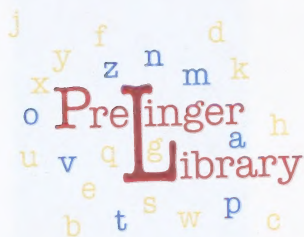


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"Sebastian, I leave you and Mr. Denham to each other."



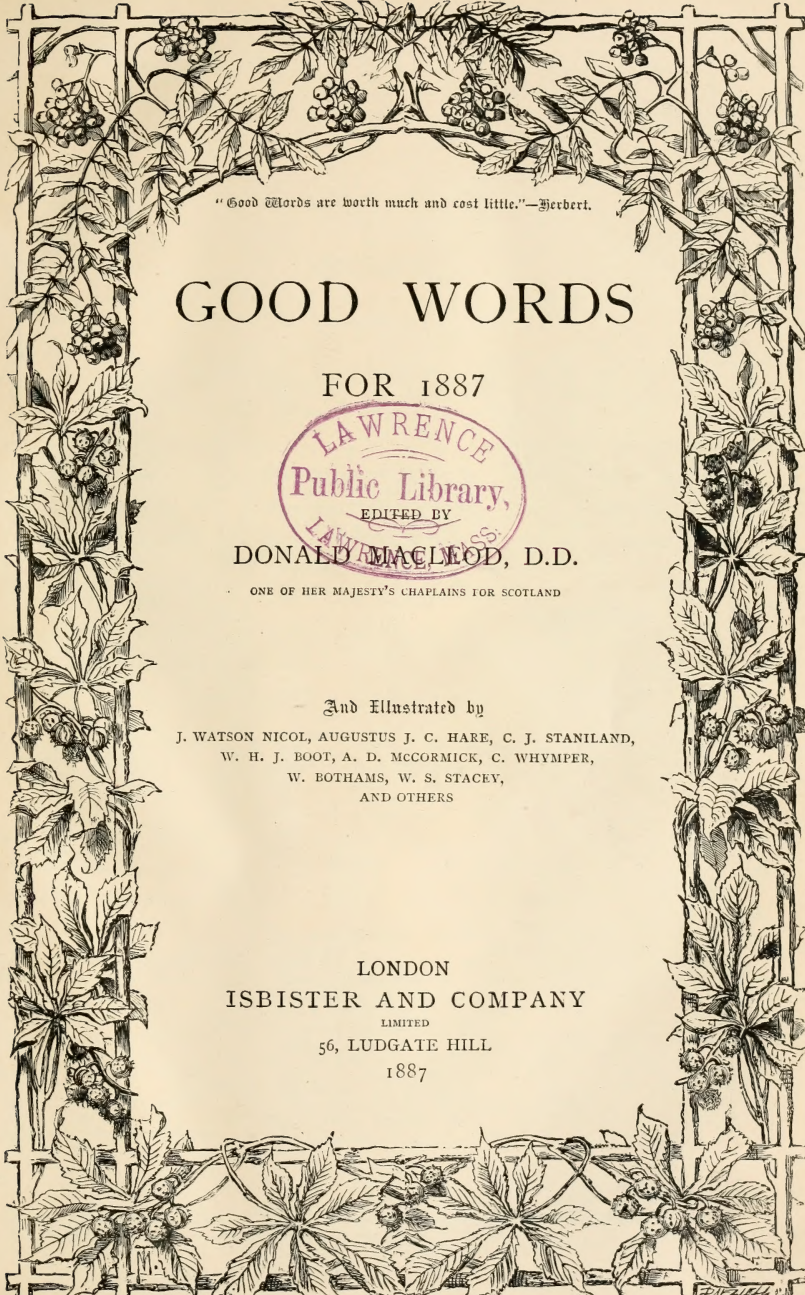
Frontispiece.]

“WINTER.”

By BILLET.

[Engraved by Whympers.]

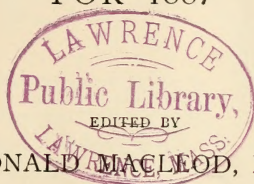
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"Good Words are worth much and cost little."—Herbert.

GOOD WORDS

FOR 1887



DONALD MACLEOD, D.D.

ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S CHAPLAINS FOR SCOTLAND

And Illustrated by

J. WATSON NICOL, AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE, C. J. STANILAND,
W. H. J. BOOT, A. D. MCCORMICK, C. WHYMPER,
W. BOTHAMS, W. S. STACEY,
AND OTHERS

LONDON
ISBISTER AND COMPANY
LIMITED
56, LUDGATE HILL
1887

GOOD THINGS

FOR YOU

5039-28

THE NEW YORK COMPANY

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"Across the great dividing seas,
We stretch a kindly hand
To where Canadian rivers freeze
In the wild western land."



1887.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER I.—SIR BRIAN.

MOST of us have such excellent, albeit melancholy, reasons for being beholden to members of the medical profession that we ought to be very much ashamed of sneering at them, and calling them a pack of humbugs, as we are far too apt to do in the arrogance engendered by a fit of robust health. Nations, it is said, have the rulers that they deserve, *populus vult decipi*, and if (as has been asserted on high authority) bread pills are frequently administered with results of a satisfying and drastic nature, what business have we to cavil at a method of treatment which benefits the patient and does no harm to anybody else? It is the fault of the patients—if indeed there be any question of fault in the matter—that fashionable physicians are constrained to work fashionable cures, to vary their remedies, and to discover at least one new watering-place every year. That for cleansing purposes Jordan is equally valuable with Abana and Pharpar, and that the Yang-tse-Kiang is probably neither superior nor inferior in that respect to any of the three, is not to the point. People must be sent to places which they think likely to do them good, and when they have tried half-a-dozen well-known localities without conspicuous change in their condition, there is obviously nothing for it but to recommend some locality which is not well known. Thus remote Alpine valleys, African deserts, and primitive English fishing villages are wont to find sudden greatness thrust upon them; and thus, quite recently, Kingscliff, which for hundreds of years had led a peaceful, slumberous ex-

istence beneath its sheltering heights in the far west, without ever suspecting that it possessed a climate comparable to that of the Azores, had the honour to receive as a passing visitor the celebrated Sir Guy Bartholomew, M.D. Sir Guy made a few inquiries, took a few notes, and returned to London with the complacent mien of one who has hit upon an entirely novel prescription. Nor was his prescription long in bearing fruit. Invalids appeared, first by twos and threes, then in larger and ever larger numbers; lodging-houses sprang up to receive them; an imposing hotel rose upon the shores of the bay; the railway company at last constructed the long-talked-of branch which now connects the town with the main line; finally, that energetic contractor and builder, Mr. Buswell, of Bristol, came down, bought land, and set to work to erect villas, which were taken before their walls were dry. In short, Kingscliff, where the weather during December, January, and February is really not worse than might be expected in a place situated in that latitude and facing west-south-west, speedily blossomed out into a favourite winter resort. That the sun actually has more power there than in other parts of England one must not venture to deny, in the face of the formidable array of decimal figures which have been brought forward to prove it, and indeed it seems scarcely worth while to dispute about such minute differences; but that it is amply shielded from the north and east by its overhanging red cliffs anybody can see at a glance, and the beauty of its position and of the surrounding scenery has never been called in question.

Yachtsmen, dawdling along the coast from regatta to regatta in the month of August, have long been familiar with this charming spot, and have admired it through their field-glasses; but no yacht ever puts in there, because the anchorage is so bad, and the bay lies open to the quarter of prevailing winds. If you were running before the prevailing wind, and consequently making up Channel, you would obtain your first glimpse of Kingscliff immediately after rounding Halcombe Head, which forms the western horn of the bay. It is a low, bare promontory, exposed to the stormy blasts and swept by them of all vegetation save a few stunted shrubs; the soft red sandstone of which it is composed is continually crumbling away and falling in great blocks into the sea, which blocks have been tormented by the rush of water into fantastic crags and pinnacles; but as the red cliffs trend inland from this point they gradually increase in height; their slopes, down to the water's edge, become clothed with hanging woodlands, and just where the eastern curve begins stands Kingscliff, a cluster of white cottages, fronted by a white beach, whereon some half-dozen of stout fishing-smacks are hauled up high and dry. Down the deep gully behind the village a trout-stream leaps to join the sea, the silvery gleam of its miniature cascades visible here and there between the trees. To the westward of this gully, and at a considerable height above the village, there is a space of level ground occupied by Morden Court, the property of Rear-Admiral Greenwood, to whom also a good part of Kingscliff belongs, and behind the house there are more woods, topped by a stretch of heathy moor and by waving fields of wheat and barley.

Morden Court is a comfortable, substantial-looking mansion, but its architectural pretensions are slight; the eye of the observant stranger is more likely to be attracted by an ancient Tudor building which rises conspicuous on the eastern side of the bay. It is of comparatively small dimensions, but is considered by connoisseurs to be a singularly perfect specimen of its style. This is Kingscliff Manor, where many generations of Winstowes have lived and died. The Winstowes were once a wealthy and powerful family, possessing properties of far greater size and importance than this cradle of their race, but their possessions gradually fell away from them; the last of them is now dead, and the Manor has passed to their neighbours, the Segraves of Beckton.

The first thing that you open out after

leaving Kingscliff Bay is Beckton itself, a noble old grey structure, erected—possibly from an Italian design—rather more than two centuries ago. Viewed from the sea, Beckton, with its length of flat façade and its two jutting wings, is decidedly imposing. A long flight of semicircular granite steps leads up to its central entrance from a grassy bowling-green. Between this and the spectator there is a balustrade, also of granite, broken in the middle by wrought-iron gates, on either side of which is a high pillar, surmounted by a ball; from the gates a second flight of steps leads down to a second lawn, then comes a second balustrade exactly similar to the first, a third flight of steps, after which there is an end of levelling, and nature is allowed to have her own way with the land until it touches the sea. The general effect is fine, though perhaps a little sombre, no flower-garden being visible from this quarter.

Kingscliff, as above described, is the Kingscliff of some years back; nowadays the fishing-boats on the beach are flanked by a regiment of bathing-machines; the Royal Hotel and the Marine Parade have displaced the fishermen's cottages, and a goodly portion of Admiral Greenwood's property is covered with smart villas. From the yachtsmen's point of view these changes may not seem to be altogether changes for the better, but from the point of view of Admiral Greenwood, Mr. Buswell, the butcher, the baker, and the lodging-house keeper, and others too numerous to mention, they are a joy to the eye and a comfort to the heart. All these, comparing past with present times, are wont to lift up their hands with one consent and bless good Dr. Bartholomew. Nevertheless, at the time when this story opens, there was a dissentient minority. True, this minority consisted only of one, but then he was a host in himself. Major-General Sir Brian Segrave, K.C.B., owner of Beckton, of a moiety of Kingscliff, and of much land thereunto adjacent, was, as Mr. Buswell would frequently declare, a born obstructionist. Sir Brian had been vehemently opposed to the whole scheme of Kingscliff improvements from beginning to end. He did not, he said, want to have mushroom watering-places cropping up under his nose; pleasure-seekers were offensive to him; brass bands were more offensive still; Mr. Buswell was most offensive of all. There is every reason to believe that he would have quarrelled with his old friend Admiral Greenwood for aiding and abetting the enemy,

had Admiral Greenwood been a man with whom it was at all possible to quarrel. He recognised the fact that he could not prevent other people from doing as they pleased with their own, but he considered that his wishes had not been sufficiently consulted in the matter; and as he was not only a country squire but an ex-military man, he was naturally disposed to resent such lack of deference.

One fine autumn morning this arbitrary, irascible, but thoroughly upright and honest old gentleman was riding through Kingscliff on his way homewards from the railway-station, where he had been making a fine fuss about the non-arrival of some parcels which ought to have been there. He had always been against the construction of the local line, and was in the habit of declaring that everybody had been much better off when their goods had reached them by carrier. There had certainly been some irregularity of delivery in those days, but then the carrier had never professed to be regular, so that you knew where you were with him. The railway company, on the other hand, as he had just pointed out to the station-master, guaranteed punctuality, yet were never punctual. The station-master respectfully begged pardon, but thought otherwise. He believed there was no guarantee. Every effort was made to insure prompt delivery, but at that season of the year, when the traffic was so heavy, it was next to impossible for the trains to keep their time. Sir Brian rejoined that that excuse was tantamount to an admission that the railway officials couldn't or wouldn't keep faith with the public. They all deserved penal servitude, and, for his part, he sincerely hoped that, when they had killed and maimed a few more of their fellow-creatures, they would get it.

He himself was in danger of being a little unpunctual at luncheon that day, for after he had ridden some distance it occurred to him that he had spoken somewhat too harshly, and he felt bound to return and mention that his words had not been intended to apply to the station-master personally.

"I didn't mean you, Simpkins; I meant your rascally, catchpenny employers. I don't suppose you are to blame."

Simpkins having expressed himself abundantly satisfied with this explanation, Sir Brian wished him good-day, and headed once more for home. Strangers turned to look at him as he rode slowly down the street, sitting

square and erect upon his cob, a tall, handsome, aristocratic-looking personage, with hook nose, grey moustache twirled upwards, and a pair of blue eyes which looked out condescendingly, but not unkindly, upon men and things. The tradesmen and the lounging fishermen touched their hats to him, for he was popular, in spite of his little peculiarities, and he acknowledged their salutes with a smile and an uplifted forefinger. Just as he was emerging from the town, which terminates somewhat abruptly on its eastern side, a stout, vulgar-looking individual, who wore a frock-coat, thrown open, an enormous gold watch-chain, and a tall white hat, accosted him, waddling out into the middle of the road.

"Good morning to you, Sir Brian. I was looking out for you; you're the very man I want to see."

Sir Brian drew rein, threw one quick glance of intense disgust at the speaker, and then gazed vacantly over his head. "Oh, Mr. Buswell, I believe?" said he in chilling accents (though he knew Buswell's face as well as he knew his work, and hated the one as much as the other). "What can I do for you, Mr. Buswell?"

The successful contractor was not in the least abashed. He was rich, a great deal richer than Sir Brian Segrave; he was in a certain sense powerful; he had a sincere admiration for himself and a contempt equally sincere for the survivors of a worn-out feudal system.

"Well," he replied, with a sort of laugh, "you can do something for me, and something for yourself too at the same time, which is more to the purpose, maybe." He produced a roll of paper from the tail-pocket of his coat and began flattening it upon his knee with his great red hand. "Now just run your eye over that, Sir Brian," said he; "it's a little plan I've had drawn out of Kingscliff as it ought to be, and as it *will* be in due course o' time."

"Thank you—no," returned Sir Brian hastily. "I feel no curiosity to inspect these fancy sketches. The subject is one in which I am not interested, and——"

"Not interested! ain't you though! Wait till you've seen my plan. Now just look at this. 'Ere's the new 'arbour works, promenade pier, aquarium and winter garden. Further back you come to proposed row of 'igh class dwelling-'ouses, with southerly aspect, to be called Segrave Crescent; and up on the right, where the Manor 'Ouse now stands—the finest sitiuation in the 'ole

place—we think of erecting as many as twenty really elegant detached villas, with from one to three acres of land apiece, stabling, and every modern convenience. I look upon that property, sir, as destined to be the Belgraviar of Kingscliff."

"Where the Manor House now stands!" echoed Sir Brian, with a stare of astonishment. Then he could not resist glancing for a moment at the audacious design which was being held up before his eyes. "Why, Mr. Buswell," he exclaimed, "are you aware that the land upon which these—these fantastic arrangements figure happens to belong to me?"

"Of course I am aware that it belongs to you, Sir Brian, and I only wish it belonged to me—ha! ha! For the matter of that, I dessay it *will* belong to me some fine day; but in the meantime——"

"Mr. Buswell!" Lightning flashes shot from Sir Brian's blue eyes, his moustache twitched, his nostrils expanded, but he uttered no more than those two words, because, although to keep his temper under provocation was what he had never been able to accomplish in his life, yet by strenuous exertion of the will and clenching of the teeth he could sometimes retain control over it, and he was very sensible of the loss of dignity which must ensue from any bandying of words with this low-bred man of bricks and mortar.

Mr. Buswell stuck his hands in his pockets, laughed, and said soothingly, "There, there, Sir Brian, don't get angry about it. Overtures have been made already to you upon this subject and they haven't been successful. You don't want to sell and you won't sell—we all know that. You make a mistake; but——"

"Kindly allow me to be the best judge of my own affairs, sir," interrupted the old gentleman in a choking voice.

"Oh, no—dash it all, Sir Brian, that's asking too much! I can't allow it, I can't really! I allow that you're free to manage your own affairs in your own way, but as for your being the best judge of 'em, why, common reason and common sense prove the contrary, you know. But never mind that, I ain't putting myself forward as an intending purchaser. What I want to p'int out to you is that you're the owner of land which is absolutely essential to Kingscliff, if it's ever to develop into the place it oughter be. These 'ere slopes, back of the town, and the bit of level by the Manor 'Ouse are worth more money than all the rest of

Kingscliff together in my opinion, including what's been bought of Admiral Greenwood. You see, I'm quite candid with you. Now, you take my advice, Sir Brian Segrave, and let that land out on building leases. In a very few years' time you'll find your ground-rents bringing you in quite a nice little income, and your son or your grandson will be a wealthy man."

Sir Brian had by this time swallowed down a desperate inclination to use language unbecoming his age and position.

"I imagine, Mr. Buswell," said he, with laborious calmness, "that my views with regard to Kingscliff are no secret to you. I do not wish the town to become a fashionable watering-place, and if, as you say, I can check its development by declining to sell a single rood of my land for building purposes, I shall be sincerely rejoiced."

"Well, Sir Brian, your ideas are sing'lar; but I suppose you've a right to 'em, same as I have to mine. Only I shouldn't be surprised if you was to change your mind when you come to think it over and consult your family. Take that little sketch 'ome with you, it'll 'elp you to see things more clearly."

"Thank you, Mr. Buswell, I will not deprive you of it."

"Don't mention it, sir, it ain't of no value to me; I can get as many as I like of it lithographed off in no time." And Mr. Buswell thrust his plan into the other's reluctant hand. "I don't doubt but what you'll change your mind," he repeated cheerfully.

At this Sir Brian's patience suddenly gave way. He tore the obnoxious paper into fragments, scattered them to the winds, and hitting his cob smartly with the hunting-crop which he carried, galloped away without another word.

"What an extraordinary old creecher!" soliloquised Mr. Buswell aloud, as he gazed after the old gentleman's retreating form. "'Ere's a man about as 'ard up as he can be—'ad to pinch and scrape ever since he come into the property to keep his 'ead above water, they tell me—and now when a wind-fall comes in his way that 'd make many a lord or dook skip for joy, he stands with his ears laid back like an old jackass, and won't touch it! And for no other reason under the sun than because he is a jackass! However, he won't live much longer, I dessay—go off in an apoplexy in one of his fits of temper, very likely—and then we shall be able to do business with his son. It's time there was an alteration made in the laws of this country all the same."

CHAPTER II.—MAJOR.

SIR BRIAN SEGRAVE sent his cob at a hand-gallop up the steep hill which leads out of Kingscliff in the Beckton direction, to the surprise and indignation of that placid animal, who was not accustomed to being so ridden. But when he reached the summit of the ridge whence Beckton on the one side and Kingscliff on the other may be surveyed he pulled up, a little more heated in body and a little less so in spirit.

"What an ass I am!" he muttered, arriving at Mr. Buswell's conclusion from different premisses. "The chances are that that impudent vagabond only wanted to annoy me, and I allowed him to succeed. Let my land on building-leases indeed! He must have known perfectly well that I am just about as likely to do that as to make him a present of it. No, Mr. Buswell, you will have to find a site elsewhere for your aquarium and your winter-garden and your other gimerack advertisements; Kingscliff, I can assure you, will develop itself no further on this side so long as I live!"

He half turned in his saddle and flung this defiance back at his distant tormentor with a certain air of triumph; but then he sighed and became pensive, remembering that he would not live for ever, and that he was already nearer seventy than sixty years of age.

"There ought to have been an entail," he murmured; "and yet I don't know; perhaps it is best as it is."

He had his reasons for deeming it possible that there might be some advantage in the absence of an entail—reasons with which many landed proprietors can sympathise. A man may have no wish or intention to cut off his eldest son; yet to possess the power of so doing is not disagreeable and adds a firm bulwark to paternal authority. Sir Brian's authority over his heir-apparent was not quite what he could have desired it to be, and as he recalled some of Mr. Buswell's remarks he felt one of those cold shivers run up his back which are apt to precede a fit of gout.

"Who knows?" he mused. "Brian may part with the land after I am gone. I don't think Gilbert would, but Brian is an uncertain fellow. He's flighty, he's opinionated, and I do believe he's something near a Radical at heart. It would be just like him to say that he had no right to hinder the prosperity of Kingscliff, or some such nonsense."

Sir Brian sighed a second time, then suddenly straightened himself up, with a short exclamation of impatience, gave a shake to his reins and cantered on.

Admiral Greenwood used to say that there never lived a man more determined to do his duty than Segrave, but that unfortunately Segrave could never distinguish between his duty and his inclination. This was a little hard upon Sir Brian, who had always done what he believed to be his duty and had by no means always felt inclined to do it; but perhaps what Admiral Greenwood meant was that his notions of duty were thoroughly proof against outside argument or persuasion. Somewhat late in life he had succeeded to Beckton, on the death of his brother, who had been a gambler and a spendthrift, and who left the property heavily encumbered. Sir Brian instantly set to work to put things straight, and found the task neither a light nor an agreeable one. He thought it his duty to keep up a large establishment, he thought it his duty to send his two sons to Eton and Oxford, and he was quite sure that it was his duty to economise. That he managed to make retrenchment compatible with these and other important items of expenditure was not a little to his credit. His method entailed considerable self-sacrifice and continual mortification, for he was by nature a generous man and hated to keep a strict account of half-crowns; yet he had adhered to it resolutely and, by denying himself all personal luxuries, was able now in his old age to see daylight. He had not yet, it is true, paid off all the mortgages, still less had it been in his power to lay by anything out of income; but he hoped that, if he should be spared for another ten years or so, he might bequeath to his heir an estate entirely free of charges. To a man so situated the opportunity afforded by the sudden rise of Kingscliff into notoriety ought, one would think, to have been a godsend, and it would be difficult to assign any cause for Sir Brian's refusal to profit by it, save the uncomplimentary one suggested by Mr. Buswell. His privacy would not have been invaded by the proposed extension of the town, for the quarter in question was invisible from his residence and even from his park-gates. To pull down the fine old Manor House would have been a pity, no doubt; but in the Manor House and the few acres of land which surrounded it Sir Brian, as it happened, had only a life-interest, nor was it in the least on æsthetic grounds that he had

set his face against the whole scheme. Had he been taken in the right way at the outset, he might not improbably have acquiesced in what he now considered so objectionable; but he had not been taken in the right way. His dignity had been ruffled, his opinion had not been asked, his protests had been smiled at; and as he was both touchy and obstinate, it did not take him very long to persuade himself that Kingscliff as a watering-place was an abomination with which no man who had any sense of self-respect could consent to soil his fingers.

The worst of it was that he was afraid his eldest son didn't agree with him. The lad had never said this in so many words, but he had hinted at it, and Sir Brian hated hints. He did not hate his elder son; on the contrary, he had an affection for him which was deep and steady, as all his feelings were. But then, as he often said to himself impatiently, he didn't understand him. Now Gilbert he did understand, or thought he did. Gilbert was a sensible, practical fellow, a sound Conservative, a great favourite in society, a lover of sport, without being so given up to it as to waste his time over what ought to be only a relaxation, and an excellent judge of live stock, besides being thoroughly well up in all branches of agriculture. Without undue disparagement of Brian, there could be no question but that Gilbert would have filled the position of Squire of Beckton more satisfactorily than his elder brother was likely to do. But Gilbert, poor fellow, had made his entry into the world a year and a half too late, so he was reading for the Bar, and might perhaps eventually make a fortune at that trade, since his talents were so great. Other fortune, however, he would have none; nor, although he never made any complaint, was it to be supposed that the occupation of a lawyer was congenial to his tastes.

Brian was an individual of a totally different stamp. He took no interest in farming, and indeed knew next to nothing about it; he did not trouble himself much to be civil to the neighbours; his great passion was his love of music. Sometimes his father was afraid that he had got no good out of Oxford. Oxford was a terrible place for picking up fads, if a man had a leaning that way—political fads, religious fads, educational fads, and what not. There were signs that Brian had assimilated some of these; certainly he did not appear to have assimilated anything else worth speaking of. To be sure, he was a Bachelor of Music,

whatever that might imply. Music, his father thought, was all very well in its way, but there was something slightly incongruous and absurd in the idea of a musical squire. Moreover, there was one respect, and rather an important one, in which Brian differed from Gilbert: he had not the faintest notion of the value of money. He could not exactly be called extravagant, but he had a habit of giving and lending whenever he was asked, also of buying whatever chanced to take his fancy and paying for it or letting payment stand over according as he happened to have money in his pocket or not at the time. Then, when bills were sent in to his father, he would say that he was very sorry, but really he had forgotten all about them. He was always exceeding his allowance, without having anything to show for his expenditure, whereas Gilbert, who had never been in debt in his life, was both better dressed and better provided with all the small necessities and luxuries of existence than he.

These things often made Sir Brian thoughtful, and it was in a thoughtful mood that he now reached home and sat down to his solitary luncheon. The young gentlemen had gone out shooting, the butler told him, and had said they should not be back before dusk.

Sir Brian did not linger long in the spacious and rather gloomy dining-room, which had been the scene of many revels in years gone by, and where, in these latter times, the neighbours were entertained at a solemn dinner-party about once a month. The Turkey carpet was very old and faded, as were also the curtains; the massive mahogany chairs, purchased probably in the beginning of the century, looked as if their framework might hold out for another hundred years, but were woefully in want of re-stuffing; the tablecloth had evidently done duty for several days. Perhaps one of the most painful deprivations imposed by poverty upon the frugal is that of a daily supply of clean table-linen. Sir Brian, who was refined and fastidious by nature, had felt it to be so once, but he had grown accustomed to such things now and hardly noticed them. When he had disposed of the not very abundant fare set before him, he betook himself to his study where he wrote letters for an hour, after which, the afternoon being so fine, he thought he would stroll out and try to find his sons.

So he put on his hat and, knowing well which direction to take, mounted the grassy hill behind the house until he reached an expanse of heathery moor, beyond which

many undulating fields of stubble and roots stretched away to meet the sky. Far beneath him, on his left hand, lay Kingscliff, the smoke from the town rising straight into the still air. The calm sea, with broad bands of silver where the sun fell upon it from between the clouds, was lost in mists towards the horizon. The red cliffs, the yellow woods, the soft melancholy of the western autumn, all these had a certain influence upon Sir Brian as he paused to take breath and survey the prospect. A verse from the Psalms came into his mind: "The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage."

"Ah, well!" he murmured, resuming his walk, "I suppose so; I suppose one must say so. All things considered, I ought to give thanks—only I wish I had rather more ready money!"

After he had proceeded some little way he was brought to a standstill by the sound of a couple of shots in the distance.

"Ah," he said, "I thought they would try this beat. I shall find them in John Shapley's mangolds most likely—at least I shall find Gilbert; as for Brian, he is pretty sure to have had enough of it an hour or two ago and gone off to play the organ or something."

However, Sir Brian was less accurate in this forecast than he had been as to locality, for when he had scrambled rather stiffly down a bank, had made his way up a deep lane, and had dropped his elbows on a five-barred gate, the figure that he saw slowly tramping through the field of mangolds on the other side of it was that of his elder, not of his younger son. At the same moment the old red setter by whom the sportsman was accompanied became suddenly rigid, and immediately afterwards a large covey of partridges rose. The young man fired both barrels and brought down three birds; after which he left the keeper, who was carrying the game-bag, to pick up the slain and came striding towards his father with a pleasant smile upon his face.

His face was pleasant as well as his smile. It was not handsome, because both the nose and the mouth were too large for beauty and the cheekbones were somewhat too high, but the eyes, which were of a soft iron-grey tinge and which were surmounted by well-marked black eyebrows, might almost be called beautiful. Indeed, Brian was generally accounted a good-looking fellow, for he stood six-foot-two in his stockings, his figure was well-proportioned and he had the appearance of great physical strength. He wore his dark hair very short, and his upper lip

was only just beginning to display signs of an approaching moustache.

"Well," said his father, "what sort of a bag have you made?"

"Pretty fair; nine brace and a half between us."

"Does that mean that Gilbert killed eight brace?"

"No," answered the young man laughing, "it isn't Gilbert's day. He was missing everything before lunch, so he said it was no use going on, and I believe he has strolled over to Morden."

"Gilbert is a better shot than you are," remarked Sir Brian a little aggressively.

"I know he is; but sometimes I manage to hit them. You must admit that that last wasn't such a bad shot."

"I don't call it good to bring down a brace with one cartridge. You must have fired into the brown of them."

"The second bird crossed."

"Humph! that's the usual excuse. What did Gilbert go to Morden for?"

"He wanted to see the Greenwoods, I suppose."

"Well, I suppose so; one doesn't generally go to a house unless one wants to see the inhabitants. At least, most people don't. You do, I dare say."

The young man laid his gun down on the bank, seated himself on the gate, over which his father was still leaning, and looked down into the old gentleman's face.

"What has been putting you out?" he asked good-humouredly.

"I'm not put out at all," answered Sir Brian. "Don't talk nonsense."

"You are, though," persisted the other; "you wouldn't have snapped at me like that if you hadn't been annoyed about something. Come, what is it?"

"I didn't snap at you; what do you mean?" returned Sir Brian, trying to look angry, but in reality he was pleased, because he liked to talk over his griefs and grievances, and since his wife's death nobody but Brian had ever taken the trouble to notice his moods. Gilbert was less observant; it was the one defect in an otherwise admirable character.

"It's enough to put anybody out," he resumed after a short pause, "to be accosted and insulted by Mr. Buswell."

"Oh, Buswell. Yes; he is rather a cad, certainly. Not a bad sort of a fellow, though, in his own way."

"It would be interesting," observed Sir Brian, with studied calmness, "to hear what, in your opinion, constitutes a bad sort of

fellow. If Mr. Buswell is a good fellow, I suppose I don't know the meaning of words, that's all."

"Well, I think he is honest."

"Honest! Upon my word, you are very charitable! However, we will give him the benefit of the doubt. We'll call him honest, since you insist upon it; but I think I am keeping well within the limits of moderation when I say that he is an infernal, insolent blackguard."

"Dear me, what *has* he been doing?"

"Oh, nothing new. I have had these applications before, of course, but he hasn't had the impertinence to address himself to me personally until to-day; and really I think it is getting a little beyond a joke when a man actually has plans drawn up disposing of your property to suit his convenience. Would you believe that he handed me a paper with the whole precious scheme in black and white? A winter-garden, an aquarium, and I don't know what else, and then a row of houses to be called Segrave Crescent, if you please! He said he was sure I should consent to sell when I had thought things over; and upon my life, I can't feel certain whether the fellow was laughing at me or not."

"I shouldn't think he was laughing at you. What land was it that he wanted?"

"Oh, the fields on this side of Kingscliff of course, and the land below the Manor House. In fact, he said he should like to have the Manor House itself. I suppose he doesn't know that I couldn't part with that, if I would."

"It's poor land," remarked the young man meditatively.

"What the deuce has that to do with it?"

"Nothing, if you are determined to eschew Buswell and all his works."

Sir Brian sprang back from the gate, stood erect, and struck his stick sharply against the ground.

"I thought you were aware that if there is anything in the world about which I am determined it is that."

"Yes; I have often heard you say so; but I have also heard you say very often that you were so hard up you didn't know which way to turn for a five-pound note. Upon the face of the thing, it looks as if it might be worth your while to sell a few acres of bad land. Of course I don't know what your reasons may be for refusing to sell; I have never heard you mention them."

"My reasons!" cried Sir Brian, in great

perturbation. "Must I give reasons for everything that I do or leave undone? I have reasons, and I could give them if I chose; but surely, *surely* for you it ought to be sufficient to know that I would rather cut off my right hand than act as you suggest."

The young man raised his eyebrows slightly and smiled.

"For me? oh, yes, that's sufficient for me," he answered. "Personally, I don't much mind being hard up; it's my normal condition. Only it seems a pity that you should have money worries if they can be avoided. If they can't be avoided, they can't."

The old gentleman was about to make some rejoinder; but the keeper, who, during this conversation, had been standing apart, coughing discreetly at intervals to attract attention, here lost patience and came forward to ask whether Mr. Brian was going to try the stubbles or not, because the light wouldn't hold out much longer. The interruption was not altogether unwelcome to Sir Brian; for he had a curious dread of coming to a direct conflict of opinion with his heir upon this subject. He was not prepared to decide what course he should adopt in the event of such a conflict arising.

So they scrambled through the hedge into the adjoining field and tramped silently on, the dog ranging ahead; and presently, with a sudden whirr of wings, a covey got up on their extreme right. It was a long shot, but the young man fired, and missed. At the same instant a piercing shriek arose from the lane over which the birds had taken flight.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Sir Brian, aghast; "you've hit somebody!"

And he started off running in the direction whence the cry had proceeded, followed by his son, who was not less alarmed than he.

It did not diminish their consternation, when they had plunged down into the lane, to find themselves confronted with two ladies, though, to be sure, both of them appeared to be perfectly safe and sound. Sir Brian, hat in hand, began to pour forth profuse apologies, until the elder of the pair, who was stout and good-humoured-looking, stopped him.

"It is I who should beg pardon for having startled you," she said. "Indeed, I dare say we ought to beg pardon for being here at all, only we thought it was a public road."

"It is a public road, you are quite right," returned Sir Brian; "and it was inexcusably careless of my son to fire as he did."

"I am very sorry that I frightened you," said Brian a little resentfully; "but I can assure you that you frightened me too. Why did you scream if you were not hurt?"

"Because I couldn't help it," answered the stout lady, laughing. "I ought to be ashamed of myself, and I am ashamed of myself, but the report of firearms always produces that effect upon me. If you were to let off the other barrel now—only I hope you won't—I should do just the same thing again."

"Miss Joy is gun-shy," observed the younger lady gravely; "she ought not to be taken out for country walks after the 1st of September."

Brian turned round and beheld the girl who (if he had known it) had been pronounced by all London a few months back, to be the beauty of the season. Possibly her exquisite complexion, her rippling hair of a bronze tinge, her straight brows and the clear brown eyes that looked out from beneath them, might not of themselves have sufficed to obtain that proud distinction for her, had she not possessed other claims upon the admiration of mankind which have always been found very potent. She was a great heiress; she had a certain imperious way with her; and either instinct or experience, or both, had dowered her with a wonderfully precise knowledge of the foibles of the opposite sex. Therefore the men of London, young and old, married and single, had with one consent fallen down and worshipped Miss Huntley; and Brian, gazing at her as she stood there in her well-fitting dark cloth costume, her head slightly thrown back and the dawning of a smile upon her lips, felt very much inclined to do likewise.

Brian did not know a great deal about young women. As a rule, they rather frightened him; he avoided them when he could, and was wont to assure his brother, who had quite other tastes, that he was not susceptible. Yet in after days, when his love for Beatrice Huntley had become a passion as deep and lasting as it was hopeless, he felt convinced that he had lost his heart to her at the very moment of their first encounter. Perhaps, however, he was not strictly accurate in this impression; perhaps it was not until a few seconds later that the catastrophe in question actually occurred. For Sir Brian, who seemed quite eager to prove his son open to a charge of manslaughter, now turned away from the lady who had been spoken of as Miss Joy, and addressed himself to her companion.

"Nothing can excuse firing across a road," said he. "If you have escaped with a fright we have only Providence to thank for it."

"I should be sorry to deprive Providence of any thanks that may be due in that quarter, and I confess that I am very ignorant about guns," answered the young lady; "but it seems to me that anyone who was trying to shoot those birds could not possibly have succeeded in shooting us. They must have been quite thirty feet above our heads."

"Oh, no, excuse me, not nearly so much. And I dare say you are not aware that shot is apt to scatter."

"I see. Of course, then, if you had happened to have a gun with you, you would not have dreamt of firing."

Sir Brian, who was a strictly truthful man, remained silent and looked a little foolish, while Brian the younger ventured to throw a grateful glance at his champion. She laughed, displaying a row of beautifully white and even teeth.

"At any rate," said she, "we must not keep you any longer from your sport. Perhaps you can tell us whether this lane leads to Kingscliff."

"Well, not exactly," replied Sir Brian; "but, if you will allow us, we will go a little distance with you and show you a short cut."

After a few conventional protests, this offer was graciously accepted, and the group set itself in motion, the two elder members of it walking first, while the remaining couple followed. During the ensuing five minutes Brian heard Miss Huntley's name, learnt that she had taken a house at Kingscliff for a few months for the sake of her companion Miss Joy, who suffered from bronchitis, and was informed that she had already met his brother Gilbert at a dance.

"Why were you not there?" she inquired. "Do you despise dances?"

"No," answered Brian; "but I am not a good dancer; and besides——"

"What besides?"

"Well, I am not very fond of society. In fact, I don't shine in it."

"It is easier to shine in society than to dance well; but both accomplishments can be learnt, if you think them worth the trouble."

"Where can one get lessons?" asked the young man.

"I believe," replied Miss Huntley, "that I may describe myself as a well-qualified teacher. Bear me in mind, if you decide upon going through a course of instruction."

Then, before he could say anything more, she joined the others, who had come to a standstill.

"I suppose," said she, "that our paths diverge here. Thank you very much. Good evening."

So the two ladies departed; not, however, before Brian, somewhat to his father's surprise, had requested and obtained permission to send them two brace of partridges.

"That is a good-looking girl," the old gentleman remarked presently. "I don't think it is necessary to offer strangers game, though. The next thing will be that we shall have her calling at Beckton."

"I hope she will," said Brian; "I thought her charming."

"Well, I don't know about that. It seems that she is a daughter of Huntley's, the great contractor, you know, who left a couple of millions, they say."

"She is none the worse for that, is she?"

"Probably not; but I think I remember to have heard that there was a son—or sons."

"I meant that she is none the worse for being the daughter of a contractor."

"Oh, you wouldn't think so, of course; your friend Mr. Buswell is by way of being a sort of contractor, isn't he? In one sense nobody is the worse for being of low origin, and if one is thrown with such people one ought to be civil to them. But I don't feel called upon to seek them out."

CHAPTER III.—MINOR.

THERE are men—most of us are acquainted with some of them—whose prosperity appears to be constant and unailing. In whatsoever they undertake they thrive; they fall into no misfortune, like other folk; they have many friends and few enemies; and we cannot but envy them their luck, while wondering what in the world they have done to deserve it. But in the generality of cases it will be found that these are men of fair and florid complexion, the whites of whose eyes are clear, and their joints supple; and although, no doubt, it is a piece of luck in itself, and a great one, to be so constituted, yet it is perhaps that alone which distinguishes them from the herd of their fellow-creatures. They may lose those nearest and dearest to them; they may invest their money badly; they may tumble down and break their bones, like the rest of us, but they bear these disasters cheerfully, and nobody thinks of them as afflicted, because their digestions are sound, and their systems

free from latent gout. The redundancy of their health will not suffer them to do otherwise than make the best of things; to which cause also may generally be traced their success in life, as well as the circumstance that they are for the most part confirmed optimists, prone to the assertion that all their geese are swans. *Terque quaterque beati!* Not only do they obtain their desires, they are conscious of having obtained them.

Admiral Greenwood, that deservedly popular personage, was quite conscious of being a happy man, and was wont to describe himself as such with the utmost emphasis to all and sundry who would listen to him. In truth he was able, at the age of sixty or thereabouts, to point to very substantial reasons for his satisfaction with his lot; for he had a wife who adored him, a daughter who was both pretty and sweet-tempered, a comfortable home, a comfortable income, and the best of good consciences. He had not always been equally prosperous, though it is likely enough that he had always been equally joyous. In the days before the advent of Sir Guy Bartholomew and Mr. Buswell, Morden Court had been let or had stood empty, waiting for a tenant, while its owner, whose means were not then large enough to permit of his setting up his household gods there, had either been at sea or dwelling with his family at some temporary marine residence where the necessities of life were cheap. But when the fortunes of Kingscliff began to rise, the fortunes of the gallant admiral followed suit. He sold a good slice of his property (being deterred by no such fanciful scruples as hampered his neighbour at Beckton), realised a handsome profit thereby, returned to the home of his ancestors upon the strength of it, and when he attended divine service on the first Sunday after his arrival, followed up the reading of the general thanksgiving with such a tremendous amen that he made the whole congregation jump like one man.

The heartiness of the Admiral's responses was a little disturbing at first to nervous people, and indeed his voice was at all times calculated to recall memories of stormy weather at sea; but Kingscliff soon became accustomed to him, and nobody could help liking him. Even Sir Brian Segrave, who regarded him as a renegade to his order, and told him so, could not hold out against his indomitable good humour. His hospitality was boundless and perfectly indiscriminate; and a fortunate thing it was for him that his wife was as good-natured as himself, for he sometimes

brought some queer-looking people home to dinner.

Morden Court, as has been said, was a comfortable, roomy house, though not a grand one. Built by Admiral Greenwood's father to replace a former structure which had been burnt down, it had the characteristics of an inartistic period and, with its bow-windows and coat of white paint, was no great addition to the beauty of the landscape; at the same time, it could not be called ugly, and doubtless many people would have preferred it as a residence to Beckton. Its garden, too, in which Mrs. Greenwood took some pride, was well laid out and could display as fine a show of roses in the summertime as any in the neighbourhood. When the season of roses was over, there was no lack of dahlias, china-asters, belladonna lilies, and other flowers to take their place, and these, as the year declined, were succeeded by chrysanthemums of all shapes, sizes, and hues.

On that same fine autumn afternoon which was treated of in the last chapter, Mrs. Greenwood, armed with a large pair of gardening-scissors, was pottering about among the beds, snipping off the very best blooms, with an occasional sigh and murmur, and handing them to her daughter, who held out a capacious basket to receive them.

"You know, Kitty," she was saying, "I do think it is a sad waste. If at least you were going to put them into vases it would be some consolation; but to twist the poor things into wreaths or crosses, or whatever it is that you make of them, knowing that they must die in a few hours, is very much like wanton destruction, to my mind. And I can't see why St. Michael's should want this perpetual dressing up, when our own church goes bare from Easter to Christmas, and is none the worse."

"But if we had picked double the number they would never have been missed from these crowded beds," Miss Kitty declared; "and surely it is better that the flowers should die at St. Michael's than wither away on their stems without having been noticed by anybody."

Mrs. Greenwood straightened up her back and laughed. She was a little roundabout woman, who had evidently been pretty some thirty years back, and whose abundant grey hair and rosy complexion still conferred upon her such a measure of good looks as old age can pretend to.

"Do you think they make a more edifying end in the bosom of the Church, and are

they sprinkled with holy water before they die?" she asked. "There, my dear, you know I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, and I am sure Mr. Monckton is a most excellent man; though personally I don't admire a cassock, because I am so old-fashioned."

"Now, mamma, you can't really mean that you like to see a pair of black legs below a surplice!"

"I do indeed, though; I think petticoats should be reserved for women. A man ought to display his legs—especially if he has well-shaped ones, like Gilbert Segrave, whom I see coming out of the house."

Miss Greenwood looked up, and the delicate rose-pink of her cheeks deepened ever so slightly. There were people who said that Kitty Greenwood was like a wax doll; but these were ill-natured people, who perhaps would not have been sorry if the same description could have been given of themselves with truth. Certainly she was a very small person, and her hair was of that glossy texture and pale golden colour which we are accustomed to see displayed in the windows of the toy-shops, and her mouth was shaped like a Cupid's bow, and her blue eyes were round and wide open; but any unprejudiced critic must allow that these things form a decidedly pretty combination; and if Miss Kitty neither looked nor was profoundly wise, that did not prevent her from possessing a warm heart and a very fair share of accomplishments.

The young man who was advancing across the lawn was both like and unlike Brian Segrave. The resemblance struck you at the first glance, while the dissimilarity became more and more patent upon closer inspection. He was cast in a smaller and more refined mould than his brother; his features were more delicately cut, and although he was the younger by more than a year, he had far less of the appearance of youth about him. Perhaps the short, reddish-brown beard and moustache which he wore had something to do with this. His hair was of the same tinge, as were also his eyes. To many people there is something a little repellent in red-brown eyes; but that there was anything repellent, either inwardly or outwardly, about Gilbert Segrave would have been an unsafe criticism to utter in Kingscliff, where he was greatly liked and admired by all classes of the community. For the rest, he was a very carefully turned-out young man, his grey velvet costume fitting him to perfection, and the legs to

which Mrs. Greenwood had made allusion being clad in unwrinkled box-cloth gaiters, terminated by a pair of shooting-boots, which, though serviceable, were small, well made, and did not turn up at the toes, as the shooting-boots of some folks are apt to do. He carried his gun under his arm, and on his head he wore a highly becoming steeple-crowned hat of soft grey felt, which he lifted as he approached the ladies.

"I have come to beg for a cup of tea and a little consolation," he said, after he had shaken hands with them. "I have been shooting with my big brother, who, for once in a way, has been shooting well, whereas I couldn't touch a feather. My nerves must be upset by the unwonted dissipation of a Kingscliff ball. I hope you are not the worse for it."

"Oh, dear no; all the better," Mrs. Greenwood replied briskly. "We must try to get up a little more dancing; it brings the young people together. And now tell me what you thought of the beauty."

"The beauty?" echoed Gilbert vaguely; and he sent a swift sidelong glance at Kitty, which may have been intended to signify that he had had eyes only for the beauty of one person on the occasion referred to.

"Now, don't pretend not to know what I mean," cried Mrs. Greenwood. "Of course, we have nobody here who can be compared in point of looks with Miss Huntley." (But in her heart of hearts she thought that her own daughter had no cause to dread the comparison.)

"Oh, Miss Huntley!" said Gilbert. "Yes, she is handsome, certainly. On rather too large a scale, don't you think? I didn't notice her particularly."

"I saw you dancing with her, at all events," remarked Mrs. Greenwood.

"Yes, once—just after I had been introduced to her. Is she considered to be a beauty?"

"You know she is; and she is said to have an immense fortune, and she thinks of spending several months here. So you see there is a fine opening for you."

Gilbert shook his head. "Great beauties and great heiresses won't look at younger sons," he said; "and I have always given you credit for being above mercenary considerations."

"Indeed I am!" cried Mrs. Greenwood, who was accustomed to place a strictly literal interpretation upon all that was said to her. "Wealth is a convenience; but nobody knows better than I do that it isn't at all an essential.

For years after I married I was very poor and perfectly happy—except, of course, when it blew a gale and Tom was afloat in command of a leaky gunboat—and I would a thousand times rather see any child of mine happy than rich."

She really meant what she said, the excellent woman; and the suddenness with which she discovered that she must go indoors and make the tea was, perhaps, some proof of her sincerity. If Gilbert Segrave ever became a rich man, it certainly could not be for many years to come; and Gilbert Segrave, as this fond mother had not failed to notice, had been very attentive to Kitty of late.

She left the young people to wander about the garden together and went into the house, where she was presently joined by her husband. The Admiral, a hale, broad-shouldered, weather-beaten old gentleman, with short grey whiskers and a true sailor's mouth, expressive alike of good-humour and determination, strolled to the window, with his hands in his pockets, and ejaculated, "Hah!"

"What do you mean by 'Hah!' Tom?" inquired Mrs. Greenwood, filling the teapot.

"What do I mean by 'Hah!' Mary? Why, I mean that that young spark who is walking up and down with your only daughter hasn't a sixpence; and I mean that he has been walking and talking and dancing a deuced deal too much with her these last few weeks. That's what I mean."

"Well, you needn't swear about it, Tom," said Mrs. Greenwood.

"Mary, you know very well that I never swear, except under the strongest provocation, and when I am speaking to people who wouldn't understand me unless I did it. Are you prepared to see Kitty either married to a pauper or bound down to a long engagement? Answer me that, you foolish woman."

"You are always so ready to jump to conclusions, Tom: very likely neither of them is dreaming of an engagement. And he is such a dear, good fellow, he is sure to get on."

"How do I know that he will get on? Or that he is a dear, good fellow either, for the matter of that? I like Brian better myself."

"I can't imagine why. Besides, Brian has never taken the least notice of Kitty."

"That's against him, I admit. But seriously, Mary, I think Kitty might do better. Some day or other she will be comfortably off, no doubt; but you and I are tolerably healthy people, and the chances are that her husband, whoever he may be, will have to support her until they are both getting on in life."

Then Mrs. Greenwood brought forward as an argument the statement about her own experience which she had made, a short time before, to another audience; whereat the Admiral scratched his head, and grumbled under his breath. He was well aware that if he were to be opposed to his wife and daughter upon any given point, victory would assuredly declare itself for the allies; not because their wills were stronger than his, but because he could not bear to disappoint either of them, so he only said:

"You are in a great hurry to get rid of Kitty. It strikes me that she is well enough as she is."

Mrs. Greenwood set down the teapot in order to throw up her hands. "In a hurry! Haven't I been telling you all this time that I should be very much disappointed in Gilbert Segrave if he ventured to propose to Kitty before he had some professional income to offer her?"

"I didn't hear you," observed the Admiral, "but I applaud your sentiments."

"And I'm sure you can't really think," Mrs. Greenwood went on, "that I want to get rid of dear Kitty. Of course I should like to see her happily married. The more so because I don't know that I agree with you in thinking her well enough as she is. I can't help feeling uneasy about all this Sunday-school teaching, and district visiting, and attending of services at St. Michael's."

"She'll get no harm there," said the Admiral confidently. "Young people must have enthusiasms of one kind or another, and I don't call that a bad kind of enthusiasm. Monckton is a first-rate fellow, too."

"Maybe he is; but I believe you only admire him so much because he knows how to sail a boat."

"Not a bit of it! Any fool can learn to sail a boat, but there are precious few men who can preach like Monckton, let me tell you; and fewer still who practise what they preach, as he does. Look at the work he has done! Why, there are some slums on Segrave's property at the east end of the town, where they tell me that the doctor didn't dare to go, a few years ago, without a couple of policemen, and now Kitty can walk through them from end to end, and never hear an unceiling word. If a parson can bring about changes of that sort, hang me if I care what uniform he wears!—and he shall have as many flowers out of my garden as he likes."

"Oh, I suppose so! In fact, I have just

been gathering a whole basketful for him. The end of this will be, Tom, that you will go over to Rome."

"No, I won't go over to Rome; I won't even go to St. Michael's. I shall sit in our own parish church every Sunday morning as long as I live, and I'd put in an appearance in the afternoon, too, only I can't keep awake; and now that they've done away with the square pews, I'm afraid of setting a bad example to the congregation. Here comes young Segrave with Kitty. Confound the fellow! I wonder what he's saying to her. How are you, Gilbert? Had any sport to-day?"

"How do you do, Admiral?" said Gilbert, stepping in through the open window. "No, I couldn't manage to hit them, somehow. I was telling Miss Greenwood that dancing and late hours have put my eye all wrong; and now she wants me to repeat the dose."

"Papa, dear," said Kitty, putting her hands on the Admiral's shoulders and raising her pretty face to his, "don't you think we ought to give a dance?"

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" groaned the Admiral. "And have the house turned topsy-turvy for a week! I thought that kind of thing never began until after Christmas."

"But Christmas is such a long, long way off; and Mr. Segrave says he will have to go to London as soon as the Michaelmas term begins."

"Can't we give a dance without Mr. Segrave?"

"Not very well, because I do so want to have a cotillon, and nobody can lead it as he does. We have been talking it all over, and he knows ever so many new figures."

"Well, well," said the Admiral, who, perhaps, was relieved to hear that the young people had been talking over nothing more serious than a cotillon, "you can have your dance if your mother doesn't object; only, mind, my den isn't to be interfered with."

So the old gentleman, having received a kiss and a promise that he should be put to no more discomfort than was inevitable, proceeded in the plenitude of his good-nature to say—

"You might as well stop and dine with us, Gilbert, my boy. Never mind about dressing; and we'll send you home in the dog-cart."

From all of which it will be perceived that Admiral Greenwood, though a man of considerable resolution and common sense, was by no means master in his own house.



WINTER IN THE SLANT OF THE SUN.

By THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

FIRST PAPER.

EMERSON says somewhere, in his magnificent way, "We live by our imaginations, by our admiration, our sentiments." Prosaic folk are disposed to add, "by our health." The first thing is to have health, and the second is to keep it, and the third is to protect it. For which protection a winter or spring sojourn in a warm climate may be the surest as well as pleasantest method. Then the question arises, "Where shall we go?" About European resorts it is unnecessary to write a word. Madeira, Algiers, the Nile, Beyrout, are all very familiar places. Bombay is within a three months' furlough, but the Red Sea must be twice traversed, and after Aden there is nothing but the Indian Ocean until you reach India. Australia requires at least four months, and the Equator must be crossed twice, with the sultry drums. The Azores are only five days from

Southampton. They are reached from Lisbon. The air is balmy, the accommodation homely, but clean. Charges are moderate. A traveller, however, should bring his own resources with him, and it would be a pity if he could not eat oranges. Those for whom a long ocean voyage has no special terrors may go to Rio, the loveliest harbour in the world, and half a day is sufficient for reaching Petropolis, a lovely and healthy resort in the Organ Mountains, where the Emperor and the diplomatic corps have summer residences, and where there is a capital, though small, hotel. Mendoza, at the foot of the Andes, is said to have a perfect winter climate, but it is a long way off. It is very liable to earthquakes, and to cross the Andes into Chili is about as risky a bit of travelling as can be conceived, though it may seem a shorter way home than re-crossing the Pampas

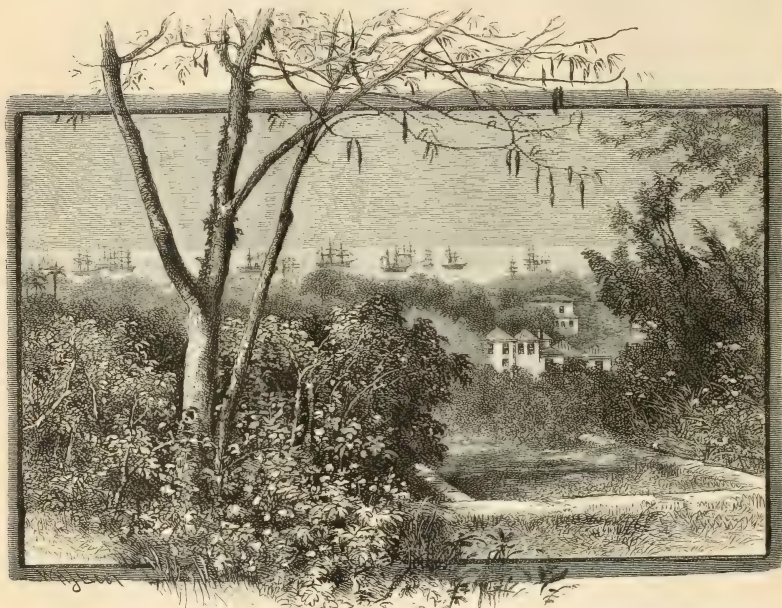
to Buenos Ayres. Monterey, on the Pacific, an afternoon's railway drive from San Francisco, is the place I long to visit. The climate is delicious, the hotel is described as simply perfect, and South California is perhaps the most fertile and healthy district under the sun. But it means such a long voyage if you go there by sea and the Isthmus of Panama, involving twenty-three days' sail on the Atlantic side, and twenty-one more on the Pacific. To attempt to reach it by land would be to fall out of the moroseness of an English winter into the rigour of a North Atlantic voyage; and a blizzard, as well as the great fatigue of eight days' incessant travelling over the continent, would not be a prudent thing to face. There is Florida, no doubt, but unless you are altogether possessed with the Englishman's traditional desire to "go and kill something," it soon palls on one. All things considered, for variety, interest, economy, and material comfort, only premising that there is no constitutional objection to heat, and that the stay in the tropics is not too much prolonged, I can recommend nothing better than a voyage to the West Indies. The Royal Mail steamers (and I have travelled more than 13,000 miles in them) yield to none that cross the ocean for punctuality, safety or comfort. After the Azores the ship is in summer, and remains there. Barbados is the first place reached, and is the convenient centre of the intercolonial traffic. The steamers into which you are transhipped from the ocean boats are, though smaller, in some respects even more comfortable, and the *Esk* and *Eden* are as cosy as a ship can be. If possible, Demerara with beautiful George Town (the queen of West Indian towns) should be visited, and a trip taken up the Essequibo River. This means the inside of a fortnight from Barbados and back there. Another fortnight will be well spent in the boat going to St. Vincent, Grenada, Trinidad, and La Guayra for Caracas. This expedition also consumes the inside of a fortnight, coming back to Barbados, and these southern localities are best visited first, for they are the hottest. Another expedition should be made to the Windward Islands, including St. Lucia, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Dominique, Antigua and St. Thomas. The steamer (you may be able to make all these expeditions in the same ship) will bring you back to Barbados (also within the fortnight); there you will meet the out-ocean mail for Jamaica, which you will reach in about four days, where a stay of a month or six weeks should if possible be arranged.

If there is leisure, and sufficient venturesomeness, a mail steamer will take you on to Havana (once a month) and Vera Cruz, from which a railroad takes you up in fourteen hours to the city of Mexico, through some of the finest scenery in the world. Puebla should also be visited—in some respects as interesting, and both cleaner and healthier, than Mexico; and from Vera Cruz there is frequent communication with New Orleans, between which and Liverpool there are steamers every week. One caution, however, let me presume to offer. Let no one, without urgent cause, go to Colon. There is no scenery worth looking at. Independently of the yellow fever, which rages there in the summer, the digging of the canal has developed a deadly malarious fever, which, if it does not at once kill you, clings to you for your life. The canal works, which will require at least twenty-five millions sterling more to complete them, have as yet made no sufficient progress to interest ordinary travellers. There are indeed huge masses of machinery lying about and spoiling, brought out in reckless haste years before they could be put to use, but even these are covered up by the tropical vegetation. There are admirable hospitals, which, alas! were not of much use to the five thousand victims of fever who are said to have died there last year, for the sickness kills so quickly that it is often not thought worth while to take them there only to die. Until the Chagres River is embanked and diverted, the real difficulty of the scheme is not even touched. But this is not yet begun. Then it is said to be as wicked a place as it is unhealthy. The captain of a ship remarked to me the other day, "If you want to see hell upon earth go to Colon." A visitor should settle with himself what the use is of seeing hell upon earth if he has no particular opportunity of making it heaven. Perhaps a place where men die like flies, and live like devils, is hardly the spot for sensible folk to visit without good cause.

May I add one or two sentences of caution to those who may take this trip for the sake of health? Where there is sensitiveness to change of temperature (and a hot climate does not of necessity diminish this) it may be well to avoid night air, and not to remain on deck after sunset. (The only fault we found with our friends, the Royal Mail Steam Co., was their barbarous dinner hour of five!) Warm clothing must not be dropped too hastily going south, nor deferred too long returning north. It is better to anticipate the cold than to be compelled to

remedy it. Flannel should always be worn next the skin, even in the tropics, day and night. Chills are very possible, and in the West Indies always hazardous. Prudence, with moderation in diet, both on sea and land, will bring its own reward. Especially beware of too much iced water, and of abandoning yourself before being acclimatised to the delicious peril of abundant draughts. Until the hot rains begin, there is really no risk of yellow fever, though there will be

from time to time isolated and imported cases in this or that island which end fatally. It is important now and then to have a few days' real rest. No mistake can be greater than to suppose that there are no fatigues connected with ship life. The noises which interrupt sleep, and the rolling which makes both bones and muscles ache again, though compensated by the ozone and sunshine, have to be allowed for. Most people, unless indeed there be real organic disease, will find three



View from the Bishop's House, Barbados.

months of the tropics as much as they care for. The change of temperature going north may be made quite gradual, and for this reason it is safer to return from Jamaica in the early spring by way of Barbados than by New York.

The sketches which follow—only sketches, though pains have been taken to make them faithful and exact—make no sort of claim to pronounce dogmatically on any of the difficult problems which it was unavoidable occasionally to notice, though they do pretend to be a kind of filter for much valuable information, and perhaps some useful reflections, which manifold conversation with all

sorts of people threw in the writer's way. His chief aim has been to try to persuade his readers (a few of whom might possibly be embarrassed at being invited to pass an examination off-hand in the geography of the West Indies) to inform themselves, of course in a much more solid and complete fashion, of the importance and value—yes, and substantial progress—of these imperfectly prized jewels of the British Crown. Quite the best result would be, if some of those who have leisure on their hands and the world to choose from to travel over, would be at the pains to go there themselves, to appreciate with their own eyes the loveliness of these



Codrington College.

homes of the sun, and to enjoy the frank and delightful kindness of their fellow-subjects who inhabit them. They would most certainly find themselves recompensed for the direction which an insignificant pen has given to their impulses of travel, and they would be welcome, ten times over, to forget, disregard, or reject any conclusions they may find here in exchange for the sounder opinions they will have taken the trouble to make for themselves.

I.—BARBADOS.

Barbados is a cheerful, healthy, and highly cultivated island, entirely the creation of coral insects, somewhat of the size of the Isle of Wight, populated to an extent relatively approximating that of China, and within twelve days of Plymouth. It claims to be, with St. Christopher, the first colony founded by Great Britain in the South of America, having been settled in 1625, and has ever since been attached to the British Crown. Here the sugar cane was first planted on British soil, and here many of the loyalists during the time of the Great Rebellion found an asylum. It is the fashion, I hardly know why, to make fun of the Barbadians for

being so fond and proud of Barbados. Even as an abstract question of expediency, it is surely far better for all concerned that those who live in a place and make its prosperity should really believe in it. Moreover, Barbados is not the only place which much respects itself. Some years ago I visited St. John's, Newfoundland, where for nine months of the year the climate may without offence be thought a little morose, and the opportunities of communication with the outer world somewhat infrequent. Prepared, if necessary, to give an ample expression of sympathy to the spirited and cheerful folk who live there for having to live there, I discovered, happily in time, that the persons felt by the inhabitants to be really in need of sympathy were those who did not live there, and I reserved my sympathy until it was wanted. Distinctly I maintain, as one who is glad to express how grateful he is to Barbados for its salubrious breezes, and to the Barbadians for their delightful kindness, that if the Barbados folk have a good deal of self-respect, they have a perfect right to what they really deserve.

Barbados, though not to be called beautiful in the sense that Jamaica, or Dominique,

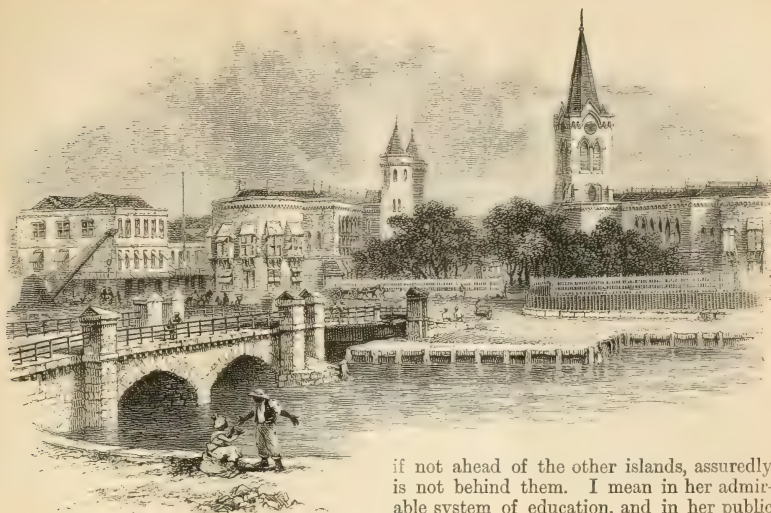
or St. Lucia claims to be, has nevertheless a kind of fairness of its own, which one who loves Nature in all her moods and phases very soon discovers. It is by no means a dead flat, but is composed of ridges and valleys of coralline limestone, with a chain of mountains which in the northern part of the island rises to the respectable elevation of 1,200 feet, and in the district called Scotland (for, like Auckland Castle, it too has its own Scotland) is almost beautiful. The coast-line, moreover, on the eastern side of the island is well worth a visit, and the melancholy little railway, if it cannot do much else, will at any rate take you there, though at a very depressing rate of speed. Just as Cornwall is marked by its mines, so is Barbados by its sugar estates, each with its group of buildings, tall chimney or windmill, and cluster of cabbage palms. I was there during the cane season, and the island was quite lively with the carts of cane going home to the mills, the brisk manufacture of the sugar for exportation, and the forest of masts in the busy roadstead waiting to carry it to Europe. Sugar is the staple product of Barbados. The estates here are not so large as those of Demerara, seldom exceeding three hundred acres, and the produce, of course, varies in relation to the soil, cultivation, and rainfall. We visited an estate at Hampton, where all the latest machinery, at a cost of £10,000, is at work, and where the entire process, from crushing the cane to packing the sugar for the ship, can be seen. It was all very interesting; but to me the most attractive feature of all was that of the negroes themselves, working cheerily and, as it seemed, diligently, for their adequate wages, and the one thought which again and again came into my mind as I went through the great building, with all its ingenious and elaborate arrangement, was, "Thank God, they are free!" As a man-servant's board-wages in Barbados are only 1s. 6d. a week, and nothing is required for fuel, very little for clothes, and, during the cane-harvest, still less for food (for the negroes almost live upon the cane), a negro, when he is in constant work, is well off. How much better off than our own artisans in Shadwell or Lambeth they must cross the ocean to discover. It is unfortunate that sugar should be so cheap, for at present it is impossible to cultivate with a profit, and Barbados has not much else to fall back upon. The climate is neither moist nor hot enough for cocoa, which is such a good second string to the bow in other islands. There is no

fruit production worth speaking of. Cotton is being planted as an experiment; but if the best seed is not used, disappointment must follow. Sugar, at its present price of £13 per ton, except when the crop is large, allows no margin beyond the cost of production. Where there is interest to pay on borrowed money (as is so often the case), an estate, in a bad time, cannot pay its way. It is the subsidised German and French beet-sugar which is competing so ruinously with our colonial production, and some of our West Indian kinsfolk would like to be protected against it. But it is a serious thing to ask the Home Government to raise, in an appreciable degree, the price of an article of consumption which, to the mass of the English people, has now become not so much a luxury as an actual staple of life. England is far in advance of all the countries of the world in her use of sugar, consuming, for every head of her population, 68 lb. a year, while France comes next with an average of only 17 lb.

It is an immense advantage for Barbados that labour is abundant, living extremely cheap, and that the construction of the Panama Canal makes an outlet for the unemployed. It is to be wished, however, that she did not carry all her eggs in one basket.

Bridgetown, prettily nestled among trees, has neither sordidness nor dirt to be ashamed of. The population is 19,000; the public buildings, not yet quite finished, are of an ornamental as well as useful character; the Barracks are prettily situated in an open park, where polo goes on under all varieties of climate; the sea drive to Hastings is a charming and favourite resort about sunset; and the briskness of the building trade, in houses both of a public and private nature, indicates that some one is thriving, even if sugar is cheap. Government House, the centre of a graceful and abundant hospitality, is well situated on an eminence which commands both the town and the sea. What the interior lacks is trees, what the seaboard wants is harbours. There are no snakes (not that any one misses them), and almost the only venomous thing is the centipede. Musquitoes, to be sure, are plentiful; but they are not so intrusive in trumpeting their presence as ours in Europe are, and a weak solution of carbolic acid rubbed on the face and neck usually keeps them at bay.

One thing more I must mention before proceeding to other matters. Barbados, exemplary, as I hope soon to show, in other things, has been particularly so in the erec-



Public Buildings, Bridgetown.

tion of a commodious, first-class hotel. To be sure it is neither furnished nor opened, for the spirited promoter of it is just dead, and some delay was inevitable. But it is built, and on an admirable site, and this citizen of our small but wide-awake island has started an enterprise which a neighbouring island took in hand some years ago, wretchedly bungled, and has not had courage to attempt again.

Florida, except to the sportsman, soon becomes monotonous. Bermuda and the Bahamas are not said to be violently attractive, and perhaps one winter there might be enough for most people. There are travelling folk enough in the United States alone to fill to overflowing all the hotels in Barbados, Trinidad, Jamaica, and St. Lucia that are likely to be built for some time to come. Barbados has built the first. If money is soon found for furnishing and starting it, it will take a man very clever in blundering to fail to make it a success. The plain truth is, that tourists, who do not happen to have private introductions in the West Indies, are at present debarred from visiting them by lack of sufficient or suitable hotel accommodation. Let this be supplied, promptly and suitably, and if properly and liberally managed, and thoroughly advertised, hotels must answer.

In two very important matters Barbados,

if not ahead of the other islands, assuredly is not behind them. I mean in her admirable system of education, and in her public recognition of the Christian faith. With one gap, of which I will speak presently, and which can be bridged over at any moment (the sooner the better), the Education scheme is complete. It is the outcome of the Education Act of 1878, resulting from a commission appointed, in 1875, to report upon the subject, and out of an annual revenue of £140,000, it expends the creditable sum of £15,000 a year. An Education Board, of which the experienced and energetic Bishop of Barbados is chairman, carries out the provisions of the Act, submits an annual Educational Budget, superintends all the schools under its authority, and every year reports to the Governor. There are three sets of schools—primary, second grade, and first grade. The primary schools, which are carried on by the various religious bodies, with full religious instruction and a conscience clause, do a useful but probably not complete work. In Barbados, as in England, many little fish escape the net, and at present any compulsory methods deserving the name would be premature and hurtful.

There are at present 68 infant schools, and 78 primary schools—either boys, girls, or mixed—under the care of the Anglican Church. They all receive grants in aid. A Moravian school I visited with the Bishop was a cheerful and encouraging sight. Nearly all the children were coloured. Here I enjoyed the unique experience of proposing to ask for a half-holiday, and finding my

proposal so coldly received that I withdrew it. Perhaps it would have only been appropriated for domestic use; and they knew it.

The second grade schools are four in number. There is an admirable (day) first grade school for girls, called Queen's College. The two primary schools are Harrison College, in Bridgetown; and Lodge School, which is just above the sea at a little distance in the country. Boarders here are charged about £51 a year including fees. The curriculum includes English, French, classics, mathematics, elements of one of the sciences, and, where practicable, German. The Government subsidises these schools wisely and liberally by a comprehensive scheme of exhibitions culminating in a Barbados scholarship lasting four years, and to be competed for annually, of the value of £175 a year, to be tenable either at Oxford or Cambridge, the examination being conducted by examination papers sent out from England. There is a Government Inspector of Schools and

(To be continued.)

an Assistant Inspector, and power is given under the Act to establish industrial schools. There is, however, one serious gap in this otherwise admirable scheme. At present there are no training institutions for masters or mistresses. This appears to me absolutely indispensable, if much of the money so liberally dispensed is not to be thrown away. Jamaica, as I have reason for knowing, has just established them.

Codrington College is an important institution, founded on a bequest of Colonel Codrington at the beginning of the last century, and endowed with two valuable sugar estates. It is at present conducted for students in arts and theology, and is affiliated to the University of Durham. The Government have established in connection with the college four island scholarships of the annual value of £30; and it is the *alma mater* of the island. The buildings are handsome and commodious, the situation healthy, and the principal thoroughly competent. The college is doing well.

ON THE EARLY CLOSING OF SHOPS.

By SIR JOHN LUBBOCK, BART., M.P.

WHEN I was first invited to become a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons, I asked myself what I should do if I got into Parliament, and there were four subjects especially to which it seemed to me that I might devote myself with advantage. One was to advocate the teaching of science in schools; the second to take some steps for the better protection of ancient national monuments; the third to obtain if possible a few national holidays, especially one in the fine summer months; and the last, not least, to shorten the intolerably long hours of labour in shops. It appeared very inconsistent that a girl in a factory or workshop should be forbidden to work more than 54 hours in the week, while the hours of her sister in a shop often ranged as high as 80 to 85.

My first idea was to extend certain of the provisions of the Factory Acts to shops, and I introduced a Bill for that purpose into the House of Commons in the year 1873. I was, however, opposed; my Bill was what is technically known as blocked, and I found I could hope for very little support. After trying in vain for two or three years I thought it better to let the subject rest for a

while; but in 1883 I again took it up. In the meanwhile the Shop Hours League had been established, and under its energetic President, Mr. Sutherst, did much to educate and stimulate public opinion. We should have wished to introduce a Bill affecting the hours of labour of women as well as of young persons. We found, however, that the advocates of women's rights would feel themselves bound to object. They feared it would tend to throw women out of employment. We did not share this apprehension. If the application of the limitation to women under 18 would not have this effect, why should it do so when extended to women over 18? However, in legislation one must consider what is practical, and we thought that a great step would be gained if we could at any rate protect growing boys and girls, to whom, of course, the long hours are especially injurious.

In this we were happily successful. The Shop Hours Bill, which limits the labour of young persons under 18 to 74 hours in the week, passed through Parliament last year and is now the law of the land.

There is, however, a very strong feeling in the shop-keeping community that while

this is a step in the right direction, further legislation is desirable.

As regards the length of the hours it is not necessary to rest our case on any private inquiries. The Factory Acts Commission which sat in 1875 and 1876 under Sir James Fergusson, reported that "the hours of labour of shop assistants throughout the country in a great many cases range as high as 84 or 85 in the week. The Committee of the House of Commons which sat on our Bill last summer, and which took a great deal of evidence, stated the facts even more broadly.

Their report is not long, so I will give it in full :—

(1.) "As the evidence submitted to your Committee has extended to considerable length, they have thought it desirable to draw attention to the leading points of the statements made by the witnesses. Of the witnesses examined, 12 were assistants called to prove the length of hours; 21 have spoken on behalf of various associations in different parts of the country; 21 were representative traders called by the supporters of the Bill; five were inspectors of factories; 14 were traders called by different members of the Committee; and two were medical men.

(2.) "Your Committee are agreed that the practice of keeping open shops until a late hour of the evening prevails extensively; that while shops used by the wealthier classes generally close at a comparatively early hour, in neighbourhoods where the shops are frequented by the working classes they are kept open until very late, especially on Saturday. It follows that in such cases all the persons employed, including young persons, must be kept on their feet for a great many hours, and that where shops are crowded and ill-ventilated such prolonged hours must be exhausting and often injurious to health, especially in the case of girls.

(3.) "Your Committee have had evidence that in wholesale warehouses the packing and entering clerks are often detained till very late at night, especially at the busy seasons. The apartments in which the work is carried on, in the departments mentioned, are often underground, and even in the daytime lighted by gas. In those departments, too, apprentices and other young men are commonly employed, and work of this description, if so prolonged, your Committee can readily believe to be exhausting and injurious.

(4.) "Again your Committee find, that in shops to which work-rooms are attached, young persons, who could not be employed in the latter beyond the statutory hours of the Factory and Workshop Act, are called upon to serve after their tasks in the work-rooms have been finished. Your Committee have introduced into the Bill a provision designed to put an end to this practice.

(5.) "It appears to be very common for the employed, and perhaps especially the apprentices and young persons, to be detained for some time after the shops have been closed to customers, to clear up, put away the goods, and to pack up articles purchased; and in many cases these young persons have to come earlier in the morning than the others to prepare the shops for the day's work.

(6.) "The great majority of witnesses expressed their opinion that though voluntary action had effected much improvement, little could be expected

from it in the poorer neighbourhoods, and that nothing short of legislation would be effective.

(7.) "Under these circumstances it is not surprising that strong testimony has been given in support of the Bill referred to your Committee.

(8.) "A widespread desire has been expressed by grown-up persons employed in shops, that in some way their labours also may be limited by law; and your Committee believe that employers are not indisposed as a rule to such limitation, provided that it takes the form of general early closing of shops.

(9.) "Your Committee have evidence that, in many localities, the desire of the great majority of shopkeepers to close early has been frustrated by the dissent of some few individuals, while in many cases the large establishments are induced to keep their doors open longer than they otherwise would do, for fear of their customers being diverted to smaller shops in the same trade.

(10.) "Your Committee did not consider themselves empowered to consider any measure for the compulsory closing of shops; but they did not decline to receive such evidence, because it bears directly upon the question of the practicability and usefulness of the proposal to limit the hours of service of young persons in shops.

(11.) "The witnesses who were in favour of a compulsory closing generally expressed a willingness to accept the Bill as a step in the right direction, and because it might tend to shorten the hours of service of the employed, and to promote the earlier closing of shops.

(12.) "There was a concurrence of opinion that if any limitation were placed upon the hours of employment of young persons, or upon those during which shops may be kept open, there must be some relaxation upon certain days, as on Saturday, and the eves of holidays. Suggestions were made by many witnesses that the limitation in the former case should be rather upon the total number of hours of employment in the week, than on those in each day, and your committee have modified the Bill in this sense.

(13.) "It appears, moreover, from the evidence taken before your Committee, as well as by that taken before the Factory and Workshops Act Commission of 1876, that a large majority of the inspectors of factories are in favour of some legislative regulation of the hours of labour in shops; Mr. Taylor, inspector in the North-West Lancashire Division, expressed his belief that they are now almost unanimously of this opinion.

(14.) "The Bill contains no provision for Government inspection, and though no doubt, under the circumstances, there may be some evasion, still your Committee believe that it would have a considerable effect.

(15.) "The Bill exempts from its operation licensed public-houses and refreshment-houses of all kinds. It appears to the Committee that the employment of young persons in such places must be at least as fatiguing, and, in many respects, as injurious as in shops; but the Bill, as referred to your Committee, did not extend to them, and your Committee have not therefore taken evidence on the subject.

(16.) "In conclusion, your Committee being satisfied that the hours of shop assistants range in many places as high as from eighty-four to eighty-five per week, being convinced that such long hours must be generally injurious, and often ruinous to health, and that the same amount of business might be compressed into a shorter space of time, recommend this Bill to the favourable consideration of the House."

I may add that, although one member of the Committee, Sir James Fergusson, felt himself unable to approve the remedy suggested in our Bill, so far as the facts are concerned the Committee were unanimous.

In factories the hours of labour are limited to 54, and consequently it follows from the above statement that shopmen, and—what is much worse—the shopwomen too, are actually in a great many cases at the present moment working for no less than thirty hours per week more than factory hands. Moreover, in a vast number of cases, the short and irregular time allowed for meals, the closeness of the atmosphere, and the absence of seats, render the labour even more severe. The seats, in fact, are on the wrong side of the counter. It is obvious that, as the House of Commons Committee justly state, “such prolonged labour must be exhausting and ruinous to health, especially in the case of girls.” The medical testimony taken before the House of Commons Committee showed, as indeed is almost self-evident, that girls so overworked could not marry with any prospect of bearing healthy children. The question is therefore one of vital importance as affecting the physical condition of the future race. It is scarcely, if at all, less important from a moral and intellectual point of view.

Let me give one or two cases out of many hundreds collected by the Shop Hours League, and published by Mr. Sutherst in “Death and Disease behind the Counter.”

Louisa B—, aged 19, drapery, four and a half years at Battersea, said—

“My hours are from 8.30 A.M. to 9.30 P.M., and on Saturdays until 12 P.M. As to meals, we are supposed to eat our food as quickly as possible, and then return to the shop. I was in perfect health when I entered the business, now I often feel ready to sink down for want of fresh air and rest. Before the end of the day, and especially on a Saturday, I am exceedingly weary and depressed, and have difficulty in standing until the clock strikes 12. I am quite unfit to attend a place of worship on Sunday morning.”

E. M.—in a shop in Camberwell—says—

“Went into business between fifteen and sixteen years of age. The average hours are from 8 and 8.30 A.M. to 9.30 and 10 P.M., and from 11.30 to 12 P.M. on Saturdays. In my present situation we have no stated time for meals. We eat as quickly as possible, and then hurry back to the shop. Never before I went into business did I know what illness was; but since have scarcely known what it is to be free from pain. I have overflowing of blood to the head, which causes me to swoon after standing a long time. I scarcely know what it is to stand with ease for the violent pain in my feet and legs. My feelings at the end of the day are so dreadfully low and weak that I scarcely have the strength to undress. I never feel thoroughly rested when I have to get up.”

Another girl, in a shop at Deptford, said—

“I begin at 8 A.M. and leave at 10 P.M., Saturdays 8 A.M. to 12 P.M. We have from 15 to 20 minutes allowed for each meal. We are very often called forward from our meals to the shop to attend to customers. We leave our meals half consumed, and then the food is either cold or we get no more. When apprenticed to the drapery my health was good; but it is gradually failing, and the doctor says I am in consumption. I am, therefore, obliged to leave at the end of the month. I have never been able to go for a walk except on a Sunday, as no respectable girl cares to go out between 10 and 11 at night. After the fatigues and worry of the week I am so worn out that my only thought is to rest on a Sunday; but it goes too quickly, and the other days drag on slowly.”

These are but a few typical cases out of thousands.

Just let us consider what 14 hours of work means? We cannot reckon less than eight for sleep, which only leaves two for dressing and undressing, for supper, and for going to and from the shop. This absorbs the whole 24 hours, and not a moment is left for amusement or self-improvement, for fresh air or family life, for any of those occupations which cheer, brighten, and ennoble life—in fact, we literally say that not only have shop assistants not a moment to themselves, but they are so hard worked that at the end of the week they are fit to drop with fatigue. The whole country would gain if shop assistants had greater opportunities of intellectual, moral, and spiritual improvement. Moreover, the cruel effect of the long hours is considerably increased by the fact that the unfortunate assistants have to stand the whole time. This long standing is a terrible evil. How injurious standing is we may clearly see from the fact that though customers remain in a shop for so comparatively short a time they are invariably accommodated with seats. Considering, however, the relative need of rest as between the assistants and their customers, it must be admitted that the seats are on the wrong side of the counter.

Happily, I may say this is no question between shopkeepers and their assistants. There is no such difference. I believe the shopkeepers are almost as anxious to close as the assistants themselves. Perhaps, then, it may be said, why not leave the matter in their hands? Because in almost every case the arrangements for early closing have been rendered nugatory by the action of some very small minority among the shopkeepers. Over and over again the shopkeepers in a given district have been anxious to close, and have all agreed to do so with, perhaps, a single exception. But

that single exception is fatal. One after another the rest gradually open again, the whole thing breaks down, and thus a small minority tyrannise over the rest. It seems clear that nothing but legislation can remedy the evil. Voluntary action has been tried and failed over and over again; and the almost unanimous opinion of the witnesses examined before the House of Commons Committee was that it was hopeless to expect any shortening of the hours in that way.

Such then is the present position of affairs, and, as I have said, the general feeling of the shopkeeping community is in favour of legislation. Even as long ago as 1873 the shopkeepers who came to me, with reference to the Bill I then proposed, expressed themselves in favour of a general compulsory closing. I then thought this was impossible. Only by degrees have I become convinced how deep and general this feeling is.

This was strikingly demonstrated last summer. When there seemed some probability that our Bill might become law, our opponents believing that the shopkeepers generally would pronounce against it, induced the Lord Mayor to summon a great representative meeting of traders at the Mansion House. We had nothing to do with the invitations. They were issued by opponents of our Bill, who, however, courteously invited me to attend. Some 700 or 800 traders were present. I believe there was not a single assistant present; they were all shopkeepers. It was a thoroughly representative meeting. The gentlemen who called the meeting proposed a resolution condemning our Bill; but the meeting, to their great surprise, was overwhelmingly in its favour. Eventually the hostile resolution in deference to the strong feeling of the meeting was withdrawn, and one proposed by Mr. Stapley, and seconded by Mr. Crisp, was adopted by more than ten to one, as follows: "That, while heartily accepting Sir John Lubbock's Bill" (which has now become law), "which would undoubtedly confer a great benefit on young persons engaged in shops, this meeting earnestly prays Parliament to go further, and to add a clause enacting a compulsory general closing at eight o'clock on five days of the week, and at ten on Saturdays; a measure which would confer an inestimable benefit on the whole shopkeeping community, and relieve them from the intolerably long hours from which they now suffer." This resolution ran like wildfire round London. Meetings were held at once in Holloway, Paddington, Shoreditch, Kensington, Camden Town,

and elsewhere, in fact, all round London, as well as in the provinces, at which the same resolution was enthusiastically adopted. It sent a ray of light and hope into thousands of homes. At Liverpool a circular has been sent round to the shops asking whether they were in favour of compulsory closing or not. Two thousand answers were received, of which 1,770 were favourable, a few neutral, and less than 200 against. The evidence given before the House of Commons Committee showed that the feeling in London was equally strong. Mr. Jones told us that in the Holloway district they had canvassed 400 tradesmen, of whom 95 per cent. were in favour. Mr. Noel, who had inquired among his neighbours in Shoreditch, found them even more unanimous. Mr. Parker and Mr. Pomeroy gave similar evidence as regards Bermondsey. Witnesses from the provinces stated that the same view prevailed in Edinburgh, Dublin, Manchester, Newcastle, and elsewhere. I may say then that this is the shopkeepers' own Bill. I have introduced it at their request, and by their help I hope to carry it. I dwell on this point because it is so important to realise that this is no question of class against class; of shop assistants against shopkeepers. On the contrary, the shopkeepers themselves, to their honour be it said, are themselves foremost in wishing to benefit their assistants by shortening the hours, and they ask Parliament to enable them to do so.

The Bill which, at their request, I introduced in the autumn session, and which I shall bring forward as soon as Parliament meets in February, proposes to enact that every shop should shut at eight o'clock for five nights in the week and ten on the sixth, excepting public-houses and places of refreshment, tobacconists and newsvendors. The hour is also to be extended to ten P.M. on any day preceding a public or bank holiday. It is also provided that if in any particular district any particular trade desires to obtain an extension of the time they are allowed to keep open under the ordinary application of the Act, two-thirds can make application to the local authority to obtain permission to remain open. The same clause provides that if in any district a particular trade wishes to grant a half-holiday two-thirds may make application to the local authority, who can give an order which would make the half-holiday compulsory for the whole trade. The thirteenth clause raises the penalty for Sunday trading to £1.

It will be observed that on one important point we have departed from the recommen-

duction of the Committee. They suggested that the Act should leave to local authorities the power of fixing an hour, and for this there is, at first sight, much to be said. The Shop Hours League, however, and, indeed, the shopkeepers generally, as far as I have been able to ascertain their opinion, entirely oppose this suggestion; they insist that the closing must be general. For instance, if the shops were shut at eight in Manchester, but not elsewhere, the result would be that the late business would be transferred to the shops immediately beyond the borough limits, and thus a great injustice might be done.

What, then, are the objections? Our opponents raise two difficulties—firstly, that it would be an undue interference with trade; and, secondly, that it would not give artisans and their wives sufficient time for shopping.

As regards the first point, I have shown that the Bill is introduced at the instance of the traders themselves. That it only gives effect to the wishes of the majority. The question is, whether a selfish minority shall rule the majority, or whether the majority shall rule the minority. Moreover, we already regulate the hours of shops for the sale of beer and spirits, so that the Bill introduces no new principle.

As regards the second objection, I may observe that Mr. Thomas Burt, than whom no one knows better the views of the working classes, has most kindly assisted me in this matter, and his name is on the back of our Bill. Mr. Broadhurst was a member of the House of Commons Committee, and gave the most cordial support. I have consulted other leaders of the working classes, and they none of them see any difficulty. Indeed it would be extraordinary if working men, who have secured much shorter hours for themselves, really wished shopmen and

shopwomen to go on slaving for fourteen hours a day.

One objection which was urged against the old Factory Acts cannot be brought against the Bill. It has no bearing on foreign competition. Under it all would be treated alike. The shops would do just as much business. There would not be a pound of tea or a yard of stuff sold less than now. Some few shopkeepers have objected because they say they do their best business after eight. Yes, and they would under the Bill do it before eight. That is the only difference and the great advantage. What is now done between eight and ten would be done between six and eight. The last two hours, moreover, are the most trying. After the gas is lit the air becomes hottest, driest, foulest, and most impure.

This then is the state of the question. The witnesses examined before the House of Commons Committee were all but unanimously of opinion that voluntary action can not remedy the evil—which, indeed, some thought was growing worse. Without legislation there is little hope of shorter hours—the lives of shopmen and shopwomen will still be the same weary monotony of shop and bed, a life of drudgery and an early grave. If this Bill passes, on the contrary, they have a hope of brighter and happier days, of stronger health and longer lives; in winter of leisure hours for study and amusement, happy evenings at home before their own fire with their family and friends; and in the longer days of pleasant walks in the sweet summer evenings. When this Bill is once passed every one will wonder it was not enacted before. No one can say that it would in any way injure trade, while it would brighten and prolong the lives of thousands of our countrymen and countrywomen.

NEW YEAR IN THE COLONIES.

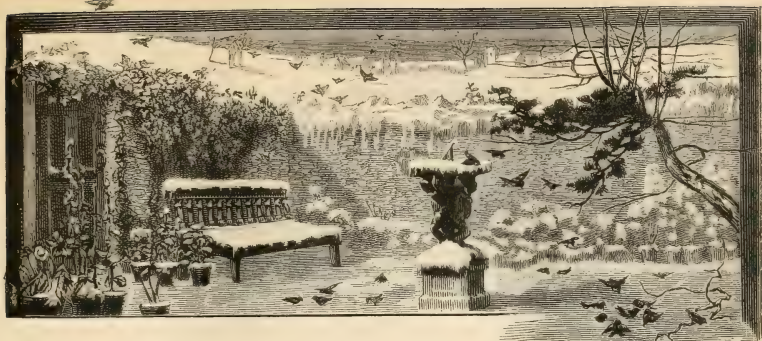
BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

A CROSS the great dividing seas
We stretch a kindly hand,
To where Canadian rivers freeze
In the wild Western land:

O'er Afric's deathly deserts wide,
To shores of far Japan,
Where scarce a living soul dares bide,
Except an Englishman:

Hid in Australian sheep-farms lone,
And South Sea Islands strange,
Or under India's torrid zone,
We find them, without change:

The same warm, honest British heart,
The same strong British hand,
And New Year's blessings, though apart,
Ring round from land to land.



THE MONTH THAT LOOKS

TWO WAYS.

By PHIL ROBINSON,

AUTHOR OF "IN MY INDIAN GARDEN," ETC.



WITH a face looking either way, January, the middle month of winter, holds Autumn with one hand and Spring with the other; a queer, empty sort of month, when Nature seems

to let things alone, and, between the balanced attractions of either season, to stand, in cold neutrality, aloof. The impatient Spring may hazard a week of untimely warmth, and the sparrow, ever ready to be tempted, turns him, uxorious, to domestic joys. But Winter jealously supervenes, and the sun hangs crimson in a frozen sky, and the sparrows, too cold to care for appearances, sit ruffled up on contradicting water-pipes, scandalously apart, and dreadfully reccriminate in chirps. One week the crocus, generous bulb! with a heart all too large for waiting, pierces the soft earth with its green needle-point of leaf. With the next comes Jack Frost, and alas! for the crocus. But January looks on and watches, and does not interfere. It is the month that waits upon the others, the narrow isthmus of two seasons. Like the rhododendron of the Himalayas, it clings on its bough-tips to the ruddy memories of a summer of flowers that is past, but about its roots gather, in rustling heaps, the leaves where the pheasants

shall nestle in the chilly days that are coming; or, conversely like our own brave English holly, that holds out scarlet signals of a passing winter, and yet, remembering what nest it holds, keeps its leaves green and close for the nightingale of coming summer.

Ay, the month that looks two ways!—one face of it sad with Regret, the other glad with Resolve. A resting time, the "breathing hill" of the year of pilgrims.

I have called it an empty month, but it is only so in the seeming. Underground all the roots are resting; even the grass, which one would think might be glad of something to do, does not grow; it does not even take care of itself, is untidy and browned; under the hedges and in odd corners it revels in a mediæval, Merovingian raggedness of growth. The trees and bushes stand about in a brown study, and the nests in them—"What more dreary cold, than a forsaken bird's nest filled with snow?"—are all to let, and dilapidated. Under the hedges the field-mouse and hedge-sparrow go nervous and uncomfortable, for the thawing twigs drip upon them, and the leaves rustle under their feet. In the grey sky the rooks are blown about, uncertain of their objects, for the grubs are so deep under the soil that it seems hardly worth the birds' while to settle on the bare fields; the larks, gathered into companies, drift in aimless fashion from farm to farm; but the robin, with his sun-ripened breast, sits above you on the medlar-tree, cheerily whistling the New Year in, and, if you care to listen, there seems a blither lilt in his voice than when, a

week ago, he sang the old year, "with all its cares, to rest."

A neighbour's ivy overhangs part of my garden-wall, making a rare shelter against inclement skies for such of the winged insect folk as have overlived the year—a large-eyed, melancholy fly, its body ringed with yellow and brown, transparent with emptiness, a thing of sad lemurine demeanour and dreamily torpid; a tortoise-shell butterfly, with wings as tattered as any Crimean colours, but holding here and there traces of its sumptuous autumnal glories; a blue-bottle infirm and old, hoary with anxieties, that moves wearily under the burden of its days.

And not insect folk alone. The possessive sparrow does not scorn the thick, close foliage of evergreen, for often as I pass down the garden-path I hear little sleepy noises thrown out from under the eaves of the ivy. Protests perhaps at my approach; or perhaps only conciliatory, apologetic intimations of presence, as deprecating dispossession or disturbance. A wonderfully snug retreat it makes too, this solid overflow of my neighbour's green-stuff; dry, even dusty, in the wettest of times; weather-proof against all the watering-pots of all the rain-compellers—of Odin the merciless drencher, Zeus Ombrios or Pluvial Jove, or Indra Parjanya, he who floods the enormous Ganges, drowning even the crocodiles where they swim, and rolls the Indus, Father of Waters, swollen with the pride of its fivefold tribute from the north, imperious to the sea.

And the snails are here too, all in a bunch, pretending to be only knobs on the wall, and living, as bears do, upon themselves.

Now I have always held the snail in respect as a model to travellers. He is your true "old campaigner." You can never cut him off from his base, for he takes his base along with him. The objective point of the small strategist is always, more or less, on his back. He has no lines of communication to be harassed and to be kept open when the enemy is hovering round; runs no risk of being caught straggling, or without his baggage, belated, or at the mercy of sudden storms. He marches with his zereba ready made for any sudden Arab on-rush, his laager for Zulu surprises. In Afghanistan you shall always find his sungum with him, in Burma his stockade. Indeed, the forethought of this compendious little beast, with its industrious ambitions, is very enjoyable, I think. So too is its integrity. Other nomads and gypsies are sudden in their flittings, precipitate, evasive, and spectral. Their apparitions and

evanishments are jerky, zigzag, bothering. You never, so to speak, get nearer them than the ashes of their last night's camp-fire. It is quite different with the snail. He proceeds, by preference, in a right line, and, unless circumstances beyond his control should compel obliquity, he visibly apologises for digression by writing all along his path, "This is the way I have gone." So conscientious is he that he cannot even bear the suspicion of dodging, but puts you up all the way a continuous sign-post, so that you cannot miss him: he unwinds a bobbin as he goes to his Bower: sprinkles crumbs on the path to his cave. Follow up his directions and you will come upon the little pilgrim, either upon the road or resting in his tracks. Unless, of course, some hungry thrush or blackbird has anticipated you. But the snail seems to be growing, whorl by whorl, under my pen. So enough here to say that, in spite of the contemptuous attitude of rural tradition towards it, I find a good deal to like in this sober-sided person. And why should folklore always deride it?

"Snail, snail, put out your horn,
Father and mother are dead,
Brother and sister are in the back yard,
Begging for barley bread."

In every language in Europe there are rhymed instructions for beating snails "black and blue," and apostrophising them as friendless orphans. It is very queer. However, here in my garden they are safe enough for the present. The sparrows do not understand them, and as for the blue-bottle it is so much occupied in pitying itself it has but little thought for its neighbours.

Has it ever occurred to you what an amazing experience this hibernation must be to a blue-bottle? Is it not, as far as the fly is concerned, *the end of the world*, itself surviving? Where has the sun gone from out of the sky? Where too the green earth, beautiful with flowers, and the grace of leafy trees? Where all the insect peoples, the nations of winged folk? This blue-bottle has actually outlived its year. It has seen "the greater light" founder in the snow-storm, fields and forests shrivel up in catastrophic frost, the air desolate of its myriads by reason of bitter cold. And it is left alone. Not another blue-bottle, so far as it knows, in all the universe! Alone, in a miserable immortality, of decrepitude, solitariness, and—who knows?—infinite chilblains. On the night that the world was overwhelmed in Arctic horrors, it happened to be sleeping in a key-hole, and so in the general overthrow of the

firmament was overlooked by the destroyer as he went, and here it is, as wretched as any of those Struldbruggs that Gulliver saw in Luggnagg.

Do you remember them? Gulliver imagined them to himself as the happiest of creatures, the sages of the cities, encyclopædias incarnate, placed by their vast age and the assurance of perpetuity beyond every sentiment of uncharitableness, universally revered for their immeasurable wisdom and beloved for their mild benevolence. And then the wretchedness of the reality! Toothless, deaf, blind, decayed, without the sense of taste, imbecile, dead in the eye of the law, unable from the changes of language during successive centuries to converse with their kind, even if their addled minds and complete loss of memory had permitted them to articulate, they crawled about in the enclosures in which they were kept, objects of public odium and contempt. Will it come to this with the January blue-bottle? When the Spring flies are abroad in their glossy, vigorous youth, will it be a Struldbrugg to them? See how infirm it is, how unlike its volatile and nimble kind! When it creeps out to sit and warm itself in the patch of winter sunshine on the brick-wall, you may push it with your finger, and it will not take alarm. It may fall off in helpless protest on to the bench below, and you can pick it up and put it back on to the brick it fell off. What is the meaning of this apathy? Perhaps it is this—that the thing has been stunned with the stones that misfortune has flung at it. Affliction has emptied its wallet at it; the phials of disaster are dry. So have poets and moralists described men and women without number, benumbed and deadened by the repeated blows of grief and careless in the lethargy of despair. Once on a time when the hammer fell, sparks flew out in hot quick remonstrance. But the hearts of them are chilled dead, blackened, and hard.

It is true the thing is only an old, very old, blue-bottle, but what of that? Lower your own standards to its small dimensions, and in its way it is as authentic as those Elder Gods whom Keats saw lying outstretched in the valleys of defeat. Has it not survived the shock of the meeting years? and with the slender thread of its own life bridged across from the past to the future? You can blow the fly away with a breath, and yet it has had experience of all the solemn epic of a year, sojourned with the Frost-giants in Jotunheim and survived. It has seen Ragnarok, the last twilight, and is still alive.

In its own tiny way, then, it is very reverend, this grey atom that has lasted out its epoch. Has it not presumptuously trespassed upon a geological age to which it does not belong? It is a prehistoric relic, an old-world beast that has lingered into the present; the Her-mogene of flies; the Nestor of blue-bottles. So a happy new year to you, Master Struldbrugg, and if that gout which (if I am not mistaken) makes your little padded feet so lumpy does not go to your heart, you may live after all—who knows?—to see the sun shine on the crocuses yet, and when the old machinery inside you suddenly falls to pieces, at every point simultaneously, like Wendell Holmes' *Wonderful One-hoss Shay*, I hope your inconsiderable fragments may rest, as those of a patriarch should do, in peace.

But we have the lark with us, and the robin, and the wren, delightful birds all three, and our own into the bargain. I am no nightingale enthusiast. Just as the Empress of Austria comes over for the hunting, so the diva of the feathered choir comes over for our May and June. It is too hot in Egypt and Palestine; the food she prefers is scarce there. So she comes to England to take advantage of our cool, deep-shaded hollies for her nesting, and of our exquisite English summer. As soon as her brood is on the wing she flies away with them back to the East and the South, and—who can tell?—perhaps she tells them as she goes how perfidious Albion is, this England of ours which is always so glad to see her, always so hospitable, and gives her of its best. Of course I like to listen to the nightingale. This bird is the crowning glory of an English spring, a delightful parable and poem. Indeed, I even go so far as to think it almost solemn that two little brown birds should have such a charge committed to them as the hatching and rearing of a whole nestful of nightingales, and I delight in the dignity of the father which prompts him to cease his singing, as conscious of great responsibilities, as soon as the eggs are pipped. To lighten as it were the anxious hours of his brooding mate, he sits close by flooding the woodland with overflow of song.

"Divine melodious truth,
Philosophic numbers smooth,
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries."

It is a delightful bird, this sweet sequestered nightingale, whether at rest, cloistered "among cool and bunched leaves," or busy singing its heart out to the listening night. And yet, and yet, and yet—it only

comes after all to see our English daffodils blow, and goes when the petals of the roses are falling. So I miss it less, this dainty migrant, following the swallow summer from clime to clime, than I should do, I think,

"The pious bird with scarlet breast,
Our little English Robin."

Every one delights in it as a winter bird. For myself I like it best in its pious aspect, the bird that "with leaves and flowers doth cover the friendless bodies of unburied men," or else—the ever-enchancing intrigue of it—as the lover of "Jenny" Wren. And the wren, what a bewitching little morsel it looks, when in the leafless publicity of winter it hops about in the empty bushes or perches itself, wee dwarf in feathers, on the wall. Yet within its small person, so tradition alleges, it holds necromantic potentialities of a very serious kind, and on one occasion at least was the abiding-place of Beelzebub himself. Poor little mite! you do not look like it, skipping in and out my old pea-sticks, and suddenly stopping in your elfin antics to trill a roundelay.

And the robin up in the medlar-tree listens. He is lord of the garden croft; but he turns his shapely head—how the round black eye glistens—and waits till the wren has finished, and then gives a stave of his own. What a gentleman he is, this robin of ours, always elegant, always self-possessed. You can never see without respecting him. His every gesture is in good taste, and musicians say his song is singularly correct. Most punctilious as to his honour, he is ready to draw his sword at the first hint of insult, and when with his equals, his hand is perpetually clapped to his side, a veritable little fire-eater among his peers, attacking with the light-hearted dash, and pursuing with the gallant recklessness of a Cavalier. And yet, when the etiquette of robinhood is not infringed, he is a delightfully well-bred little person, coming into your presence with an unassuming, self-respectful independence that is very engaging, and leaving, when he has said what he has to say, with the same ease of bearing, the same unaffected demeanour.

How different is our sparrow! Thoroughly British too, but not of the Elizabethan gallant or the Royalist type. For the sparrow is a bullet-headed, opinionated, self-assertive Briton of the "average" kind, and dreadfully modern; given, too, to grumbling in all weathers, though living (the London citizen of his kind) in the foremost city of the world, a freeman of it, and availing himself, with an

extraordinary judgment, of all contemporary privileges. The telegraph-poles and wires might have been put up for his convenience, the vast domes of our railway stations erected to suit his tastes, the omnibuses and trams run for his special convenience in locomotion, for he roosts on our wires, nests in the vaulted roofs of our stations, travels on all public conveyances. And this assumption of his rights has endeared the small brown bird—deplorably grubby though he often is—to the British public. He is, indeed, a British institution, and a supporter of the British arms too—not in the way that the lion and unicorn may be, but in this, that he follows our armies into every field. Wherever our conquering camps are pitched, there the sparrow takes possession of foreign soil. He flies with our battalions, as the eagles did with the Legions, and perched on our flag-staffs, chirps his satisfaction in a full-fed, matter-of-fact sort of way that is strongly national. Zululand now knows him, and he is familiar in the Sudan; he is at home among the mulberries in the Candahar bazaar and out on the peach-dotted plains before Cabul. Nor is it only the commissariat waggons of war that he follows, for he goes abroad, a symbol of civilisation and the commercial conquests of peace. Following "the course of Empire westward," the British sparrow has invaded America. Five years ago it had spread as far as Omaha, on the skirt of the great prairies, and, sailing round the Horn in our merchant vessels, had occupied San Francisco on the Pacific, and spread eastward to Salt Lake City. I looked out for it in my travels, and made notes of it, and I found then that there was a stripe some thousand miles wide, running north and south, which the sparrow had not crossed. But by this time he is probably over it, pecking his food in Cheyenne, and travelling by the Union Pacific across the levels of the Platte. An excellent little fowl, and a hardy, in his own way genial, and in every way strongly British. Albeit Luther hated sparrows. The "Hebrews," said he, "called them tshirp, and they should be killed wherever found."

Perhaps: but not here in England. In the month of January, with his brave little feet planted so firmly in the crust of snow, his plucky little head ruffled by the keen snow-wind, the chirp still so full of heart, he is a lovable bird. He is waiting for his small dues of crumb; let him have them. By-and-by the frost will be gone, and the wind blow warm and sweet through the bee-be-

leaguered limes, and there will be birds in every bough.

For January looks forward to the month of daffodils and green-tipped hedgerows.

And looking backwards, my memory flies to those days in India, where the New Year finds us living under a blue sky, with the gardens at their brightest, and in the morning just that touch of sharpness which tempts us northern folk out into the air, and which shrivels up our Aryan brother, making his limbs shiver under the manyfolded blanket in which he creeps about his duties, and his teeth chatter as he sits by the stream, plying his neem-twig tooth-brush with "a face on him," as the Americans say, like the ragged edge of despair. And from the road beyond the wall, where some villager has taken out her pots and pans to the travelling medicine-man, the tink-a-tink-tink on the metal reaches my ear.

And suddenly there grows up before the mind the peepul-shaded walls of a many-

templed city in the East, and all up and down the street, screened from the sun, January though it be, sit the artificers in brass plying hammer and chisel, engraving the glittering lotahs with processionary monkeys, peacocks, and fiercely whiskered tigers. And the chink-chink-chink of the engraving needles upon the sharply-resonant metal fills the air for a mile round with a myriad cicada-points of sound that thrill on the ear with a rhythmic pulsation—a perpetual cadence of little insect-notes, as unlike the voice of serious human tone as well can be. Just such sounds do the belated travellers in fairy-books hear when they find themselves on the hillocks where the gnomes have their smithies, and the fairies' anvils ring to the strokes of elfin hammers.

Looking back! What a far-off city it seems that Benares which I know so well, lying to-day—New Year's Day—steeped in clear sunlight, and the water-carrier crying down the street, selling to thirsty folk as he goes.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

By F. H. UNDERWOOD.

WHITTIER, the New England poet, born December 17th, 1807, is now entering upon his eightieth year. Probably no living man in the United States has more of the admiration, love, and reverence of his countrymen. He has fortunately illustrated an agreement of many paradoxes. With a frail physical constitution, and with life-long ailments, he has attained to great age; with the scantiest outfit of early education he has become a well-read man and skilful and influential writer; reared among farmers in a lonely neighbourhood, he had from the beginning the simple and distinguished manners which belong to the highest society; a chivalrous admirer of women, he has remained unmarried; without inherited wealth, he has maintained the estate of a gentleman; a devotee to the principles of peace, he has been most active in the movement which led to the great Civil War; once the unsparing denunciator of the orthodox clergy and the great political leaders for subservience to slavery, he has lived to win their respect and homage; a member of a sect which has lightly valued the graces and has put poetry and song under ban, he has lived in an ideal world of beauty and melody, and shown himself the most truly spontaneous and inspired of poets; the most

abstemious and self-controlled of men, his verse often exhibits many glowing traits that remind us of the brilliant and passion-blinded Burns; brought up far from the centre of academic influence, he has become a member of that higher circle of great minds for whom worldly honours and scholastic titles are useless and belittling.

A few paragraphs will be enough for the history of his life. He was the eldest son and the second of four children born to a Quaker family in Haverhill, on the beautiful Merrimac River in north-eastern Massachusetts. The house, which is still standing, was built about the time that William and Mary came to the throne of these islands, and its solid oaken frame may last for centuries yet. Some of the small windows have the same sashes through which, a hundred and fifty years ago, the poet's ancestors looked out upon the Indians prowling in the neighbourhood, who plundered, burned, and murdered at will, but who never once molested the Quakers who had shown them kindness.

His father was stern in manner, but kind and just; his mother was generous, loving, and patient. The world, for this lively and impressionable boy, consisted of the lonely farm, the district school, which was kept in a poor

wooden building for six months in the year, and the Quaker meeting-house in Amesbury, eight miles distant, to which the family went every First-day. Besides the Bible, there were scarcely a dozen books in the house—for among the Quakers literature was devoted solely to religion, and music, whether of voice or instrument, was never heard—except, indeed, the songs of bobolinks, robins, and cat-birds, which were not amenable to discipline.

One day, when he was about fifteen, there came a pedlar, an off-hand rhymers and a ballad singer, who made use of his talents in showing off his wares. He sang some of the songs of Burns, and the boy, for the first time in his life, knew the delight of music married to the sweetest songs ever written. An unimagined sense of beauty and melody was suddenly developed in his heart and brain. His emotion was overpowering, as on the wings of song his soul floated above his native valley. The pedlar had done his appointed work in awakening the feeling of poetry in the soul of Whittier.

Thenceforth the boy lived a dual life; the murmur of music was in his ears, and the cadences of verse began to form in his teeming brain. The sights and sounds of the farm became rhythmical: the sleigh-bells along the road in winter, the ring of whetstones upon the scythes, the sweep of the mowers through the grass, the brook tinkling over the little cascades, the plaintive calls of whip-poor-wills at night, the hum of the spinning-wheels, the roaring of the fires in the great chimney, and the wild anthem of the winds in the neighbouring woods. Then the visible universe became alive with meaning and analogy, and nature in all its forms filled him with an eager and passionate joy. About the same time the present from his schoolmaster of Burns's poems completed his happiness and determined his career.

In his poems there are pictures of his life and experience which scarcely need interpretation. In the "Barefoot Boy" may be seen the image of his own youth and the joys of his rural life under the guidance of his light-hearted uncle Moses. In "Snow Bound," the truest and best picture of life on a New England farm ever written, is a vivid representation of the poet's family—a series of "Flemish pictures," as he calls them, which may fairly be put by the side of Burns's immortal "Cottar's Saturday Night."

A few years after his introduction to the new world of poetry his verses began to

appear in the country newspapers. It might be supposed they were love-songs, but his biblical education and the discipline of the Friends held his fancy in awe. His first productions were scenes in blank verse from Scripture, full of fire, but naturally without the grace and finish which he attained later. The editor who printed these verses was William Lloyd Garrison, with whom Whittier was afterwards associated in the sublime movement which made the United States a free nation. Garrison drove out to see his unknown contributor, who proved to be a barefooted youth at work in a field of Indian corn. As a result of the visit, Whittier in the following two years attended an academy at Haverhill, three miles distant, during two sessions of six months each; and this, with his previous slender training in the district school, covered all his opportunities for education. With this imperfect preparation he began life about one-and-twenty as an editor of a weekly paper in Hartford, Conn.

At that time literature in the United States had scarcely an existence, and the pay of writers was wretchedly small; but he wrote stories, poems, and sketches in great numbers. Like some fortunate orators, who think while on their legs before an audience, Whittier gained his education, his power as a writer, and his mastery of verse by his incessant industry in writing. In those early years his publications were very numerous; they are to be found now in almost all the literary periodicals of the time, as well as in the country newspapers of Massachusetts. But it will not be with his approval that they will ever be gathered and reprinted. He would say, "Why does thee want to dig up those old things?"

The energy of Whittier's life was devoted to the cause of the slave. He was editor of the *Penn. Freeman*, at the time (1833) when a pro-slavery mob sacked the publishing office and burned the noble hall overhead, in which the abolitionists were holding a convention. He was corresponding editor for many years of the *National Era*—an anti-slavery paper in Washington. He was also an occasional contributor to the *Liberator*, Mr. Garrison's paper; but after a time he came to differ with his friend upon questions of policy. But the friendship between Whittier and Garrison was never strained; such men could only entertain sincere respect for each other; but they served in different camps.

Then came the civil war—a fierce, tremendous, and exhausting war—but, in the lan-

guage of Canon Farrar, "a most just and necessary war," establishing the unity of the republic and the principle of universal freedom. Whittier, a Quaker, and, of course, an advocate of peace, was in great distress while the war continued. He had hoped that an appeal to arms might be averted. He would have been willing, as probably many in the North would have been willing, that the Government should pay an indemnity to the slave-owners. But his was not the cowardly view of war; by nature he was bold and resolute. Lowell painted him long ago in some vigorous lines :

"There is Whittier, whose swelling and vehement heart
Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker apart,
And reveals the live man, still supreme and erect,
Underneath the bummymyng wrappers of sect."

There are many references in his poems to the war and to his own trying position. In some of them the *man* seems to be struggling with the *Quaker*, e.g.—

"Wherever Freedom's vanguard goes,
Where stand or fall her friends or foes,
I know the place that should be mine."

After a weary time the end of the war came, and slavery was for ever destroyed : a momentous fact of which the world has not felt, and will not for centuries feel, the full significance. The triumph of Whittier was not in the victory of Northern over Southern-born men, not in the downfall of the Confederacy, but in the establishment of right and justice. When the proclamation of freedom came he gave utterance to his long-pent-up feelings in a poem of almost painful energy, fitly entitled "*Laus Deo!*" It is a cry of devout gratitude for deliverance, in simple unaffected lines, which could scarcely have come from any other living man. Later, when the consequences of the great events began to loom up with the grandeur of mountains in the distance, he wrote "*My Triumph.*" He had a right to exult. For over thirty years he had devoted his life and strength to the cause, had voluntarily renounced fame, had chosen poverty, and denied himself the pleasures which man hold dear in this life, and now his reward had come. This poem seems to me singularly pathetic in its simplicity and power. It is terse to baldness. The poet is not thinking of melody or of fine phrases; his words come as if uttered in the presence of God.

"Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave light-bringers!
Forward I reach and share
All that they sing and dare,

"The airs of heaven blow o'er me;
A glory shines before me
Of what mankind shall be,—
Pure, generous, brave and free.

"Ring, bells in unreared steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples!
Sound, trumpets, far-off blown,
Your triumph is my own."

In a brief sketch like this it is not possible to dwell upon the simple incidents of the poet's life.

He was one of the original and highly valued contributors to the *Atlantic Monthly*, and many of his best poems are to be found in its pages. The establishment of that magazine, the first of a high literary character to defend the principles of universal freedom, gave him great delight.

Some of his early poems, such as "*Mogg Megone*," and, perhaps, "*The Bridal of Pennacook*," remind one of Scott; but that influence passed away, and there was developed from his character and experience a manner of thought and expression entirely his own. His poems are pervaded by the high sense of duty and the spirit of primitive Christianity, in which he was reared. They are in the domain of poetry what he has been in the world of man. The passionate impulses which inspired so many of the songs of Burns, and much of the verse of Byron, have never been breathed in a line of his. His blood was naturally fiery, and his feelings intense; but a sure self-control has directed him.

He has been equally steadfast in abstaining from wine. For him, "wine is a mocker, strong drink a raging." Shielded so by principle and by discipline from the frailties and excesses that have ruined so many generous men, but alive with the glow of love for the beautiful in humanity, in nature, and in art, he has presented a combination of traits seldom united in one person. If one could imagine the purity and honour of a knight, the boldness of an inspired prophet, the single-hearted zeal of an apostle, an artist's deep joy in the world of nature, the pitying heart of a woman, and a poet's power to fuse all these qualities without extinguishing humour and naturalness—in such a blending one would realise the soul of Whittier.

Knowing his character and powers, the scenery and legends of his native valley, and the history of the cause for which he toiled, it is easy to classify and understand his poems. He never crossed the ocean, and travelled but little out of New England; and his scenes are naturally located in the region where he lived. The region is not extensive. There is the Merrimack River, from its sources near the White Mountains to the sea; the lakes and forests haunted by Indian legends; and the villages full of traditions of the trials of witches and the persecution of Quakers.

Considered as landscape, few places in the New World are more beautiful than those Whittier has described. As specimens of his observation and art in scenery, readers may look at "The Last Walk in Autumn," "Summer by the Lake Side," "Melvin Stream," "Our River," and others; one can hardly go amiss, as there are few poems which do not contain some strokes that testify to his quick eye and sure hand. Here are a few passages.

"O'er the bare woods, whose outstretched hands
Plead with the leaden heavens in vain,
I see, beyond the valley lands,
The sea's long level dim with rain."

Along the river's summer walk
The withered tufts of asters nod,
And trembles on its arid stalk
The hoar plume of the golden-rod,
And on a ground of sombre fir,
And azure-studded juniper,
The silver birch its buds of purple shows,
And scarlet berries tell where bloomed the sweet wild
rose."

"Once more, O mountains of the North, unveil
Your brows, and lay your cloudy mantles by!
And once more, ere the eyes that seek ye fail,
Uplift against the blue walls of the sky
Your mighty shapes, and let the sunshine weave
Its golden net-work in your belting woods,—
Smile down in rainbows from your falling floods,
And on your kingly brows at morn and eve
Set crowns of fire! So shall my soul receive
Haply the secret of your calm and strength,
Your unforgotten beauty interfuse
My common life,—your glorious shapes and hues
And sun-dropped splendours at my bidding come,
Loom vast through dreams, and stretch in billowy length
From the sea-level of my lowland home!"

"We saw the slow tides go and come,
The curving surf-lines lightly drawn,
The grey rocks touched with tender bloom
Beneath the fresh-blown rose of dawn."

Here are two stanzas from "The Pine Tree" (the ancient emblem in the flag of Massachusetts), written during the war with Mexico, 1846:—

"Lift again the stately emblem on the Bay State's rusted
shield,
Give to northern winds the Pine Tree on our banner's tattered
field.
Sons of men who sat in council with their Bibles round the
board,
Answering England's royal missive with a firm 'Thus
SAITH THE LORD!'
Rise again for home and freedom!—Set the battle in array!—
What the fathers did of old time we their sons must do to-
day."

"Where's the man for Massachusetts? Where's the voice to
speak her free?
Where's the hand to light up bonfires from her mountains to
the sea?
Beats her Pilgrim pulse no longer? Sits she dumb in her
despair?
Has she none to break the silence? Has she none to do
and dare?
O my God! for one right worthy to lift up her rusted shield,
And to plant again the Pine Tree in her banner's tattered
field!"

Religious readers will, I believe, consider his expressions of faith and trust in God as the truest evidence of his inspiration. They breathe a fervent piety and in a tone which

none but a poet and a believer could have conceived.

"Still waits kind Nature to impart
Her choicest gifts to such as gain
An entrance to her loving heart
Through the sharp discipline of pain."

"Forever from the Hand that takes
One blessing from us others fall;
And, soon or late, our Father makes
His perfect recompense to all!"

Again:—

"Wherever through the ages rise
The altars of self-sacrifice,
Where love its arms has opened wide,
Or man for man has calmly died,
I see the same white wings outspread
That hovered o'er the Master's head!
Up from undated time they come,
The martyr souls of heathendom,
And to His cross and passion bring
Their fellowship of suffering.
I trace His presence in the blind
Pathetic gropings of my kind,—
In prayers from sin and sorrow wrung,
In cradle-hymns of life they sung
Each in its measure but a part
Of the unmeasured Over-Heart."

So welcome I from every source
The tokens of that primal Force,
Older than heaven itself, yet new
Beneath whose steady impulse rolls
The tidal wave of human souls;
Guide, comforter, and inward word,
The eternal spirit of the Lord."

As affording a text for some remarks on Whittier as a man, and on his place among New England poets, I quote a passage from a recent number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*:—

"Fastidious people of the present day, accustomed to works whose only defect sometimes is excessive cleverness, accuse Whittier of too great facility, of negligence. . . . A Quaker grafted upon a New England farmer is excusable for letting some bad rhymes pass; but the traces of hasty work in his case never succeed in destroying the sovereign charm of savour and spontaneity. . . . What will never grow old is the treasure of his ballads, idylls, and stories in verse. The idylls of Longfellow and those of Lowell are justly admired; but there is this difference between them and those of Whittier, that in the former the poet evidently looks down from an enormous intellectual and social height upon the persons and things which he puts upon the stage; Whittier, on the contrary, is of the same blood as his humble heroes. He has remained a peasant, rooted to the soil, like a roadside fern. Not a shadow of dilettantism. If he has not the breadth of Bryant, the penetration of Emerson, he has something more—he reads the soul of the people as from an open book, and he addresses himself to the insignificant as well as to the learned."

In the first place there are no "peasants" in Massachusetts, and never have been. Not only is there equality before the law, but every independent farmer, like Whittier's father, is and has been the equal of any in the township. For all their mild ways, the Quakers were particularly independent. Whittier grew up erect and unbent, straight as a sapling, and, so far from being "rooted to

the soil," he early abandoned the farm and all manual labour, and from the age of about twenty-two devoted himself to a literary career. His ancestors, furthermore, were fellow-townsmen of the ancestors of both Lowell and Longfellow, the three poets being descended from families in Old Newbury. The ancestors of all three were honest, God-fearing men; but there was no splendour of birth or breeding in Old Newbury, and no talk until late years of a Brahminical class in Massachusetts.

Lowell and Longfellow are distinguished for learning as well as for genius; they had every advantage, and made the best use of their time. In their verse and prose are evidences of their reading and travel. But it is a truism to state that no training whatever would have made them poets without native genius, and the example of Whittier has shown that a genius may blossom as a poet, even outside of the university hot-house. This is not the time to speak of relative "intellectual height," but the talk of "social" inferiority is nonsense. And though Whittier had no college training, he is *not* "to be excused for having let pass some bad rhymes." He is well enough instructed to know when he violates the rules of assonance and of prosody. He *does* know, and he deplors his shortcomings. And they did not arise from ignorance; they are the effect of his vehement temper, of the rush and fervour of his ideas, of the impossibility of halting to refine and potter when the flood of inspiration is upon him. No man has a finer natural ear for melody, and few poets have given more delightful specimens of it—witness his

"Proem," which flows like the most liquid of Spenser's stanzas. But every one sees that he sometimes leaves a limping line or an imperfect rhyme, especially when he has brought out his thought strongly. One thinks of Burns's homely expression—

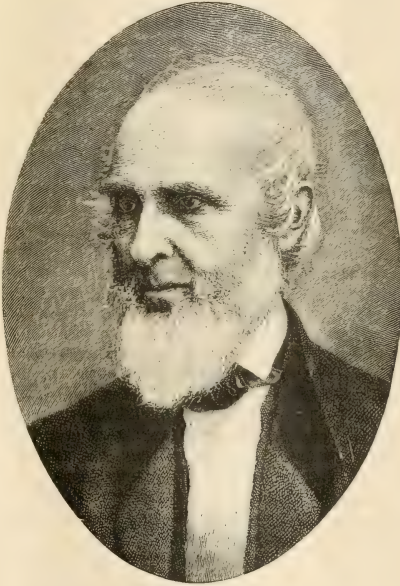
"Whene'er my muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her."

Perhaps the very temperament that gave him his dazzling conceptions made him averse to the tedious labour of revision.

Once more as to the supposed "peasant." Of all men in our time Whittier is remarkable for loftiness of soul. This is a distinguishing feature of his verse, and it is this which has raised him above the makers of merely pretty pastorals, and above the singing gladiators and cymbal-clashers of the reform. For he is *not* chiefly a poet of the common people, except that he does not repel them by foreign phrases nor bewilder them with metaphysics. Excepting his anti-slavery lyrics, his verse, like all high products of mind, demands thought and attention. There has not been as yet a poet of the common people in the United States.

Still avoiding comparisons as far

as possible—which are ungracious in the lifetime of any of the poets under consideration—it may be said that the chief difference between Whittier on the one hand and Longfellow and Lowell on the other arises from the fact that the latter have been cloistered scholars, while our Quaker has been in the thick of the greatest moral contest which the world has seen since Luther's time. Both of the scholars were heart and soul in the anti-slavery movement; and Lowell, we all know,



John Greenleaf Whittier

is immortal in the Yankee satire which blasted the supporters of slavery in the North as well as in the South; but Whittier alone renounced all to become the apostle and bard of the cause. His devotion cost him dear in honour, fame, wealth, and home delights; it cost him much also in the absorption of time and energy, which, if applied to study and to verse in his fresh and budding years, might have surprisingly changed the relative rank and popularity of the chief American poets; for while others may be more philosophic, profound, and cultured, no one has yet appeared in the United States (of whom the public has knowledge) whose native poetical genius exceeds Whittier's.

The description of Whittier, in the article from the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, rankles in the mind of any one who has known him as an unworthy contumely, a personal wrong. His nature is delicacy itself; his taste is as refined, his perception as true, his self-respect as perfect, his gravity as commanding as if he had been "born in the purple."

With all this, he has characteristic human traits. He has a keen sense of humour, shown in the mobile lines of his mouth and in his sparkling eyes. In ordinary conversation his soft and ungrammatical *thee* and *thou* are very fascinating; and when (in earlier days) he related a comical story, the gravity of phrase made it convulsing.

Whittier is tall and rather spare, and in early manhood and middle age was singularly handsome, far more so than his engraved pictures lead one to expect. In the engraving is seen the noble dome of his head—the graceful swell of the temples and the ideal fulness of the crown—but no art could represent the depth of his eyes, their softness in repose, or their flashes when he was aroused. His complexion is quite dark, but the skin as well as the features have the delicacy which marks a fine organisation; the whole visage shows refinement, especially when one ob-

serves the half-pathetic smile that sometimes plays about his lips. He is often silent, and generally reserved, since age has made him somewhat deaf, but he was never timid or self-conscious.

The distinctive dress of the Friends appears to have been modified of late years. The ancient broad-brims have become obsolete. Whittier's costume is plain, but neat and becoming; the colour deep brown or black, the velvet coat collar in shape much like those worn by clergymen in this country.

Whittier in a certain way was "canny" as a Scot, and in consequence there have been few things in his life to pique the curiosity of the lovers of *ana*. After the deplorable scandal that followed the publication of the letters of Carlyle he burned the great part of his correspondence; and he had been a most assiduous letter-writer. In fact it was largely by correspondence that he carried on the work of the political anti-slavery party for the many years in which he gave to it his service. And this period and this service will be with great difficulty set in light by any future biographer. He had not the gift of speech, and never appeared on the platform.

His relations with the leading authors of the country have always been pleasant, and he has been visited by multitudes of admirers from all over the world. He is content to live in very simple style at his home in Amesbury, and passes a good portion of each year with relatives in Danvers, not far distant. He generally makes a visit to Boston each winter. Having been almost an invalid all his life, he has shunned dinners and other assemblies, and from his native reserve he has avoided all publicity and display. But his qualities have long been known, and no man living, probably, has such troops of friends. A genial temper, a striking presence, a soul without spot or flaw, a life of self-devotion, a record of toil in well-doing, a serene old age, an unflinching faith, these all belong to John Greenleaf Whittier.

ON BROADLAW.*

BY THE EDITOR.

"Juvat meminisse."

A BURST of glorious August weather,
The moorland that I love so well,
Ridge on ridge—a sea of heather;
Rolling up the mountain-swell.

Oh joy to leave the sweltering masses,
Mammon-driven on grimy street,
For streams that glide thro' nibbled grasses,
For cushat's croon and pastoral bleat!

* Broadlaw is in Peeblesshire, near the upper reaches of the Tweed, and is the highest mountain on the mainland of Scotland to the south of the Forth.

See ! far down on level meadow
 How green the depth of rushy hay !
 See ! shadow softly chasing shadow
 O'er all the breadth of hill and brae.

Summer clouds above us hover,
 Floating from the Western Sea,
 Scream of whaup and plaint of plover
 Make our moorland minstrelsy.

Plunge through golden-dusted heather,
 Breast the corrie grey and brown,
 Mount where bent and moss together
 Lie bare upon our monarch's crown !

Ha ! there's Manor, Meggat, Tala,
 Sweet St. Mary's silver gleam,
 Hills that look on Ettrick, Gala,
 Melrose fair, and Yarrow stream ;

Skene Loch, open to the heaven,
 Lies jewelling her heathy bed,

Deep-throated Gameshope, lightning-riven,
 Raven Craig and Hart Fell Head.

Beneath us Tweed, old music singing,
 Hurries from her grassy 'Well,'
 There Clyde, her merry waters bringing,
 'Twixt Tinto-Top and Culter-Fell.

There's not a burn or streaming "water"
 But murmurs some historic tale ;
 Old song and ancient ballad scatter
 A pensive charm on every dale.

The spirit of great days departed
 Lives on 'Hope,' and 'Shaw,' and 'Glen—'
 Homes of the heroes mighty-hearted,
 The men who made our Scottish men.

Then drink the draught of Freedom blowing
 From heights that Freedom's battle saw,
 And hie you gladly homewards, knowing
 You've had a day on high Broadlaw !

EARTHQUAKES.

By ARCHIBALD GEIKIE, F.R.S.,

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

FIRST PAPER.

AMONG the phenomena of nature that vividly impress the imagination of mankind none leave so potent and abiding an influence as Earthquakes and Volcanoes. To other manifestations of natural energies we may become more or less accustomed, till by degrees they lose their power over us. A great storm, for instance, brings before us the might of the commotions which from time to time arise in the atmosphere and trace out for themselves a path of destruction across the surface of the land. Yet, though we cannot but recognise its potency, secure in the shelter of our well-built houses, we watch the progress of the storm, even with a certain degree of pleasure. Again, a gale at sea is witnessed from the land, not indeed without a sense of awe, but yet without that feeling of horror which is inspired by the possibility of personal danger. Who can be insensible to the fascination of the huge breakers as they come rolling in one

after another, to burst against a rocky coastline, the thunder of each successive billow and the hoarse rattle of the shingle dragged back by the recoiling wave, the hissing cata-racts of sea-water that pour back again into the angry surf, and the yeasty foam torn off by the wind and blown in fragments away inland? Even thoughts of sympathy for those at sea hardly lessen the kind of painful pleasure with which the exhibition of such stupendous power is beheld.

But in an earthquake the sense of personal safety gets a rude shock or vanishes altogether. The solid earth on which we have passed our lives, and to which we have instinctively trusted as an immovable foundation, suddenly trembles and sways under our feet. An ominous hollow groan, or a prolonged rumble, or a grating roar seems to rise out of the ground. And then amid the crash of falling buildings come the shrieks and wails of the terrified inhabitants. In a

few moments, and utterly without warning, a whole city may be laid in ruins, thousands of its population may be dead or dying, and thousands more may be rendered homeless and destitute. No recurrence of the calamity can diminish its impressiveness. We may become inured to most visitations, but those who live in earthquake-shaken countries assure us that, after a really destructive shock has once been experienced, it is impossible to grow indifferent to earthquakes. There is always the terrible uncertainty as to what is going to happen. The convulsion may pass away with no serious effects on life or property, and in a few hours men may be seen going about their ordinary avocations, as if nothing had happened. But the first shock may be only the forerunner of a more violent one that will bring death and destruction in its train.

No wonder then that natural events of such a momentous kind should have graven their mark deeply on the human imagination. Among the ancient mythologies, for example, it is not difficult to trace the ideas that have been suggested by these underground commotions of the earth. The stories of the wars of the Titans and gods may with little hesitation be referred for their origin to the earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that have from time immemorial affected the basin of the Mediterranean. The rumblings heard under the volcanoes of that region were not unnaturally looked upon as the groans of those colossal beings whom the wrath of Zeus had overwhelmed and buried under burning mountains; and the earthquakes, experienced more particularly around the volcanic centres, were regarded as the struggles of these same beings as they tried to turn themselves on their bed of pain. It is curious to trace a somewhat similar belief among totally different peoples and in remote quarters of the globe. The old Norsemen, for example, when they felt an earthquake pictured to themselves the evil spirit *Loki* chained up below and struggling to regain his freedom. The Japanese, living in a country so constantly shaken by earthquakes, have fabled that the convulsions come from the movements of a large whale that is creeping underground. There seems no reason to doubt that the frequent recurrence of earthquakes has ministered to the perpetuation of superstition. Mr. Buckle drew attention to the fact that the most superstitious nations of Europe dwell in those tracts which are most frequently and violently shaken with earthquakes. Other and more potent

causes may have been at work, but the terror caused by the suddenness and destructiveness of these calamities can hardly fail to have had a notable influence on national temperament and character. In Christian countries the visitations have been taken as warnings of the divine displeasure, and it is curious to observe the practices which in different countries and at different times have been singled out as specially meriting such prominent marks of disapproval. Thus in the north-east of Scotland, a smart shock of earthquake which occurred in 1608 was believed to have been chiefly caused by the Sunday salmon-fishing in the river Dee. Rather more than a century later people in New England were "so awakened by the awful providence in the earthquake, that the women generally laid aside their hoop-petticoats."

From the earliest beginning of human history down to the present day, probably every region on the earth's surface has been at some time or other affected by earthquakes. But of by far the largest number of these shocks no record remains. Only those which have produced wide-spread calamity to mankind were in olden times thought worthy of mention. The pages of human history have in recent years been diligently ransacked for accounts of earthquakes, and catalogues of these events have been prepared. Up to the year 1850 between six and seven thousand earthquakes had been noticed by man as having occurred since he was able to leave a record of such phenomena. But between the years 1850 and 1857 no fewer than four thousand six hundred and twenty were observed, or on an average nearly two a day. It is not for a moment to be supposed that during these seven years there was a sudden outburst of earthquake energy. The number of shocks now recorded in each year is vastly larger than formerly, because only in modern times have natural phenomena been generally observed and recorded, and means of communication have been established for the transmission of news from each country to the rest of the globe. All that can be legitimately inferred from the crowded pages of the earthquake registers for the modern period is, that observers are now multiplied all over the earth, and that instead of merely the great catastrophes being recorded, no perceptible tremor can affect any wide region inhabited by man without being remarked and chronicled.

But while it cannot be affirmed that, on the whole, earthquakes and volcanic erup-

tions are now more frequent or more violent than in earlier centuries of human experience, there does seem some foundation for the belief that during the last few years at least a temporary increase has occurred in the subterranean activity of the planet as compared, for instance, with the previous decade. No large region of the earth's surface seems to have entirely escaped. All over Europe, from the far Hebrides to the Levant, district after district and country after country has been shaken, for the most part indeed gently, but sometimes with violence enough to destroy much life and property. The calamities of Agram, Ischia, Southern Spain, and Greece, are fresh in the recollection of newspaper readers. From other regions of the Old as well as from the New World, tidings of similar catastrophes have reached us with startling frequency. Hardly had the news of the Greek earthquake of last summer arrived, when the telegraph announced the destruction of Charlestown and the concussion of a large part of the eastern States of the American Union. The earthquakes of Southern Spain were succeeded by the volcanic outbreak in the lake district of New Zealand, at the exact antipodes. Districts which have never been known to be visited by any underground disturbance, or which at least have remained unaffected for many generations, have recently been more or less rudely shaken. The sharp shock felt two years ago in Essex served to remind us that earthquakes have from time to time raised wide-spread alarm even in this country.

It might be supposed that regarding a natural phenomenon of such frequent occurrence and so momentous in its effects, much would be known. Yet in the whole range of scientific inquiry it would be difficult to select a subject about the origin of which we know so little. The shock comes so unexpectedly and goes so swiftly, that even were one's nerves steady enough for effective observation, only a minute or two are available for taking note of its passage. Most of the knowledge of earthquakes is derived from a consideration of the effects they leave behind them. What we are actually sensible of during an earthquake is an oscillation of the ground beneath, which is felt to move forward and backward several times in the course of a few seconds. The movement appears to come from one quarter of the horizon, and to travel away to the opposite quarter. But the actual direction of the movement seems so different to different observers, that no great reliance can be

placed on the evidence of the senses alone. By accurate determination of the time at which the shock is experienced at various places, it is possible not only to trace the line of movement, but to ascertain approximately the central area from which it proceeded. Valuable information is also obtained by a careful examination of the rents made in walls, the direction of the chief cracks being commonly transverse to that followed by the earthquake. But the phenomena are now being subjected to a much more rigid scrutiny than has previously been attempted. Delicate self-registering instruments have been erected in countries liable to frequent earthquakes. By this means a detailed record is kept of the direction and intensity of the various movements of the ground, and of the times when they occur. Doubtless from the accumulation of such evidence the problem will be attacked with much more hope of success than has ever before been possible.

In minor earthquakes the oscillation of the ground may detach loose objects, but leaves behind it little or no trace of its passage. In those of a more violent order cracks are opened in the walls of buildings. Among the rent and ruined streets of a town that has been overthrown by one of these convulsions, what appears at first to be a strange caprice characterizes the destruction. One building may have been levelled with the ground, while others near it are still standing. Some walls are split open with yawning fissures, and look as if a mere breeze would hurl their disjointed masses to the earth. Others again have entirely escaped. Yet a little further examination shows that the work of demolition has not been quite at random. It will not infrequently be found, for instance, that walls running in one general direction have been grievously damaged, while those placed transverse to them have for the most part escaped. That direction indicates the track of the earthquake. Hence walls built at right angles to the line of movement are more likely to stand than those parallel to it. Pillars, obelisks, chimney-stacks, and other isolated blocks of masonry or of stone, are sometimes twisted round and left standing in this altered position or else thrown to the ground. Detached masses of cliffs are likewise loosened and prostrated. Fissures also are opened in the ground, and either close again, swallowing up any objects standing at their mouths, or else remain open and are apt to be widened afterwards into gullies

by rain. Water, mud, and sand are often thrown out from the cracks as they close, and sometimes curious circular pits are formed where these materials have been ejected.

It is astonishing how soon these and other defacements of the surface of a country are obliterated. Man rebuilds his shattered tenements, and Nature aids him in concealing and removing all trace of the disaster. In a few years, the traveller who visits the scene of some destructive earthquake is surprised to meet with little or no evidence that any disturbance has ever happened. The fissures have closed again; the open chasms have been tapestried with vegetation, and look as if they were parts of the original landscape. The scars left by the masses of rock detached from the face of the cliffs are tufted with mosses and ferns, and the blocks that fell from them are already half-buried in brushwood or wild flowers. But occasionally permanent and striking memorials are left of an earthquake. Along low coasts there is sometimes an elevation of the land to the extent of several feet. Bays and harbours are thereby shallowed. Half-tide rocks are raised above high water-mark. Cliffs against the base of which the waves at highest tides were wont to break, are carried back beyond reach of the sea. Caverns into which the breakers used to burst are now left high and dry. A selva of what was once the beach, overflowed twice a day by the sea, is now added permanently to the dry land. Again, it happens here and there that ground sinks down below its former level, and after the earthquake is found to be covered with water. Should this happen in the interior of a country, trees and other objects are left with only their tops standing out of the water, as in the "Sunk Country" of the Mississippi valley.

Large bodies of water are singularly sensitive to the passage of subterranean disturbances. Even where no symptom of movement has been perceptible on the surrounding land, rivers and lakes have been appreciably affected. Rivers have been known to stop their flow for a time, leaving their channels dry, or to roll in waves between their banks. Lakes are sometimes greatly agitated, or they are affected by gentler oscillations marked by an ebb and flow of their waters along shore. The great Lisbon earthquake of 1755 caused the deeper lakes of Britain to oscillate in this way, and similar movements extended even to the great lakes of Canada. But the effects of these move-

ments are most conspicuous upon the ocean. Where the shock occurs under the sea, an enormous low swell is formed on the surface of the water above, and travels outwards in all directions. When this swell or wave reaches a low shore-line, the sea is seen rapidly to retire from the land. Then gathering itself into a great wall of water, sixty feet or more in height, it rushes impetuously ashore, bearing destruction far into the interior. Such a great sea-wave sometimes arrives several hours after the swifter-moving earthquake shock has already come and gone, and the devastation it causes, especially in seaport towns, already shattered by the earthquake, is not infrequently the most disastrous part of the calamity.

In trying to ascertain what earthquakes really are we have two questions to consider. In the first place, what is the nature of the motion that affects the solid earth? and, secondly, what is its cause? Now the first of these questions can be answered with considerable confidence. There can be no doubt that the shock of an earthquake is due to the passage of a kind of wave through the substance of the earth's crust. It can be imitated artificially on a small scale, as where a quantity of gunpowder or dynamite is exploded, when a distinct pulsation or wave of shock is propagated outwards through the ground in all directions from the centre of explosion. The crust of the earth in which earthquakes take their origin is composed of various solid rocks, through which what are called elastic waves, due to sudden compression or distortion, readily undulate. The phenomena of earthquakes can be understood on the supposition that they are produced by the transmission of such waves through the crust. There is first a sudden shock, and from the centre where this takes place, an elastic wave, or rather series of waves, travels outwards to all points of the compass. If the crust of the earth were perfectly homogeneous, and the shock originated at a point, the waves would radiate in successive spheroidal shells, becoming less and less in volume as they retreated from the centre of disturbance. At the surface these waves would be felt as shocks, the intensity of which would be the same at equal distances from the centre, but which would gradually die away outward. The analogy of the rings of ripples that diverge from a pebble thrown into a pool helps to make clear this divergence and evanescence of the earth-waves. But the earth's crust, far from being uniform, is exceedingly complicated, both in composition

and in structure. It is made up of rocks differing much in elasticity, and dislocated by innumerable fissures. Hence the elastic waves transmitted from any centre through this diversified mass of rock meet with innumerable impediments to their progress. They travel faster in some materials than in others. They are constantly liable to be reflected or diverted by coming against a fissure wall, or some mass of rock of different quality. These difficulties in their path are partly indicated by the curious differences in the rapidity and intensity of the shocks felt at the surface as they travel outwards from their centre of origin. The rate of motion of an earthquake diminishes outwards and varies within wide limits, being sometimes only about one furlong in a second, and sometimes as much as three miles. The velocity from the same focus of disturbance is sometimes twice as great in one direction as in another. A mountain range opposes a great obstacle to the transmission of the earth-wave, and sometimes extinguishes it altogether.

The question of the origin of the impulse that sets the earthquake waves in motion is one of the most puzzling in the whole range of science. The interior of our globe is hidden from us. We can only penetrate but a little way below the surface even in our deepest mines and borings. And though volcanoes bring up to view some of the materials that form the interior, they suggest perhaps more puzzling problems than they solve. We are left in large measure to speculation with regard to the causes of the changes that take place within the earth. But so long as the speculations are based upon actual observation of nature, and the inferences are regarded merely as inferences and not as ascertained facts, they may pave the way for advances in real knowledge.

Now it is manifest that the initial impulse of an earthquake must be due to some sudden and violent origin. Various causes may be conceived as possibly producing the shock. For example, when the roof of a subterranean cavity collapses, a concussion must be produced which may have the effect of an earthquake at the surface. In limestone countries, such as Carniola, the ground is honeycombed with grottoes and passages, and slight shocks of earthquake are of frequent occurrence, due no doubt to the falling-in of some of these underground caverns. More violent effects might arise from the collapse of large emptied volcanic reservoirs, as perhaps has occurred at the extinct volcano of Ischia. Again, the rocks of the crust are in a state of continuous

strain due to various causes, and especially to the gradual contraction that arises from the slow cooling of the planet. From time to time there probably come moments when they can no longer bear these stresses, and when consequently they snap asunder and readjust themselves in a new position of equilibrium. A slight dislocation of this kind would undoubtedly set in motion a series of earthquake waves that might devastate the country far and wide, while a more extensive fracture might produce such a catastrophe as man has never yet witnessed. Such sudden ruptures of rocks are not impossibly the sources of the earthquake shocks so frequently experienced in mountainous countries. Along the range of the Alps, for instance, subterranean disturbances are of common occurrence, varying in force from hardly perceptible tremors up to smart and more or less destructive shocks. That mountain chain has a long and most interesting history, which takes us back to the early beginnings of the shaping of what is now the European continent. Instead of having been produced by one primeval uplift, the Alps have been upheaved again and again, and during the intervals of repose their crests and declivities have been slowly worn down, as they still are to-day by frost and rain, springs and brooks, rivers and glaciers. Yet the repose has only been comparative. That intense crumpling and contortion, the proofs of which the tourist gazes at with wonder, along the mountain sides that plunge down into the Lake of the Four Cantons, has left the rocks below in a state of strain from which relief is at intervals obtained by a sudden snap or crack. Whether or not any local change of level may be appreciable, either in the way of elevation or subsidence, these subterranean tremors, "growing pains" we might call them, must be regarded as evidence that the building of the Alps is not yet a completed process. Again, along the oceanic borders of the continents, earthquakes are of frequent occurrence. Continents are areas that have been upraised; oceans lie in basins that have subsided. The tracts between these two regions of opposite movement may not improbably be specially liable to be affected by stresses, the sudden relief from which will generate earthquakes.

In volcanic districts, earthquakes are notably abundant. There can be no doubt that in these localities they generally arise from the explosion of intensely hot vapours, more especially of superheated steam within the volcanic reservoirs. At each violent out-

burst of steam a volcano is shaken to its centre, and the concussion sets in motion a series of waves, that travel outward through the solid crust of the earth, and are felt in all the surrounding region as an earthquake. It is possible that explosive steam may be the cause of earthquake shocks, even where no actual volcano is formed. We may suppose, for instance, that sea-water sometimes gains access to the highly-heated interior of the earth. The sudden generation of steam as the water passes out of the spheroidal condition can hardly fail to cause an explosion, and thus to start an earthquake. Or if a large mass of steam imprisoned within some heated subterranean cavity be suddenly condensed by access of cold water from above, a violent shock will take place.

Thus we perceive that various conceivable sources may be the origin of earthquakes. The phenomena are so varied in character and in distribution that they are almost certainly not due merely to one cause. One of the great problems in the physics of the earth is if possible to trace out individual earthquakes to their several modes of production. The task is a difficult though by no means a hopeless one. But until some considerable progress has been made with it, earthquakes must remain one of the most curious and interesting puzzles that can engage the ingenuity of scientific men.

Closely connected with the cause of earthquakes is the question of the depth at which they start. In certain respects this question is not so difficult of solution, and various methods have been proposed for answering it. The most generally followed is that adopted by Mallet, who was the first observer to bring the phenomena of earthquakes to rigid scientific examination. He took note of the angles of the fissures made in walls by the Neapolitan earthquake of 1857, and, assuming that these were formed at right angles to the path of emergence of the earth-wave, he drew lines inwards to the centre of disturbance, and found that these lines intersected at depths varying from rather less than three to a little more than eight geographical miles. Other writers have repeated and varied Mallet's method with varying results. In some cases the depth of origin has appeared to be only about a mile and a half, in others it may have been twenty-five or thirty miles. We may suppose that on the whole the shallowest earthquakes are most local in extent, while those which have the deepest origin affect the widest areas of the earth's surface.

One of the practical results to be looked for from the greater attention now paid to earthquake phenomena, and especially from the erection of self-registering instruments in the more disturbed regions of the globe, is the forecasting of earthquakes. Even now it would be practicable to send to surrounding districts warning by telegraph that an earthquake has taken place. A minute or two may be all the time that could be given before the rapid earth-wave follows after the still more rapid electric current. Yet where men are prepared for these calamities, even such a brief warning might be of enormous importance, at least in saving life. But what is especially deserving of investigation relates to the premonitory symptoms which an earthquake may furnish of its approach. Various attempts have been made to predict the coming of earthquakes. Where they have been more than mere guesses, these predictions have been based on such natural appearances as have been observed to occur before subterranean commotions—such, for example, as the restlessness of various animals, a peculiar oppressive sultriness of the air, a sensation of nausea experienced by many people, alteration in the volume and purity of springs, fluctuations in the quantity of gas emitted from underground sources. But what is more particularly desirable is, that the earth itself should be made to give notice of its movements. Whether this will ever be accomplished remains to be seen. It is perhaps not too much to look forward to a time when the minute tremors and vibrations of the earth's crust shall have been so carefully watched, that from their variations and accelerations reliable indications may be obtained for giving warning of the probable advent of some more serious shaking. We shall never be able to lessen the suddenness and violence of earthquakes. But if we were enabled to get even a few moments' warning of their approach, if the surface of the globe were so carefully examined that all the regions most likely to be visited by earthquakes were well known, and if in such regions scrupulous care were taken to build in such a style as would be least affected by disturbances of the ground, then the dangers of the earthquake would probably be reduced as far as the skill and foresight of man could devise. In a second paper some account will be given of the distribution of earthquakes over the globe, with more especial reference to those of the British Islands, in modern and old geological times.



GOLD AND SILVER.

ALONG her father's field they strayed,
All flecked with cowslips yellow,
A little dainty gold-haired maid,
A sturdy nine-year fellow.

And there love's course they two began,
(Ah, thorny path for treading!)
And vowed when they were maid and man
The town should see a wedding.
Their golden curls were blown and blent,
Through wafts of fragrance treading;
"And oh!" they murmured, well content,
"Twill be a golden wedding!"

"Tis time," said he, "to claim her vow,"
And forth he went and found her;
But she was grown a beauty now,
And half the town was round her.

"I see," says he, "you don't want me!"—
Though tears were ripe for shedding,
"I'm glad your eyes are good," says she—
Ah, where's that golden wedding?
He flung away, and left her there,
Such heart-sore tear-drops shedding,
And gossips cried, in blank despair,
"He's spoiled the rarest wedding!"

He sailed the seas, he beat the French,
Two-score good years he tarried,
And then he thought, "That little wench—
I wonder if she's married?"
Next week a bluff old tar rolled past,
The gabled High Street treading,
And ancient gossips crowded, "At last
We're like to have the wedding!"
She'd waited for him forty years—
The grey their locks were threading;
And some with smiles, and some with tears,
Beheld their silver wedding.

F. LANGBRIDGE.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

By the BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

TO those who first heard the apostle's command, "Love not the world, neither the things of the world," it must have seemed easier to understand and easier to obey than it does to us. The world which they were forbidden to love was a visible one; it stood out before them in clear outline, sharply divided off from that other world to which they as Christians belonged. It was the world of heathendom; it was that pagan society which lay all around them, with its laws, institutions, beliefs, manners, customs, all so essentially different from their own. It was a kingdom which they had, all of them, at one time or another of their lives, deliberately forsaken in the hour of their baptism, when they entered into the new kingdom of God. And none who had any moral sense, any desire for righteousness, could have doubted which of these two was the better and the nobler one. The pagan world of that day was an effete and a decaying thing, dying of its own corruption, all its earlier and healthier morality perishing, all things base and foul and vile flourishing within it. It was a selfish, a profligate, a cruel, a miserable, a despairing world; and over against it stood the new kingdom of Christ, bright with the beauty and the power of its new life, filled with the ennobling and sustaining hope of immortality, filled, too, with the tenderness and the purity of a new human brotherhood, born of the Fatherhood in heaven. "Salt of the earth!" "Light of the world!" All the hopes, all the nobler future of humanity lay within its borders, all around it corruption and death. So visibly, so distinctly apart, stood those two kingdoms then that the apostle John—looking out, as it were, from the battlements of the new city of God that he and his brother apostles had been building amongst men—could say, "We are of God, the whole world lieth in the wicked one."

But for us this state of things has long since passed away. Humanity in our time is not divided into any two such visible and separate kingdoms as those the apostle saw. The world of our day has long since been merged in the outward and visible kingdom of Christ; it is baptized, it is Christian; we call it Christendom. It accepts the faith, it owns the laws, it professes to follow the

example of Christ. We cannot say of any visible portion of it, This is all of God, and that altogether lies in wickedness.

Has the distinction, then, which the apostle drew between the Church and the world vanished away? Has this precept, "Love not the world," no meaning for us? Is there no world for us which we are not to love, whose friendship must be for us enmity to God? And if there be, where is it, what is it, how are we to know it when we see it, how are we to shun it when we know it?

Assuredly there is such a world. It was not for Christians of his day only, but for all time that St. John was speaking. It was not for his own age, but for all ages to come that St. Paul spoke when he said, "Be not conformed to the world, but be ye transformed in the renewing of your minds." It was not for the disciples only who slept beside Him in His hour of agony, but for "all whom His Father had given Him," that our Lord said, "I pray that thou shouldest keep them from the evil that is in the world;" not to them only, but to us did He say, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you;" not for them only, but for us did He speak that word which has sustained the faith and hope of all His true followers since the hour when He spoke it, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." If, then, we would obey these precepts, if we would take to our hearts these promises and consolations, we must understand what is the world we are to shun, what it is to be worldly or worldly-minded, what, on the other hand, it is to be heavenly or heavenly-minded.

This is obviously a very practical question, it is one that must affect our whole idea and rule of life. To ask this question is really to ask, on what plan, on what principle shall I lay out my whole existence?

There are, it seems, two ways of living, so widely different that they are spoken of as if they belonged to two different worlds. Which are these, and how are we to know them?

At first this seems a very difficult question to answer—at least, if we may judge from the infinite variety of answers it receives from those we ask it of. All who accept the Bible as their rule of life agree in saying that the Christian must not be worldly, that he must fight against the *world* as well as the

flesh and the devil. But when we ask what it is that you mean by being worldly, what a babel of contending answers do we receive ! To one man the world and worldliness mean one thing, to another something quite different. Each man draws some line for himself beyond which all is forbidden, within which all is allowed. In the matter of amusements, for instance, one draws it at the theatre, another at the ball-room, another at a race-course, another at a card-table, another at a novel. It has even been drawn at some particular fashion or texture of dress. Literature, recreation, study, business, all have their various degrees and shades of worldliness.

So that practically, and as a matter of fact, it comes to this, that the world and worldliness are for a large number of worthy and well-meaning people just that pursuit, that indulgence, that amusement in which they do not engage and others do. The world they are to shun and dread is, in one word, always some one else's world—never their own. Is it any wonder, then, that those who make no profession of religion whatever, those who own themselves men of the world and nothing else, laugh at distinctions so nice and varied and so unpractical as these ? Is it any wonder that they say to us, "It will be time enough for us to forsake the world, to shun its ways, to break away from its customs, when you Christians have agreed amongst yourselves as to what really is this world that we are to shun. We do not see how, nor why, your religious world, as you call it, is any better than—nay, we do not see, on your own showing, wherein it is really very different from our own. Meanwhile we find this world in which we live—our world, whatever it may be, suits us well enough. It is not perfect, perhaps, but we are not going, at any rate, to give it up until you show us why we should do so, and until you show us some other and better one to which we may migrate from our own."

And yet they who so speak must be mistaken—there are, there must be, if we believe what Christ and His apostles tell us, still the two worlds essentially distinct and apart ; and if so, it must of all things concern us to understand wherein they differ, and why one should be in friendship, the other in enmity with God.

Now, perhaps we shall most readily understand this question if, for the moment, we put ourselves back at that point when, as we have seen, men did easily understand it ; if

we imagine ourselves living in those days when Christendom was one distinctly visible world and Heathendom another. Let us see what it was that caused such great difference and contrast between these two ; why it was that the one was all darkness and the other all light ; one a kingdom of death, and the other a kingdom of life.

Another apostle shall tell us this. St. Paul, in the terrible description of the Heathendom of his day, with which he begins his Epistle to the Romans, tells us that the cause of all its misery and sin was this, "that when men knew God they glorified him not as God." They changed His truth into a lie. They worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. It was a mistake, a terrible mistake, they had made as to the nature of the world in which they lived that had caused all this misery. They made it their God, their only and supreme good. They worshipped it, they served it ; and its worship and service were really their whole religion.

Many as the gods of the heathen were, they were, each and all of them, only so many forms in which men worshipped themselves, their possessions, their pleasures, their occupations, their passions. The gods of the heathen, by whatever name they called them, were each and all of them some created thing which they had come to worship instead of God. They worshipped Power, Knowledge, Wealth, Pleasure, Force, Passion, Art, by many names, under many forms ; but they all meant the same thing, namely, something God had made and given to man put in God's place and made man's God, made the object of his trust, of his faith, his service. They lived for these things ; they knew of nothing higher or better. And these being all of them creatures of this world, those who worshipped and served them were necessarily, therefore, living for this world, for this present life only. To be powerful, wise, happy in this world, to get as much as each one could of its good things and to keep and enjoy them as long as might be, this was all they asked of their gods, all they cared for in life. They had lost the thought of living not for self nor for this life only, but for God and their fellow-men for His sake. They had lost sight of the truth that all these things they worshipped were not good or gods in themselves, had in themselves no power to make men happy, were only good for men so far as they used them for God's glory, because that is man's only true happiness.

And as they worshipped these so they served them, that is they became their slaves; they lived for these and these only. These were all they had to live for. That other world of which we know, that eternal life which is revealed to us, they had no thought of. The world after death was for them the shadowiest and gloomiest of things, a dim, unlovely realm where ghosts flitted to and fro, and sighed for the substantial joys and delights of the world they had left for ever. The idea of sacrificing anything in this life for such a life as that never entered their minds.

And then, as this present life was all in all for them, as they cared for no other, their one aim was to have and hold as much of it as they could grasp or snatch from others. Like hungry guests at an ill-spread banquet they crowded and strove for place and food, and the strong trampled down the weak, the rich were gorged and the poor were sent empty away. And so the hungry hated those who feasted, and strife and war and cruelty filled the whole earth with violence. Every one was for self and none for another, or for God. This it was that made their life increasingly base, selfish, and therefore unhappy, and all this came from trying to live in God's world without God. This was their worldliness!

What then was the unworldliness of the Christian in Christ's kingdom? It was that His rule of life was just the reverse of this. It was, "Worship and serve thy Creator rather than the creature. This world is not your good, is not your God, not by its bread alone does man live, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. This world is God's world. He is the maker of it, as He is your Maker and Redeemer. But for you He has provided something better, more precious, than any created thing, more precious than all creation—even Himself. Give thyself to Him, live for Him, serve Him, sacrifice to Him, if needs be, all or any of those possessions, those gifts, those pleasures which He has given thee. Pass through this world as a stranger and a pilgrim in it, using it, not serving it; in it, but not of it; not depending on it for happiness, disregarding its claims, defying its rules whenever these are not also God's. Do this and thou shalt have eternal life, that other life, that other world which He has promised to those who do this—not dim and shadowy, cold and repellant, but glorious, beautiful, full of satisfying joys and abiding pleasures that are at His right hand for ever."

It was in the power of this new life that

Christendom went forth to overcome the world. It was in the might of that new spirit which held life and all life's joys and treasures as nothing compared with the love and the favour of God—that men went forth to strive, to suffer, to die if needs were, if only they might live for ever with God. It was this that made men brave, pure, self-denying, self-sacrificing. It was this that made them pitiful, unselfish, loving, helpful, no longer fiercely striving for this world's possessions (why should they, when they had another world to live in for ever?) no longer hateful and hating one another; for self-love and the selfish and cruel life it causes were cast out by a deeper passion, even by the love of God. This was the unworldliness of the Kingdom of Christ then, and this it should be still and now. To be unworldly is simply not to make the world nor any part of it our supreme and only good, nor success nor joy in it our only aim in life. To be worldly is to do this. The world for us then is not any particular place, or pursuit, or pleasure, or occupation. It is all of, any of, these from which we have banished God. It is any realm or domain of life into which the thought of His presence does not enter and abide. It is nothing else than that far country which is yet so near to every one of us, that country, far from our Father's home and yet close to our feet at every turn, into which we enter whenever we take our portion of goods and seek to have and enjoy it apart from the Father who gave it us.

And now we see how simple and easy, in principle at least, is that distinction which we found at first so hard to realise. The question for us is never *where* we are, but *what* we are. We cannot fence off any part of life and say, on this side is worldliness, on that it is not. To attempt this is about as wise and hopeful as it would be to build a wall around us in order to keep out a fog or a pestilence. The evil thing is in the air. It rises up all round us, it penetrates within our artificial defences and limits, it enters into our homes, it fills our churches, it fans the leaves of our Bibles, it mingles with the very breath of our prayers; it is in one word the *spirit* of the world that we have to dread, and that is everywhere. And this can only be cast out by the spirit of that other world and that other life to which God calls us and which He is ever ready to give us, that spirit which, if we yield to it, will so "transform us in the renewing of our mind" that our whole pur-

pose and plan of life shall be changed once and for ever, and shall become, instead of life for this world and for ourselves only, life for God, and God in all our life.

Such a rule, it is clear, frees us at once from all those petty difficulties of detail with which this question seemed at first beset. It is not a set of precepts as to this or that, as to when and how and where; it is a broad, abiding, simple principle.

How it shall be applied must vary with the circumstances of each individual life. What proves hurtful to one man's spiritual life may not be so to another's. The pleasures that tempt one man prove no temptation to another, what to one is most exciting dissipation to another is mere wearisome custom. But for all alike the same principle applies: avoid that which you find is drawing you away from God; shrink from that which you find is putting itself for you in the place of God. That is for you, whatever it may be for another, the world which you are to shun, and its friendship is and ever must be enmity against God.

To forget this broad, deep, searching rule, and to endeavour to avoid worldliness by measuring off some portion of this world's life, and dwelling within it isolated and apart from all the rest, is to make a double mistake and to do a double injury to ourselves first and then to our fellow-men. To ourselves, because not only do we not escape the spirit of worldliness by thus withdrawing ourselves within purely artificial limits and defences, but we often intensify it. There is no subtler, no deadlier form of worldliness than that which haunts with its malarious influence the little sets and coteries in which those who deem the world of common life all unworthy of them gather themselves together, thanking God that they are not as other men are, and yet standing farther off from Him, in their spiritual pride and Pharisaism, than the mere man of the world whom they look down upon, ay, even though he has not yet learned to smite upon his breast and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Their "religious world," as they with an unconscious irony so often call it, is in very truth a world which they worship, a world whose favour they court, whose rules they follow with a slavish, timid obedience, and which is for them an idol that they serve with a truly idolatrous veneration.

Not to ourselves only, however, is such isolation injurious, but to others also. To the world around us such a setting up of an arti-

ficially separate religious territory must prove seriously hurtful. For in proportion as the citizens of the other world withdraw themselves from this present one, in the same proportion does the world they withdraw from grow more and more worldly.

The disciples of Christ are the salt of the earth, but if the salt be withdrawn the earth it should have preserved grows rapidly corrupt. They are the light of the world. But if the light instead of shining out into all the house is hidden under the bushel of some close-fitting sectarian covering, how great will be the darkness that will spread itself around! The world of ungodliness left thus to itself without the counteracting forces, the restraining, purifying influences of that kingdom of God which should be in it as the leaven working grain upon grain through the whole mass, turns putrid with a terrible rapidity. And so by such feeble and cowardly withdrawal of the Church from the world, the Church and the world both suffer. The Church becomes not unworldly but worldly, the world becomes more and more the devil's world instead of God's.

To what fearful evils, to what perversion and corruption of religion for the Church, to what desperate recklessness of unclean living for the world such a mistake must lead is clearly to be seen in those ages when the Church, appalled at the evils, the crimes, the horrors of Paganism, instead of contending with them fled from them far away into the wilderness, built Herself homes in the desert and peopled them with men and women who sought to lead in safety, far from all sight and sound of evil, what they thought was the religious life—a timid selfish life of contemplation and fasting and prayer and praise, but *not* a life of brave enduring effort and sacrifice for others' good, not the life that,—deep-rooted in the love of our fellow-man, nourished by the joys and deepened by the sympathies of our common humanity,—grows strong and fresh and free beneath the open sky of heaven and the approving smile of God.

No wonder that religion, thus divorced from common life, became distorted, one-sided, fantastic, superstitious, unreal. No wonder that the common life of men, thus deprived of religion, grew fouler, baser, more and more monstrously wicked, until at last the sword of the barbarians—sent in judgment that yet was fraught with mercy—cleansed the world of its worst pollutions and gave men back the sacred fire on the hearths of

homes that, though rude and rough, were at least the homes of men and not the dens and styes of beasts. Never, since then, has the fatal experiment of trying to create a visible and material severance between the two worlds of divine and human life been tried on so large a scale nor with such terrible results. But never since then has it been tried, upon any scale, in any measure, without producing, in sure and certain proportion to the extent to which it has been tried, the like result: religion enfeebled, morality depraved, society degraded and debased.

If the Church of Christ is to keep a pure and undefiled religion, to maintain a true and high morality, to save human society from perishing of corruption, it must live the life of Christ in this present evil world; it must go about, as He went, amongst men, amongst all sorts and conditions of men, doing good, healing with a touch at once human and divine—human in its sympathy, divine in its power and purity—all manner of diseases; ever *in* the world and yet never *of* the world, never conformed to it, ever striving to transform it to the image of Her Lord.

But, if we do this, if we follow this rule honestly, what shall we lose, what shall we gain? What we shall lose we cannot tell; possibly much in this life—pleasures, gains, success, friendship, honours—we may lose or we may not, as the case may be. What we shall gain, however, is certain: we gain our very selves, our true, our eternal life. Our Lord has summed up this question of profit and loss for us long ago. We may lose, He tells us, the whole world, but we must gain our own souls. What shall it profit us to lose our souls and gain the whole world?

And yet, after all, do we lose so much by the choice? Is it true that he who gives up in heart and purpose the world for God does always lose it even in this life? Surely not so. For when did man ever give up anything to God his Father that he did not receive back his own gift a thousand times enriched with blessings? We give ourselves to God; what do we receive back? A nobler, purer, better self, enriched with all the powers and graces

of a nobler life! We sacrifice our goods, our wealth, our ambition, to God; we get back a contented and peaceful spirit which can dispense with wealth and success, and without which wealth and success are no blessings! We discharge the duties of our life for God, and there comes into these, even the smallest and the lowliest of them, an interest, a dignity, a beauty, unknown before, as we think of each one of these, this is the work my Father has given me to do. We give those we love to Him, dedicating and training them for Him; are they lost to us even when He takes them from us? Are they not in the very act of that taking given us back in the assurance of their eternal peace, joy, and safety in His presence? Are they not for us from that hour treasures laid up for ever in heaven, where the rust and moth of fretting care and change come never, and death may not break through to steal them away.

Nay, the material world itself, this beautiful earth on which we live, is it made for us less or more beautiful when we have learned to look on it as God's handiwork and God's gift to man? Surely as we do so it becomes for us glorified and beautified with that "light that never shone on sea or shore." Surely as we look on the starry heavens, as we walk by strath, or stream, or sea, the heavens above shine with a new glory as they sing, "the hand that made us is divine;" the earth grows lovelier as it testifies that it and the fulness of it are the Lord's. The sea has in its ever-moaning waters an under-song of joy and hope as it tells of Him who has set the sands for its perpetual boundary, and who holdeth its wild winds and waves in the hollow of His hand.

Yes, if there is a sense in which we may not "love the world nor the things of the world," there is another, a truer, a deeper sense in which we may love them all. The same book which says to us so sternly, "Love not the world," says to us also, "God so loved the world" that He sent His Son to die for it. That world, His, our Father's, created by His power, redeemed by His love, that world—in Him for Him, with Him—we may love; and that world, if we so love it, we shall one day enjoy and rule over with Him for ever and for ever!

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE.

By E. H. PLUMPTRE, D.D., DEAN OF WELLS.

The National Anthem : Adapted for the Year of Jubilee.

GOD save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen.
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious ;
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen.

Thy choicest gifts in store,
On her be pleased to pour,
Long may she reign.
May she defend our laws,
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice,
God save the Queen.

Seed sown through fifty years,
Sown or in smiles or tears,
Grant her to reap :
Her heritage of fame,
Her pure and stainless name,
Her people free from shame,
Guard Thou and keep.

O'er lands and waters wide,
Through changing time and tide,
Hear when we call :
Where'er our English tongue
To wind and wave hath rung,
Still be our anthem sung ;
God save us all.

Jubilee Hymn.*

FOR all Thy countless bounties,
Through varied chance and change ;
For old familiar blessings,
For mercies new and strange ;
For laws that widen slowly,
For ordered life and free ;
We thank Thee, Lord, and welcome
Our year of Jubilee.

For queenly wisdom, sought for
In prayer of early days ;
For guidance pure and noble,
That won the wide world's praise ;
For children taught to follow
Their father's footsteps true ;
For afterglow of brightness ;
We now our thanks renew.

For peace with all her triumphs,
Peace welcomed after war ;
For prosperous years that brought us
Rich gifts from near and far ;
For days of darker outlook,
That tried the nation's nerve ;
For all alike we thank Thee ;
Thou gav'st ; Thou canst preserve.

For onward march of knowledge,
That grows from more to more ;
For words of noblest wisdom
From poet's golden lore ;
For these we praise Thee, Father.
Oh, make us Sons of Light,
Against the hosts of darkness ;
With these, for Thee, to fight !

The fifty years behind us
Have told their wondrous tale ;
The fifty years before us
Lie yet within the veil ;
Grant, Lord, that all our future
May work out good begun ;
That, in the tasks that wait us,
The goal at last be won !

Through all Thy saints and servants,
Send forth Thy Light and Truth ;
Renew our nation's greatness,
As 'twere an eagle's youth :
So, with full hearts of gladness,
We lift our souls to Thee,
And keep in hope and courage,
Our Year of Jubilee. *Amen.*

* An edition of this hymn, with music by C. W. Larrington, will be published immediately by Messrs. Novello, Ewer & Co., Berners Street, W.

WALKS IN OLD PARIS.

By AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE.

FIRST PAPER.

ENGLISHMEN are often especially impressed with Paris as a city of contrasts, because one side of the principal line

the signal for all the troubles of the Fronde. It was at No. 3—then called L'auberge des Trois Pigeons—that Ravallac was lodging when he was waiting to murder Henri IV.; here the first gun was fired in the Revolution of July, 1830, which overthrown Charles X.; and here, in the Revolution of 1848, a bloody combat took place between the insurgents and the military. Throughout this street, as Marie Antoinette was first entering Paris, the poissardes brought her bouquets, singing—

"La rose est la reine des fleurs,
Antoinette est la reine des cœurs ;"

and here, as she was being taken to the scaffold, they crowded round her execution-cart and shouted—

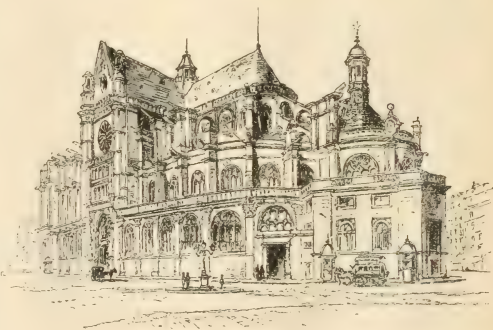
"Madam Veto avait promis
De faire égorger tout Paris,
Mais son coup a manqué
Grâce à nos canoniers ;
Dansons la carmagnole
Au bruit du son
Du canon !"

Who can pass for the first time along the street without a reminiscence of the last journey of the pale queen ; of the little child, in front of the Oratoire, who sent her a kiss with its hand, the only moment when she seemed likely to give way



Fontaine des Innocents.

of hotels frequented by our countrymen : who looks down upon the broad, luxurious Rue de Rivoli, all modern gaiety and radiance, whilst the other side of their courtyards opens upon the busy working Rue St. Honoré, lined by the tall, many-windowed houses which have witnessed so many Revolutions. They have all the picturesqueness of innumerable balconies, high slated roofs with dormer windows, window-boxes full of carnations and bright with crimson flowers through the summer, and they overlook an ever-changing crowd, in great part composed of men in blouses and women in white aprons and caps. Ever since the fourteenth century the Rue St. Honoré has been one of the busiest streets in Paris. It was the gate leading into this street which was attacked by Jeanne Darc in 1429. Here, in 1648, the barricade was raised which gave



Church of St. Eustache.

to tears ; of the horrible crowd on the steps of St. Roch, whose curses rose like one voice, whilst their victim, calm and majestic, for-

gave the insults of which she seemed unconscious?

St. Roch contains the tombs of Mignard and Le Notre, and that of the infamous Cardinal Dubois, minister under the Regent Orleans, whose death, says St. Simon, was "a consolation to great and small, indeed to all Europe." Hence, passing the Oratory, famous for the preaching of Gretry, Coquerel, and Adolphe Monod, we must turn eastward to keep within old Paris. Down a street on the left (Rue Sauval) we soon see the odd-looking circular Halle au Blé, only interesting as marking the site of the old palace called Hôtel de Nesle, built by Queen Blanche of Castille, who received there the homage of Thibault, the poet-king of Navarre, when he sang—

"Amours me fait
comencier
Une chanson
nouvelle;
Et me vuet
enseigner
A amer la plus
belle
Qui soit el mont
vivent."

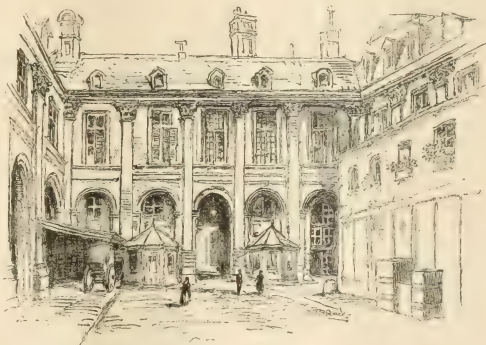
Hence, also, when wearied of the importunity of his love, Queen Blanche sent Thibault to fight in the Holy Land, where he hoped to conquer the affections of the queen by his deeds of valour. Here the beautiful queen died (1253) on a bed of straw, from necessity's sake, and the hotel, after passing through a number of royal hands, was given by Charles VI. to his brother, the Duke of Orleans—"afin de le loger commodément près du Louvre, et dans un lieu qui répondit à sa qualité." Hence, as the guilty paramour of his sister-in-law, Isabeau de Bavière, the Duke went to his murder in the Rue des Francs Bourgeois.

It was Catherine de Medicis who pulled down the Hôtel de Nesle, and she built another more splendid palace in its stead, called from its later proprietors, Hôtel de Soissons. The cruel queen had her observatory here, and when a light was seen passing there at night, the passers-by used to say, "The queen-mother is consulting the stars; it is an evil omen!" Even of the second palace, nothing

remains to this day except a fluted column, resting on a fountain, and attached to the exterior of the Halle. This is said to have been used for the observations of Catherine's astrologer. Such was the fame, however, of the Hôtel de Soissons that Piganiol de la Force declares that, except the Louvre, no dwelling-house was more noble and illustrious, while to give its history, or rather that of the Hôtels de Nesle, de Bahaigue, d'Orleans, de la Reine-Mère, and des Princes, as it was successively called, it would be necessary to touch on the great events of every reign during its long existence.

Houses now cover the gardens of the Hôtel de Soissons, which, under the Regency, were covered by the wooden booths used in the stock-jobbing of Law and his Mississippi scheme.

We are close to the Halles Centrales, occupying the district formerly called Champeaux, which, from time immemorial, was at once a centre for provisions and a place of sepulture. The great



Hôtel de St. Aignan.

roads leading to Roman towns were always bordered by tombs, and the highways leading to the Roman Lutece, on the island in the Seine, were no exception to the rule. Especially popular as a place of sepulture was the road across the marshes, afterwards known as "grant chaussée Monsieur Saint Denys." A chapel dedicated here to St. Michael at a very early date was the precursor of a church dedicated to the Holy Innocents, built under Louis le Gros, whose favourite oath was "par les saints de Bethléem." The whole surrounding district had by this time become a cemetery, and the ancient oratory was exclusively used for prayers for the dead. Philip Augustus surrounded the cemetery with walls, and it became the favourite burial-place of the middle classes. Of great extent, it was surrounded by cloisters, decorated with frescoes of the Dance of Death, and contained several

hermitages, some of which were inhabited from motives of devotion, but one at least as an enforced penance, by Renée de Vendôme—"la recluse de St. Innocent,"—shut up here for life as a punishment for adultery. The church, and the cemetery with its cloisters, were closed in 1786. Their site is now covered by the vast buildings of the modern Halles, and nothing remains of the past except the Fontaine des Innocents, dating from 1550, which formerly stood against the church wall, and which, much changed as to arrangement, and lifted upon a disproportionate base, still stands in a garden-enclosure at the south-west of the market. Though alterations have stripped it of its original interest, the fountain is still a *chef d'œuvre* of the French Renaissance of the sixteenth century, and its earlier and still existing decorations, by Jean Goujon, are of the greatest beauty.

Behind the Halles, which are ever filled with a roar of voices like a storm at sea, rises the huge mass of the great church of St. Eustache, the most complete specimen of Renaissance architecture in Paris, a Gothic five-sided church in essentials, but classical in all its details, and possessing a certain quaint, surprising, and imposing grandeur of its own, though brimming with faults from an architectural point of view. Henri Martin, who calls it "the poetical church of St. Eustache," considers it the last breath of the religious architecture of the Middle Ages. Chapels surround the interior, and in one of them kneels the effigy of the minister Colbert, attired in that mantle and collar of the Saint-Esprit which so offended the exclusive spirit of the aristocratic St. Simon. St. Eustache was amongst the churches in which the most tumultuous carnival orgies were held during the Fêtes de la Raison.

Hitherto we have seen little more than sites where old Paris once stood, but a little behind St. Eustache, in the street called Rue Tiquetonne, is a real relic of the past, in a massive quadrangular tower, belonging to the ancient Hôtel de Bourgogne, sometimes called Hôtel d'Artois, having been built in the thirteenth century by Robert, Comte d'Artois, brother of St. Louis. In 1548 the hotel was sold to the Compagnie de la Passion, who bought it that they might represent their mysteries there. Thence it passed to more mundane actors, and eventually to the Opéra Comique. The old tower, which still remains, had been added to the original hotel by Jean sans Peur, Duke of Burgundy, when he belied his name by his terror after having murdered the Duke of Orleans, and erected this residence,

"toute de pierre de taille, pour sa sûreté, le plus fort qu'il put, et terminée de machicolis, où toutes les nuits il couchoit." The staircase is very curious, winding round a column, from which branches of an oak spring at the top, and cover the vault with their stone foliage.

All the streets eastward from St. Eustache are more or less picturesque, and all have some story of the past. In the Rue St. Honoré, beyond the entrance of the Rue de la Tonnellerie, being then very narrow at this point, and known as the Rue de la Ferronerie, the visionary Ravallac assassinated Henri IV. He had come at first from his native Angoulême to try to persuade the king to revoke the Edict of Nantes, and with an imaginary revelation from Heaven to confide to him. But failing to obtain an audience, he returned four months later as a murderer. In the narrow street, where the royal carriage was stopped by two carts in the way, he came upon his victim, and mounting upon one of the wheels, plunged a knife into the king's side. Henri threw up his arms, saying, "I am wounded;" then a second blow pierced his heart, and he never spoke again. Meantime Ravallac, immovable, waited his arrest.

The next opening on our left is the Rue St. Denis, which is said to have been marked out by the blood of the sainted bishop, when he walked this way, after his martyrdom, with his head under his arm. This street, which was hung throughout with silk and trappings, "*à ciel couvert*," for the extravagant coronation of Isabeau de Bavière, contains the picturesque Gothic church of SS. Leu et Giller, a dependency of the abbey of St. Magloire.

The Rue de Rambuteau now leads us into the Rue St. Martin, containing the church of St. Mery, with the tower which has given the war note of many revolutions, when its tocsin, sounding day and night, has sent a thrill through thousands. The most interesting feature of the building is a small subterranean chapel of St. Pierre, rebuilt on the site and plan of that which contained the tomb of St. Mery, Abbot of St. Martin at Autun, who coming hither in the seventh century to venerate the tombs of St. Denis and St. Germain, remained three years as a hermit in a little cell attached to this church.

High up the street are the old buildings of the Priory of St. Martin des Champs, founded by Henri I. in 1060. It was only enclosed within the limits of the town on the con-

struction of its fourth ramparts in the beginning of the fourteenth century. Hence its strong walls and towers, of which a specimen may be seen in the Rue St. Martin. At the Revolution the monastery was at first, for a short time, converted into a manufactory of arms, but, as early as 1798, was appropriated to its present use of Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers. The refectory, now used as a library, has two ranges of vaults, divided by slender stone pillars, and lighted at the ends by beautiful rose windows. On one side is the reader's pulpit, one of the oldest and best refectory pulpits in existence, approached by a staircase in the thickness of the wall. Of the old priory church, the single nave, with a wooden roof, was rebuilt in the thirteenth century, but its choir and its radiating chapels are of the eleventh century, and the earliest examples of Gothic architecture in the capital. The fine neighbouring church of St. Nicholas des Champs was founded in 1119, though its present buildings are only of the first part of the fifteenth century.

The streets immediately east of the Rue St. Denis are considered to be the St. Giles's of Paris. Several are curious, but the Rue Beaubourg is especially picturesque with its sharp turns and gabled overhanging houses; and there is none of the squalid poverty apparent which is found in every great English city. Entering the Rue du Temple, and turning south, we find, near the angle of the Rue Rambuteau, the magnificent old Hôtel de St. Aignan, built by Pierre Lemuet, which belonged to the Comte d'Avaux, a celebrated diplomatist of the seventeenth century, and afterwards to the Duc de St. Aignan, "chef du conseil royal des finances" under Louis XIV. The stately entrance, which retains its magnificently carved doors, leads to a court surrounded by Corinthian pilasters and arcades, now used for warehouses. Almost opposite this, the Rue Rambuteau has cut through the Hôtel de Mesmes, where the famous Constable Anne de Montmorency died of the wounds he had received at the battle of St. Denis, November 12, 1567.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

The Story of a Fortune.

By WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RIVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER I.—AN ARRIVAL.



IT IS past midnight. A serene moon, set in a purple sky, shines on the Lago Maggiore, crowning with a golden au-

reole the snow-crested peaks of the Helvetic Alps, and bathing in mellow light the quaintly picturesque and superbly placed town of Locarno. But Locarno sleeps, the streets are deserted, and a small boat, which follows swiftly in the wake of the moonbeams, approaches the jetty unperceived. It contains four men; two are rowing, the third is steering and minding the sail; the fourth lies huddled up in the bottom of the boat, his bandaged head resting on a cushion, his pale face streaked with blood.

When his companions, all of whom wear red shirts, have made fast the boat to the jetty, they lift him tenderly out, and two, placing themselves on either side of their wounded comrade, half lead, half carry him to an inn a few hundred paces from the landing place. The doors are closed and all is silent within, but a strong pull at the bell brings a head speedily to one of the upper windows.

"Who is there?"

"We, and Leonino is hurt. Come down and open quickly."

The next moment the doors are thrown open and a stout little man, with nothing much on save a white shirt, appears at the threshold in a state of great excitement.

"Dreadful, dreadful!" he exclaims. "Poor Signor Leonino, is he much hurt? How did it happen? I knew it would come to this at last. Yet better so than that he should fall into the hands of those thrice accursed Tedeschi. But tell me how it happened afterwards. Let us get him up-stairs at once. And here, Maximilano (shouting), fetch the doctor immediately. Go, running; tell Dr. Fadio to come quickly. I hope you are not in pain, dear Leonino. You can walk just a little—a very little—and we will support you up-stairs."

"I can get one leg before the other, if that is what you mean, Martino," gasps Leonino. "But stand I cannot. Yes, I shall be glad to get to my room and lie down. My head pains me terribly, and that bullet in my shoulder burns like fire. I shall never get over this, Giacomo."

"Don't say that, Signor," says one of the red-shirted ones. "Dr. Fadio shall dress your wounds, and in a month you will be as strong as ever. Come, now, lean on me, put one arm round Umberto's neck thus, and we will carry you to your room. It is not far off. Courage, steady, now!"

The room to which they took him was on the first floor, large, airy, well lighted, and handsomely furnished. In one corner stood a bed on which Leonino was laid. The man whom he had called Martino, the keeper of the inn, took off his shoes and was proceeding to undress him.

"Don't," murmured Leonino. "I feel very much exhausted, let me rest a few minutes."

At this moment a woman *en déshabille*, and with a scared face, glided into the room.

"*Mon dieu! mon dieu!*" she exclaimed in an intense whisper. "What is this which has taken place? My poor patron! Is he killed?"

"Not at all," answered Giacomo sharply. "Dr. Fadio will soon put him to rights. But had you not better go? The less he is disturbed just now the better, and see, he sleeps."

"Is that Gabrielle?" asked Leonino feebly, opening his eyes.

"Yes, monsieur, it is I, Gabrielle."

"Vera!"

"She is quite well and very happy. She is in bed; shall I bring her?"

"My poor Vera! Yes, bring her. But stay, it is a pity to wake the child."

"Do not bring anybody at present, if you please, mademoiselle. Bring rather sponges, hot water, and towels. When I have dressed monsieur's wounds then he may perhaps see his daughter." This in French.

The speaker was Dr. Fadio, a tall, middle-aged gentleman, leathern-skinned and lantern-jawed, with bright black eyes and a pleasant smile. He was an old army surgeon, and without more ado he began, deftly and tenderly, to examine his patient's wounds.

Gabrielle and Martino stood by to help him. The one held a lamp, the other a basin of water. Near the window, and in the light of the moon, stood the three red-shirted men, with folded arms, looking sadly and sternly on. They were pale, seemed almost overcome with fatigue, and the head of one and the arm of another were bandaged, as if they too had been wounded.

The wound in Leonino's head was long and deep, and as the doctor examined it his face grew very grave. When the hurt had been stitched and plastered he extracted the bullet which was lodged in the shoulder, an operation that did not appear to be attended with any great difficulty.

"Who will watch with him?" asked Fadio in Italian, when all was finished.

"I will," said Gabrielle and Martino. "We will," chorused the red shirts.

"Nonsense," answered the doctor, "you three are fit for nothing but bed. What is the matter with your head, Umberto? I must see to it presently. Let Gabrielle watch. I shall return at sunrise."

Whereupon Fadio beckoned them all to leave the room, and after giving a few directions to Gabrielle, and casting a last look at his patient, he followed them.

"Well, Signor Doctor, what do you think?" asked Martino, drawing him into a room near the foot of the staircase. "Can you pull him through?"

"I am not sure. He is very badly hurt; still, neither of his wounds is mortal, and if he had not lost so much blood I should have little fear. The question is whether he can rally. A few hours will tell. How was it, Giacomo? Another brush with the Austrians?"

"Sì, Signor Dottore. It was an attempt to rescue Silvio."

"A rash undertaking."

"True; but he and Leonino are great friends, and Leonino risked his life to save a friend, as he has done many a time before. Pietri went in disguise the other day to Lavereo, and contrived to communicate with

Silvio and convey to him a file and some cord. It was arranged that he should make the attempt last night. We were to be there with the boat, and ready to give him a helping hand if he should be pursued by the guard. That was the chief risk, for with a file and a cord anybody could get out of the fort. But the night was too light. Silvio was seen before he had got well out of the dry ditch, followed and recaptured. We tried to rescue him; shots were exchanged; Beppo was killed, Leonino wounded, as you see, and all of us are in want of a little plaster, I think."

"Good; I will plaster you, and then you must each take a glass of wine and go to bed. Yes, a rash undertaking indeed. The idea of five Red Shirts trying to carry off a prisoner under the very noses of an Austrian demi-brigade! Nobody but Garibaldi—or a mad Englishman—would have had the audacity to concoct such a scheme, much less to execute it. The wonder is you were not all killed or taken."

"We were beaten; but we made them pay dearly," broke in Giacomo fiercely. "We killed four; Leonino ran the sergeant of the guard through, just as he got that cut on the head. If it had not been for that we should have been taken. But the sergeant's death seemed to confuse his men, and we profited by their hesitation to shove off. The bullet in Leonino's shoulder was a parting shot. Fortunately nobody else was hit, or we should not be here. The soldiers did get a boat out and chase us; but we ran close under the bank, under the shade of some trees, and they shot past us. Leonino is a fine fellow, doctor, and a true friend to Italy. It would be a thousand pities if he were to die."

"I will do my best to keep him alive, Giacomo, both for the sake of Italy and that dear little dark-eyed Vera. But man proposes and God disposes, and Leonino is badly hurt and very weak."

CHAPTER II.—A DEPARTURE.

THREE hours later Dr. Fadio was again with his patient.

"Has he slept?" he asked Gabrielle, who sat by the bedside.

"A little," said Leonino, opening his eyes. He was a man in the prime of life, with blue eyes, tawny hair and beard, and a bold, handsome face, but its general expression was that of one who is oppressed with care or cherishes the memory of a great sorrow.

"And how do you feel?"

A wistful smile was the answer.

"Not very well, I am afraid?"

"Very ill. I never felt like this before. I have got my death-stroke. Poor Vera! no mother, no father."

The doctor counted his patient's pulse and watched him attentively several minutes.

"He must have a little beef-tea every hour, Gabrielle, and when he feels faint give him a spoonful of cognac."

"*Oui, monsieur.*"

"Vera; may I see Vera?"

"Yes, if you will not let yourself get excited; but only for a few minutes. You can fetch her, Gabrielle. I will wait."

In a few minutes Gabrielle returned, leading by the hand a little girl of some seven years old. The child had a wonderfully sweet face, and though her eyes were dark, her curls were chestnut, and she bore a striking resemblance to Leonino.

A smile of deepest love lit up the father's face.

"Darling Vera!" he said. "Lift her up on the bed, Gabrielle; place her near me."

"We will leave you together for a few minutes," said the doctor, glancing at the nurse, and then the two went out of the room.

"Are you ill, papa dear?" asked the child in English, as she nestled up to her father and placed her cheek against his.

"Very ill, darling," answered Leonino in the same tongue; "I have been badly hurt."

"Hurt! Oh, dear! Who hurt you?"

"The Austrians."

"Those wicked Austrians! How I hate them! Why does not somebody kill them all? Why don't you kill them, papa?"

"That is not so easy, my pet. I am afraid they have killed me this time."

"No, no, no, papa! It is not possible. You must not die. If you die, Vera will die too."

"I will do my best to live for your sake, darling. But it may be a long time before I am better—and if—Gabrielle will take care of you. She is a good woman, and I think loves you, and you love her, do you not?"

"Yes, dear papa, next to you; but a long, long way after. I have nobody like you, dear papa."

"Well, she shall be your *bonne* always, if she will, and I think she will. How would you like to go to your grandpapa?"

"No, no; I never saw him. I love no

one like you, dear papa. Let me stay with you always—always."

"God Almighty bless you, my darling! and may the pure spirit of your mother watch over you!" murmured Leonino in a broken voice. And then he drew the child closer to him, and there followed a long silence.

When the doctor and Gabrielle re-entered the room Vera was fast asleep, and Leonino's eyes being closed, he too seemed to sleep. They made a striking picture. The child's bright, rosy face touched one of her father's pale and hollow cheeks, her chestnut hair mingled with his tawny beard, one dimpled arm was round his neck, one little hand was pressed in his.

"Let us leave them for a little while," whispered Fadio. "No harm is being done. But prepare the beef-tea. He does not rally much, and unless we keep up his strength he will sink."

In half an hour they returned, and at the doctor's suggestion Leonino reluctantly allowed the child to be taken away to her breakfast.

"But you will let me see her again?" he said imploringly.

"Certainly, when you have taken your beef-tea and rested awhile. I want you to sleep; there is no medicine like sleep."

The beef-tea taken, Leonino sank wearily on his pillow, shut his eyes, and tried to sleep, and the doctor left him for a while to Gabrielle.

After an hour's uneasy slumber Leonino awoke.

"Gabrielle!"

"*Oui, monsieur.* How do you feel yourself?"

"Bad. Give me a taste of that brandy. Ah, that gives one a little strength; but it won't last long, I fear. I have something to say to you, Gabrielle."

"*Oui, monsieur.*"

"You love Vera?"

"As if she were my very own. Have I not brought her up? Since her poor mother died has she not been everything to me?"

"And you will be kind to her?"

"Oh, *monsieur!*" said the *bonne* in an injured tone, "how can you ask? It is doing me a wrong."

"Well, listen. I don't feel as if I should get better, and I judge from the doctor's manner that he thinks as I feel: I have made no will; but I shall write a few lines to my father, asking him to take charge of Vera, and that you and she may never be

separated. You will take this letter and the child to London, first writing to tell my father what has happened. . . . You are paying attention, Gabrielle?"

"*Oui, monsieur,*" said the *bonne*, wiping her eyes, which were red with weeping.

"My father is a hard man; but he will be good to you and Vera for my sake. I have made no will, and shall make none; but, to prevent the authorities troubling you afterwards, I will give into your possession now all my money and papers. If I should get better you can give me them back. Open my trunk; you will find the keys in my pocket."

Gabrielle took the keys and unlocked a large iron-bound trunk, which stood in one corner of the room.

"Bring my portfolio and the little iron box, which you will find at the bottom, right under my clothes," said Leonino.

Gabrielle took these two articles, laid them on the table near her master's bed, and at his request brought writing materials and sealing-wax.

Then Leonino, sitting up in bed, wrote a letter to his father, enclosed with it several papers, made the whole up into a packet, and sealed it carefully with his signet ring.

"These," he said, taking a packet from the portfolio, "are letters from Garibaldi, Mazzini, and other friends engaged in the revolutionary movement. Destroy them all. But these" (pointing to a second packet) "are family papers of importance. Be sure you give them all to my father. You may also find a few bank-notes in the portfolio. I have always been careless about money—perhaps that is the reason I was never robbed. In the little iron box is also money, both gold and notes—several thousand liras, I think; never mind counting it now. If I don't get better you will, of course, pay Martino and the doctor, and everybody else, and then you must give the men who were with me, Giacomo, Giuseppe, and Umberto, each two hundred and fifty liras. Then, after paying your expenses to England and taking five hundred liras as a present for yourself, you will give what there is left to my father, together with the packet. Give it to him with your own hands. Do you understand, Gabrielle?"

"Perfectly. But pardon me, sir, don't you think this should be put down? It is a serious charge. Suppose anybody should say that you did not give me this money, that I stole it!"

"I have thought of that. We must have a witness. Call Martino; but first give me

another spoonful of cognac, I feel faint again."

When Martino came Leonino explained to him what he had done.

"It is better so," said the landlord; "all the same, I think you will recover; but should you not, I can testify that you gave Mademoiselle Gabrielle this portfolio and this iron box."

"And the big box and all there is inside, Martino, I give to you, and this watch. It is not a very valuable one, but it has accompanied me in all my wanderings and may serve to remind you sometimes of your old friend."

Martino, who was an Italian refugee and deeply engaged in the revolutionary movement, silently pressed Leonino's hand. He was too much affected to speak.

"My wife's watch, Gabrielle," said Leonino, after a short pause, "her miniature and mine you will keep for Vera and give them to her when—when she is older."

Gabrielle bent her head in token of assent.

"Poor Vera, poor child! I am trusting you with all that is most precious to me, Gabrielle, but you are a good woman; you will be faithful to your trust, and Vera will not be ungrateful. And—and—tell my father how I died and give him my love. We did not always get on very well together, but he is an old man, and this will be a great shock to him."

A few minutes later Dr. Fadio came. When he had examined his patient he looked concerned.

"You have been letting him talk too much," he said, turning to Gabrielle. "Did I not tell you—"

"Don't blame her," interrupted Leonino wearily, "it is all my own doing. I do not know whether I shall live, and I had instructions to give her and something—a mere trifle—to write."

"You have actually been writing! The worst thing you could do."

"Never mind, doctor; my mind is easier now, and that must be better for my body, you know, and I promise you that I will sin no more."

"If you do I shall not answer for the consequences. And now, Gabrielle, we must dress his wounds."

When this was done Leonino asked if Vera might come to him again.

"You need not be afraid," he remarked, seeing that Fadio hesitated; "her presence does not excite, it soothes me."

"Very well, let her come. But except

for a word or two now and then when you want something, I must absolutely forbid talking. See that he obeys, Mademoiselle Gabrielle, quietness is essential."

"Don't fear, doctor," said Leonino, with a melancholy smile, "you may count on my obedience. I shall be quiet enough, soon."

Fadio glanced at Gabrielle, and she went with him to the door.

"I fear he is worse—decidedly weaker," he whispered. "You should not quit his bedside without leaving somebody in your place. You had better" (raising his voice) "fetch Mademoiselle Vera at once. I will wait until you return."

In a few minutes the *bonne* returned with the child, who crept to the old place by her father's side. Leonino looked at her lovingly, put his arm round her and laid her face close to his. Gabrielle told her little charge that papa's head ached and she must not talk, and then sat down. The *bonne* was tired with watching and heavy with loss of rest; before long her eyelids closed with their own weight, and she sank into a sound sleep.

A few moments afterwards, as it seemed to her, though in reality two or three hours, she was roused by a touch on the shoulder; looking up she saw the dark face of Dr. Fadio.

"A nurse should not slumber at her post," he said sternly. "Take the child away."

Vera was sleeping by her father's side, and the father slept the sleep of death.

The nurse gently disengaged the girl from the dead man's grasp, and took her into her arms.

"Come with me, *ma fille chérie*, papa is tired."

"Yes, Gabrielle, but I must first kiss him. Do let me kiss him." And then the child pressed her warm and rosy mouth to the cold and pallid cheek of her once father. She raised her head with a look of affright. "Oh, what is it?" she gasped; "what is it? He does not look at me—he is cold—he does not open his eyes! Papa! papa! Oh, Gabrielle, he does not speak to me, and his mouth is open!"

"Come with me, my poor motherless darling; your father will never speak again. You have only me now. Oh, my poor master! he was so good, so good to everybody, and everybody loved him."

CHAPTER III.—ANOTHER DEPARTURE.

THREE days later Leonino was buried. All the Italian exiles in Locarno and many of the townsfolk followed his body to the grave,

for, though not Italian born, he had fought and bled in the cause of Italian liberty, and lost his life in a bold attempt to free from his bonds one of the most eminent of Italian patriots.

Gabrielle carried out faithfully her late master's wishes—saw him buried, discharged all his debts, and paid the two hundred and fifty liras apiece to Leonino's three companions in the unfortunate expedition to Laverco. She was making preparations for departure, and meant, a day or two after the funeral, to leave by the diligence for Fluelen, *en route* for England. As yet, however, she had not written to apprise Leonino's father of his son's death. She had been too much occupied; and the disposal of the money she had found in the portfolio and the cash-box gave her great concern. There were many bank-notes in the portfolio, mixed up with sundry political papers, whose existence Leonino had apparently forgotten. The sum in her hands was large. To her, who reckoned in francs and liras, it seemed enormous. She did not know how she should secure it on the journey, and was in mortal terror of being robbed. If she had consulted Martino he would probably have advised her to buy a draft on London or Paris; but she was peasant-bred, and having all a peasant's shrewdness and distrust, kept her own counsel, and even told the landlord that the disposable balance, after all had been paid, was not very much. After much cogitation she hit upon the ingenious device of stitching the bank-notes inside her stays and putting the gold into her boots, which she hid among her clothes, and placed in the very bottom of her trunk.

This done she proceeded to write to Leonino's father. Gabrielle was a young woman of fair education, rather a nursery governess than an ordinary nurse, and she spoke English fairly. But speaking is one thing, writing quite another, and the framing of the letter cost her both time and trouble. She had hardly finished and addressed it when a letter was brought to her. It was rudely sealed, and the direction was written in a large, sprawling hand, but it bore a post-mark Gabrielle well knew, and she opened it with a feeling made up of pleasurable expectation and self-reproach, for it was a long time since she last wrote to her people. The letter was long, and as she read it her face grew graver and graver. The tidings it brought occupied her mind to the exclusion of everything else, and the letter to Mr. Hardy was never finished.

She was roused from her reverie by the

entrance of Vera, who, like herself, wore deep mourning. The child's pale face and the dark circles round her eyes showed how sorely she grieved for her dead father. Throwing her arms round Gabrielle's neck, she sobbed as if her little heart would break. The *bonne* took the child on her lap and soothed her.

"When are we going, Gabrielle?" she said as soon as she could speak. "It is dreadful here now poor papa is gone. I went past his room just now; they are taking out all the things, and he is not there—he is not there! Oh, Gabrielle, my heart is breaking! Let us go! let us go!"

"We will go to-morrow. I did not think of leaving until Thursday; but it will perhaps be better to start to-morrow. Come with me to the post-office, and we will take our places. The walk will do us both good."

Martino and several other of Leonino's friends saw them off.

"You will write from London," said the landlord, as he wrung Gabrielle's hand, "and tell us of your safe arrival? It is rather a long journey; but you have travelled before, and are quite able to take care of yourself and the little one. If you should ever need a friend do not forget that Andrea Martino holds all that he has at the disposal of Leonino's daughter. *Bon voyage.*"

And then, amid a babel of stamping horses, cracking whips, tinkling bells, and shouting stablemen, the huge diligence, with Gabrielle and Vera weeping in the coupé, moved off towards Bellinzona.

"I shall never see them again," muttered Martino, as he walked with sad eyes towards his house. "Poor Leonino! poor little girl!"

CHAPTER IV.—TEN YEARS AFTERWARDS.

A MEETING in the club-room of the Cock, in the town of Calder.

The inn was old, and—though an attempt had been made to modernise it by substituting plate-glass windows for the more picturesque if less light-giving diamond-shaped panes of other days—so was the room. The ceiling was low, and ribbed with oaken rafters, the oaken door black with age, and there were oaken settles and chairs that a collector would have been glad to buy with money and fair words. Many a feast and dance and merrymaking has there been in the old club-room; its rafters have rung with the shouts and songs and laughter of many generations of roystering Calderites; and as much drink has been "consumed on the

premises" as would float a fleet of ironclads. But the present meeting, as the absence of glasses testifies, is not of a festive character. Neither is it a meeting of creditors, nor of local politicians, nor of any local society; and being held in a public-house it cannot well be either a religious assembly or a teetotal gathering. The people present number about a score and a half, and among them are all sorts and conditions of men—and women.

The chairman is a portly, well-dressed, well-fed personage of some sixty years old. His fat, clean-shaven face wears a stereotyped smile; his little eyes are sharp and deep-set, and his head is fixed in an enormous black stock, from which it seems to have recently emerged. He carries his watch in a fob, and sports a heavy chain and a still heavier seal. Whatever else he may be this gentleman is evidently well-to-do, and knows it. Not far from him is a man the cut and appearance of whose garments proclaim him a calico-weaver. Then there are a shoemaker, a blacksmith, a waggoner, a butcher, a baker, several farmers, and three or four women, one of whom carries a market-basket, and is probably a farmer's wife.

"I don't know as I am called upon to make any particular remarks," said the president, without rising from his chair. "You all know what has brought us here, so I think as the best thing as I can do is to call on Mr. Ferret to explain it, and tell you what he advises about this 'ere fortune."

The individual thus addressed was a broad-set, swarthy little man, with a thick nose and heavy chops, and a look more suggestive of a bull-dog than of the animal whose name he bore.

"I think you are all Hardys?" said the lawyer—for such he was—as he rose to his feet.

"Or akin to 'em," answered the chairman, "except you and your clerk, and Mr. Balmaine here. We must keep friends with the press, you know; and he'll print nowt without showing it to me and Mr. Ferret."

"What good will that do?" put in the calico-weaver; "th' job will be done then."

"Publish, I should say; he'll publish nowt as we don't sanction."

"Aye, that's summat like. Yo' speyk when your mouth oppens, Mr. Hardy."

"Will you please go on, Mr. Ferret," said the chairman tartly. "These—these interruptions are unseemly."

"I am quite ready, Mr. Hardy," began the lawyer, who spoke fluently and easily, though in rather Yorkshire English. "You

all know, I think, as I was the first to find out that the Hardys of this neighbourhood are probably entitled—in my opinion certainly entitled—to a very large fortune. I cannot say exactly how much, for them as has it in hand are very close, but it cannot be far short of two millions of money."

"By gum, that's a corker!" broke in the calico-weaver.

"Order!" exclaimed the chairman. "Really, Tommy, you are behaving very badly. Will you please go on, Mr. Ferret."

"I say two millions at least," continued Ferret. "Why, John Hardy's personalty was sworn under £800,000; he had lots of land in the most improving parts of London, and then there's ten years' accumulations. Well, as I was going to say—for it's best to begin at the beginning—John Hardy died ten years since, and left all his estate, both real and personal, to his only son Philip—to his only child, I should say, for he had no other. Well, it has never been claimed, and I do not believe ever will be claimed, for we may be quite sure as if he was living two millions would fetch him; and though he has been advertised for and sought out all these years nothing has been heard of him. The presumption therefore is—any Court of Equity in the kingdom would presume it—that Philip Hardy is dead; and if he is dead the property goes to the heirs-at-law—which in this case are them as was nearest akin to him. Do you follow me?"

"Ay, we follow you reyt enough," observed the shoemaker; "but was not this Philip wed? Didn't he leave no heirs, and if he did, wouldn't the property go to them?"

"He was married—to an Italian woman, I think—but his wife died and left him with a little lass, and as nothing can be heard of her neither, it is supposed that she predeceased her father. If she did not, we may be quite sure as she would have come forward to claim her inheritance before now. The same argument as I have just used applies to her; the courts will presume as she is dead, and you have only to prove that you are the next-of-kin to get all this brass."

"Who has it now?"

"John Hardy's trustees. But if we establish our claim they will have to give it to the rightful heirs, and, to do 'em justice, I don't think they want aught else. The estate is at present managed by Artful and Higginbottom, highly respectable London solicitors, I dare say, but as they make a nice penny out of it every year, they will naturally keep it

in their hands as long as they can. They reckon to believe, and they have persuaded the trustees, as there is still a possibility of Philip Hardy or his daughter turning up. But that is all nonsense [with a knowing smile]; we know what that means. It means as Artful and Higginbottom don't want to lose a business as brings 'em in a thousand or two a year. Just keep these two facts in your mind: that there's two millions of money in London, and that if you can prove that the John Hardy as left it is the same John Hardy as left this town a young man sixty-five years since it is yours."

"Can that be proved?" asked the blacksmith.

"I have not the least doubt it can, with a little patience, and, considering the amount involved, at a very trifling cost, too. There is only one difficulty in the way—that of identifying the Calder John Hardy with the London John Hardy."

"You'll find that rayther a hard nut to crack, Mr. Ferret, I'm thinking," observed one of his listeners.

"Not at all; anyhow, not as hard as you may think. To begin with, they bore the same name and were born in the same year. That is beyond dispute. Then we know that shortly after John Hardy left Calder, a John Hardy got a situation in a London wholesale warehouse, and got on so well that it was not long before his masters took him into partnership. Then he rose to be head of the firm, and made a large fortune by speculations in land. But he never told where he came from, nor acknowledged any kinsfolk, and till he married lived in lodgings. You will happen say that is against us. But wait a minute. The John Hardy that left Calder sixty-five years since went away in a hurry. He had good reasons for not coming back or letting on where he had gone."

"What had he done?" asked one of the farmers' wives.

"Well, it is a long time since," said the lawyer, "and I don't like raking up old scandals; but I could tell you, and I may have to do before we have done."

"I know what it wor, though nobody never tow'd me," put in the calico-weaver, with a smile and a wink. "It wor a woman. Whenever owt goes wrong you may mak sure as a woman's at bottom on it."

"Well, I believe it was something of the sort," said Ferret, when the laughter which this sally provoked had subsided. "I shall name no names, but his sweetheart played

him false, and a man he looked on as a friend did him an ill turn. John was high-tempered, and he gave his treacherous friend such a beating that his life was despaired of. If he had not gone away, or if he had come back or been caught, he would have been transported as sure as a gun. So you see everything fits in, and if I could get access to John Hardy's private papers, I am sure that something might be found as would stamp him as the real Simon Pure."

"Simon Pure!" broke in the shoemaker indignantly; "what's the use o' stamping him as Simon Pure? We want to stamp him as John Hardy o' Calder, and get his brass. That is what we want; isn't it, chaps?"

The audience greeted this observation with loud applause; and Ferret, to the satisfaction of everybody, explained that he had spoken in metaphor, and that Simon Pure was in no way connected with the Hardy fortune. That done, he was allowed to proceed.

"When I file my bill I shall of course demand copies of all documents bearing on the case. That will be the first step. At present the trustees deny me access to the documents. It is for you to say whether I shall act or not, and how soon. Another point: As most of you know, John Hardy was the youngest son of Nathan Hardy, who died nearly seventy years since. He left seven other sons, all of whom are deceased. All here, I think, are their children, or wives or husbands of their children. Most of them are in humble circumstances, I believe; but a few, like our worthy chairman here, are well off. Among the poor ones are the descendants of John Hardy's eldest brother, Samuel by name, and they, according to law, would be entitled to all the real estate. But, as I have said, they are poor, and so are willing to enter into a binding arrangement to put the whole of the fortune into a common fund and divide it, share and share alike, among all Nathan Hardy's descendants. The question now before us is the raising of a sufficient sum to make good your claim. We may want two thousand pounds, but one thousand will be enough to start with. As the claimants number fifty that is not much; only twenty pounds a-piece; and we propose to form a limited liability concern, to be called "The Hardy Fortune Company," with two thousand shares of a pound a-piece, first issue one thousand; and we propose further, with the concurrence of all concerned, to pay each shareholder, on the realisation of the fortune, a bonus of ten pounds a share. I have so

much confidence in the thing, gentlemen, that I am prepared to take some shares myself, unless you want to keep 'em all in the family."

"And I," said the chairman pompously, "I shall take two hundred and fifty shares, a fourth of the entire first issue. Now, we are not all rich, as Mr. Ferret lately observed, but I know as there's some of you as has got something nice laid by, and I am sure of this, as you could not have a better investment than these 'ere shares."

"How much will it mak' a-piece?" asked the woman with the market-basket.

"That depends how many shares you take, Jane."

"I mean th' fortin, not th' shares."

"Well, as there's fifty of us, and th' fortune is about two millions, that will be forty thousand a-piece; but, to be on the safe side, say thirty thousand."

"And how much is the shares, sayen yo'?"

"A pound a-piece."

"Well, yo' see, my mon couldn't come—he's most terrible throng spreading muck just now—but I'm his loful wife, and he said as I could act for him."

"Nobody better, I am sure, Jane," put in the chairman gallantly.

"He said as I could act for him, and we are willing, him and me—how much did yo' say them there shares wor'?"

"Twenty shillings."

"Well, put us down for hoaf a one—and here, yo' had happen better tak' th' brass while yo're at it."

And with that she clapped down on the table four half-crowns.

All laughed, save the lawyer and the chairman, one of whom was highly indignant, the other enraged almost past speaking.

"Ten shillings for a chance of getting thirty thousand pounds!" exclaimed Ferret.

"Why, it is perfectly ridiculous. Besides, you cannot have half a share."

"Of course she cannot," said the chairman.

"Ten shillings! Why, what are you thinking of, Jane? You have hundreds of pounds laid by; I know you have."

"Well, I will not deny as we have a bit o' summat, and we mean to keep it, my mon and me. A bird i' th' hand is worth two i' th' bush, you know. But do you really think now, Sammy, as this is a gradely good thing?"

The chairman winced. For a man of means and a justice of the peace to be called Sammy in public by Abel Hardy's wife, al-

though she was "a bit of a relation," was an indignity which in other circumstances he would have felt bound to resent. But as things were, he thought it his duty to pocket the affront and answer the question.

"Do I think it a good thing? Of course I do. Do you suppose I should put £250 into a thing as I didn't think well of?"

"No, I don't think you would, Sammy, nor yet 250 farthings, and yo' wi' moor brass than yo' knowen what to do wi'. Well, mak' it thirty shillings moor, Mr. Ferret, and if my mon's willing we'll put wer names down for four pounds."

Encouraged by this beginning most of the Hardys present subscribed something or another, the total amounting, as the lawyer presently announced, to £500.

"We shall make it up, I think," observed Mr. Samuel Hardy.

"Not a doubt of it," answered Ferret briskly.

"There's ever so many more I have my eye on as are good for a £20-pund note a-piece, and some of them here as have not subscribed to-day are sure to come forward later on. And there's many an outsider as would be fain to have an interest in a promising speculation like this. We could get the money twice over, I do believe, Mr. Hardy. Yes (to the blacksmith), business is over for to-day. When there is anything further to report you will hear from me. I am in daily communication with Mr. Hardy on the subject, and I almost think we should form a standing committee. We will talk about that another time. Sufficient for the day, you know. Here, Warton!" (to his clerk). "Oh, you have entered up the minutes, I see. Take these papers, will you? Mr. Hardy has been good enough to ask me to tea. Good evening, gentlemen, good evening."

As Warton left the room he was joined by Balmaine.

"What do you think of it all?" asked the clerk in a whisper. "Come down with me into the bar; the governor will not be at the office again to-night, and I have something to say to you."

CHAPTER V.—WARTON'S PROPOSAL.

THE bar of the Cock was no less quaint and old-fashioned than its club-room. It had a low, raftered ceiling, recessed windows, fitted with settles, and wainscoted walls, round which ran a broad red-cushioned oaken bench. A bright copper kettle hissed on the hob-end of a wide-throated grate of ancient make, and on the lead-lined counter was

marshalled a formidable array of crystal tumblers, pewter tankards, and portly decanters, above which rose a tier of brass-bound barrels, which proclaimed in big fat letters the nature of their contents. The pervading odour of the bar was whisky and lemons, with a strong dash of tobacco; for the Cock's customers made it a rule never to drink ale when they could afford anything stronger.

At one end of the counter sat the landlady, Mrs. Juniper, short, broad, and rosy-cheeked. Several of the Hardy family were taking a glass to help them on their way home, and talking noisily, and generally all at once, about the late meeting and the Hardy fortune.

"What a gabble!" observed the lawyer's clerk to his companion, as they stood at the bar door. "There's no talking here, that is clear."

"I think there's a great deal of talking," returned his companion with a smile.

"I mean there's no chance of our having the quiet talk I was promising myself. However, I dare say Mrs. Juniper will let us go into her parlour. I'll ask her."

"Good evening, Mrs. Juniper" (addressing the landlady). "Mr. Balmaine and I have a bit of private business to talk over, and if your parlour is not occupied, I thought, perhaps, you would let us sit down there a few minutes."

"Certainly, Mr. Warton; go in and stop as long as you like. You are quite welcome, I am sure. Sally will take your order."

"What will you have, Balmaine?" asked Warton, as they stepped into the cosy little parlour behind the bar, which Mrs. Juniper reserved for her own particular use, and occasionally for that of a favoured guest. "Whisky?"

"No, I thank you; whisky is a bad thing to work on, and I have work to do. I think I should prefer tea. I have some proofs to read, but they will not be ready for an hour or more, and the paper to make up before I go home."

"All right; tea let it be then. Tea and toast. And look here, Sally, give us some of the Cock's dead pig—a callop of your famous home-cured, you know. No objection to a bit of broiled ham, have you, Balmaine?"

"None whatever. I vote for ham."

"Proposal carried *nem. con.* Tea, toast, and broiled ham as soon as you can, Sally, if you please. I am most terribly sharp set."

"Well, what is it all about, Warton?"

asked Balmaine, when they were alone. "Something I can use for the paper?"

"Not exactly. That is always the way with you journalists. You never see, or read, or hear anything, that your first thought is not whether you cannot turn it to account for your paper. It is a good sign, though, and you will make your mark as a journalist, mark me if you don't." Here the clerk laughed as if he thought he had made an excellent joke. "But about your question. Before I answer it, let me ask you one;—What did you think of our meeting?"

"What does my opinion signify? However, Ferret's theory, assuming his statements to be accurate, struck me as being rather plausible, and a fortune of two millions—can it really be so much?—is certainly worth looking after. But do you think the Calder Hardys will be allowed to have it all to themselves? Hardy is not a very uncommon name, and when the facts become more widely known there will be as many claimants as there are pounds."

"Exactly. And that is not all. I do not believe in the governor's theory, and I am not sure that he believes it himself."

"Not believe it himself! What does it all mean then? Why is he getting up this company?"

"I suppose because he wants to turn an honest penny."

"An honest penny!" exclaimed Balmaine indignantly.

"Perhaps I ought to have said a lawyer's honest penny. You see, we have a big office—four clerks besides myself—and Ferret has a big family—nine sons and daughters—and they cannot be kept for nothing. We are bound to have business, and prosecuting claims and filing bills help Ferret to pay his bills."

"Well, you may say what you like, Warton; but if Ferret is getting up this company, and taking these people's money to prosecute a claim he knows to be illusory, it is nothing less than a downright swindle. By Jove! I'll expose it in the paper."

"Confound your paper! you have got it on your brain, I think. No, no; you must not do anything of the sort, Balmaine," broke in the clerk, whom his friend's threat seemed greatly to alarm; "that would be a slander, and Ferret would both prosecute you criminally and sue you for swinging damages; and I don't know, you know, that he is not sincere. It is only a case of suspicion, and I may be mistaken. Even if the chance of getting these two mil-

lions is ever so remote, it may be worth spending a thousand pounds or two to try. And really, old Ferret is not so bad, after all. Many a one would have asked for five thousand, and got it. He has formed one theory, I have formed another; that is all."

"That means, I suppose, that Ferret is not quite as big a rogue as he might be. And what is your theory, Warton?"

"I am going to tell you, and I am in a better position to judge than anybody else, for I went to London to look into the thing, and it is really on my report, though not on my opinion, that Ferret is acting. He will have it that Philip Hardy and his daughter—I forget what her outlandish name is (looking at a memorandum book)—Vera, yes, that is her name, Vera—he will have it that Philip and Vera Hardy are dead. Now, I am not at all sure of that. Where is the proof? That is what I say—where is the proof?"

"Ten years' silence and the impossibility of finding them, the lack of any news whatever about them, are as strong presumptive proofs as you could well have, I should say."

"Not in the circumstances. This Philip Hardy was one of those wild, harum-scarum fellows that never do anything like anybody else. He was a bit of a poet, and a bit of a painter—a terrible Radical and Red Republican, and hand and glove with Mazzini and Garibaldi and that lot. He might have lived like a lord in England; his father would have bought him an estate, or done anything for him, if he would only have stayed at home and settled down. But he preferred to ramble about the Continent, especially Italy, conspiring against the Austrians, and organizing revolutionary societies. And, queerest thing of all, he did not care a button-top for money! When he married that Italian woman, and his father told him he would cut him off with a shilling, he just wrote back to say as he was very glad to hear it, that it would relieve him from a great responsibility. What do you think of that now? He must have been mad, don't you think?"

"Decidedly—as a March hare," returned Balmaine with a smile. "A man who refuses to be a millionaire deserves——"

"To be milled," suggested the clerk with a laugh at his own pleasantry.

"To be put in a lunatic asylum, I was going to say. But where did you learn all this, Warton?"

"From Artful and Higginbottom, and Baggs, their head clerk. They don't show any unwillingness to give information—not

they; but I thought it might be as well to supplement it by a talk with old Baggs, so I stood him a dinner at the Bull's Head in Holborn, and it was worth while. You can talk more freely to a man across a dinner-table, when there is nothing between you and him but a bottle of port wine, than when he's sitting on an office stool with a pen behind his ear. I did not try to pump the old boy, I let the wine do that; and when he warmed to his work he told me all he knew, and as he has been in the office over forty years, and was well acquainted with both the Hardys, and all the correspondence about the estate passed through his hands, he knew a good deal."

"Does he think the father and daughter are dead?"

"Bless you, no! That's not the theory of the office at all. You see, Philip Hardy, when he went about Italy, conspiring and that, did not always go under his own name, and Artful thinks—and Baggs thinks as he thinks—as he must have been caught by the Austrians just about the time of his father's death and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment in a fortress—as likely as not for ten years—and they would not be surprised if he turned up any day. But not a word of this to anybody else. Ferret would knock my head off, and worse, if he knew."

"What could he do worse than knock your head off?" asked Balmaine, with a laugh.

"Give me the sack. If he knocked my head off, Mary and the children would get my insurance brass—that's a thousand pounds; but if old Ferret gave me the sack, there would be nothing for any of us, don't you see?"

"Perfectly. All the same, I hope you will keep your head on your shoulders. But tell me now, do you think that Philip Hardy is really a prisoner in some Austrian dungeon?"

"It's possible—everything is possible in this best of possible worlds—but not, I should say, very probable. Artful and Higginbottom think so, of course, for reasons aforesaid, assigned by old Ferret. They say they have made every inquiry and advertised no end. All the same, I am strongly of opinion that if a right sharp fellow were entrusted with the job, he would find a clue to the mystery."

"Yourself, for instance?"

"Why, yes," said the clerk. "I think I could manage it as well as most folks. But

wait a minute. You must not think that all this talk is to lead to nothing. I mean business, Balmaine. That girl, you know—where is the girl? A girl with two millions is worth finding. And she is about seventeen now and, I dare say, as handsome as paint. Old Baggs says her father was as fine a looking man as you would wish to see. Why, now, if I was only single! But I am not, and I cannot stir out of Calder—got too many clogs on my feet for that. Look here, Balmaine, you are the man that must find Vera Hardy."

"I! What on earth do you mean, Warton?"

"I'll tell you; but you must know that I am most terribly anxious to increase my income. My Mary is a very good wife, and it isn't her fault, poor lass; but three children in less than two years is rather hard on a chap, isn't it now? If we go on at that rate I don't know whatever we shall do. It's awful to think how many of us there will be in, say, ten years. And there's as many as the pasture will keep already. If I could only find this Vera Hardy!"

"How would that help you? You could not marry her."

"I know that; but don't you think that if I let her know what an heiress she is, and helped her to her property, she would stand a handsome commission?"

"That's very likely, I think. I know I should be very happy to pay anybody who put me in the way of getting two millions a very handsome commission indeed. But what can I do in the matter?"

"You are going to take this situation in Switzerland, are you not?"

"The assistant editorship of the *Helvetic News*, you mean? Yes, I think so. The pay is no better than I am getting here, but it will be a new experience for me, and perhaps lead to something better later on."

"Quite right. You are at the top of the tree here. You can never be more than editor of the *Calder Mercury*. If you keep pegging away till you are a grey old man you will never make more than three or four pounds a week, and yet you have it in you to be a slap-up journalist. Well, when you go to Switzerland, I want you to find Miss Hardy."

"You are joking, Warton. What chance shall I have of finding the poor girl?"

"A good many, I hope. Philip Hardy was sometimes in Switzerland—that we do know—and when not there he was in Italy, and they are about as close together as Lancashire

and Yorkshire, they tell me. You are sure to be going about, and when you do you must just ask questions and keep your eyes open. I will post you up before you set off, and, who knows, you will maybe light on her. And if you do we will go snacks at the commission. Suppose she stands five per cent., why that would be a hundred thousand pounds! Fifty thousand a-piece! I would not object to a baby a twelvemonth then, and they might keep on coming for a quarter of a century, bless 'em, if they liked! What do you say?"

"About the babies?"

"No, about finding this girl."

"I fear the chance of my finding her is very remote; but I will keep the matter in mind, and do my best. I don't think, though, I should like to ask her for a commission."

"Why? Isn't it business?"

"Perhaps. I was not thinking of that. But I could not fancy myself going to a young girl saying, 'You are heiress to a fine fortune, promise me a commission of five per cent. and I will give you all particulars.'"

"But you might tell her first and claim the commission afterwards."

"I could not do even that, Warton."

The clerk's countenance fell.

"Why? What is there wrong in it? A ship captain who takes a derelict vessel into port gets salvage, and the finder of a purse is rewarded by the owner."

"Do you think I would take a reward for finding a purse?" asked Balmaine indignantly.

"Perhaps not; but I'll take all the money I can get hold of as is honestly come by. However, if you won't ask her yourself you will perhaps not object to my asking her, on the ground that I am a professional man, and put you up—gave the information that enabled you to find her."

"None whatever; that would be entirely your own affair. But this is very absurd, you know. I shall never find the girl. Remember, it is ten years since all this happened."

"At any rate you can try, if only for the poor girl's sake. Who knows where she is?"

"Precisely; who knows where she is?"

"That we must try to find out. After all, the world is very small. How often we run against people we least expect to meet! Why, when I was in London the other day I ran into the arms—literally ran into the arms—of my old schoolfellow, Harry Welsh. He went to America seven years since, and

had landed only three days before! What do you think of that now!"

"But, you see, the misfortune is," laughed Balmaine, "that if Miss Hardy were to run into my arms I should not know her."

"I wish she would run into your arms; you would soon identify her, I'll be bound, and—what a happy thought!—perhaps marry her. Then you would be paid for your trouble, and no mistake, and could afford me a swinging commission."

"Rubbish! May I beg of you not to talk such nonsense, Warton. I have not the least hope of finding this girl, and I am sure I shall not marry her."

"Perhaps you are bespoken," replied the clerk, eyeing keenly his companion, who had spoken somewhat warmly, and seemed rather taken aback. "And that reminds me. I have heard a bit of a whisper, but I did not believe there was aught in it. I would not if I were you, Balmaine. I——"

"Here is the tea," interrupted Balmaine coldly. "Put the tray opposite Mr. Warton, Sally, and the ham at this end of the table."

"How confoundedly touchy he is!" thought the clerk. "But it looks like being a true bill, and if it is I shall be sorry. Balmaine should do better in every way than marry Lizzie Hardy. I don't like the lot, and if I see any chance of stopping it, by Jingo, I will."

"Take some ham, Warton?" asked Balmaine when Sally had taken her departure.

"Thank you, I will take some ham. A 'cute old boy is Saintly Sam. Don't you think it's right I am?"

"Why, what put him into your head?" said Balmaine with a rather forced laugh.

"Ham—don't you perceive that it rhymes with Sam?"

"You should not speak evil of dignities, Warton. Mr. Hardy has been three times mayor of Calder, remember, and is at this present moment a justice of the peace, and otherwise a man of importance in the borough."

"Exactly; and does not that make his conduct on the present occasion all the meaner?"

"In what way?"

"In what way! Why, don't you see that he doesn't more than half believe in this Hardy fortune, and yet he is persuading his poor kinsfolk to lay out £750 in trying to get it! You will say, perhaps, that he goes in for £250 on his own hook. But what is that for a man like him, when there is a

chance of getting forty thousand? Wouldn't it have looked a fine sight better, think you, if he had spent a couple of hundreds or so in preliminary inquiries before sending the hat round?—for that's what it amounts to. And I am by no means sure that he means to find the two-fifty after all."

"You surely don't mean to say, Warton, that he will attempt to back out of a promise so publicly made?"

"Not he! Saintly Sam knows a trick worth two of that! He'll take the shares, right enough; but, unless I am mistaken, he has an understanding with old Ferret to allow him a commission of five or ten per cent. on the amount subscribed, or to do his own business on special terms for so long."

"Come, come, Warton, you let your dislike of the man carry you too far. Hardy has his faults, I admit, but he is not a miser."

"I never said he was. A miser does not spend money on himself. Hardy does; he likes to live well, and be a big pot. To hear him talk you would think he was generosity itself; but just you try him! Anybody that has aught to do with Saintly Sam is pretty sure to get hold of the dirty end of the stick. However, as he's a friend of yours I won't say aught against him."

"Not say aught against him! I don't know what you could well say more! Anyhow, he has always behaved well to me."

"Of course he has. You are the editor of the *Mercury*, and have been useful to him, and may be again; but just you try the other tack and you'll see. But let us drop the old beggar and talk about something else. You will not be setting out for Switzerland just yet, I suppose?"

"Oh dear no; I only sent in my acceptance to-day, and until it is acknowledged, and the appointment confirmed, I cannot very well give Grindleton notice, you know; and that reminds me (looking at his watch), it is quite time I went to the office and made up the paper."

"Well, we must have another talk or two about this Hardy business before you set sail. The subject is far from being exhausted."

"Whenever you like. But as to my obtaining any information about Philip Hardy, or finding his daughter, I really don't think there is a vestige of hope."

"Hope be hanged!" returned the clerk, thumping a fat fist on the table. "I have made up my mind to bottom this business, and bottom it I will—if you will help me."

"Of course I will. Have I not said so?" "Energetically?"

"Energetically."

"It's a bargain, then," exclaimed the clerk, slapping his hand into that of his friend. "And look here; I'll put it all down on paper—write you out a brief, in fact, embodying the latest information on the sub-

ject. I don't mean to let the thing slip out of your mind, I can tell you."

Then, after an amicable contest as to who should pay, which resulted in favour of the clerk, they went into the bar and settled with Mrs. Juniper

AN IDYLL OF THE WOODS.

IT is a summer day, and I
Am in the woods, and as I lie
Among the waving grass, I hear
A thousand murmurs in my ear,
For everything has life to-day
To bend and nod, to shake and sway,
And wed itself with gentle sound
To all the music heard around.

The branches of the trees have set
Their shadows like a living net
On grass and fern, and there they lie
Responsive to the passing by
Of winds, whose chief delight it is
To stir their boughs to leafy bliss
Till one sweet whisper fills my ear:
The Spirit of the woods is near.

Hark! running through my waking dream,
The distant bugle of a stream,
So soft and low!—as if 'twere blown
For fairies marching to its tone,
That not one straggler from the band
Should miss his way to Fairyland.

It were no idle dream to-day,
Here where the leaves in sunshine play,
If I should see with half-shut eye
Their green-clad pageant wander by,
All just the same, as when of old,
Ere hearts and creeds of men grew cold,
They came, and in the moonlight sheen
Touch'd with light foot the velvet green,
Till all the harebells blue and sweet
Swayed to the music of their feet,
And tender violets at the view
Took deeper tints from midnight dew.

Alas! that old belief is dead,
And all its early visions fled,
Nor will they come again, for we
Have lost that Spirit of infancy
That open'd up with golden wand
The Paradise of Fairyland;
And we could see with awe-struck eyes
Wonders on wonders change and rise,
As clouds do at their own sweet will
When all the careless winds are still.

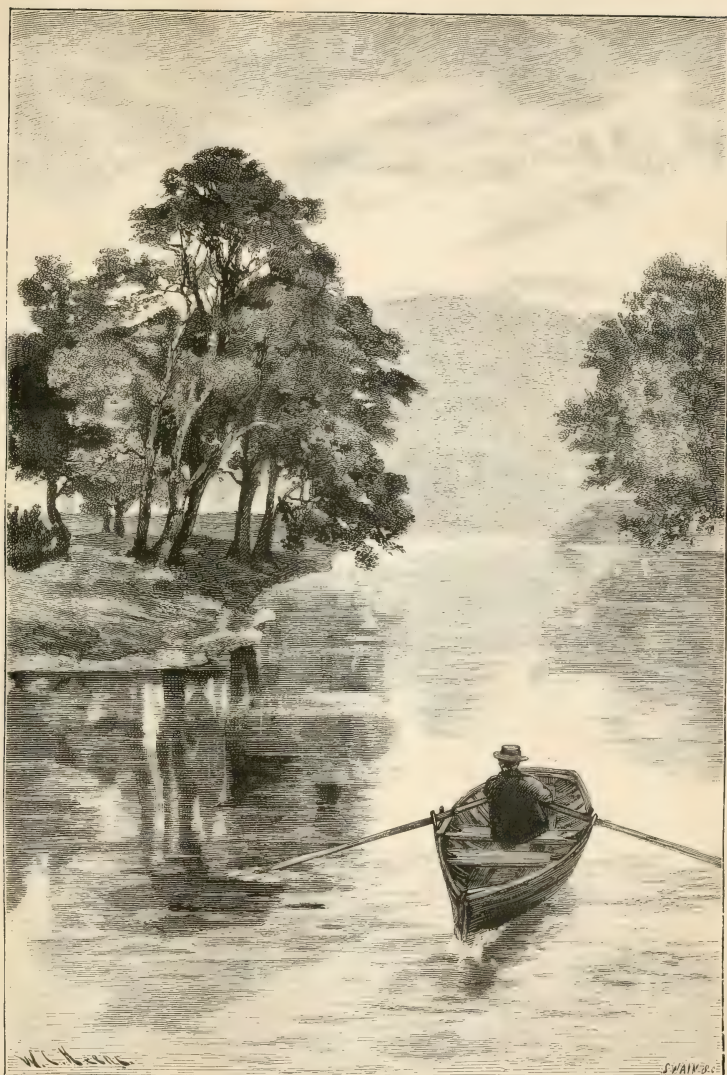
Enough. The grass is still as sweet,
The moss as soft beneath the feet,
The leaves as green, the streamlet's tone
The same as in our childhood flown,
The sky as blue, the clouds as white
As when they met our early sight;
And still from these, as here I lie,
I draw delight with sober eye,
Though what gave splendour unto each
Has passed for ever out of reach.

I hear a lark that, long and loud,
From some white mansion of a cloud,
Trills, as no other minstrel can,
A splendid flood of song to man.
True poet he that still will sing,
Nor dream of any listening,
As we, his lesser brethren, may,
Who fondly pipe a feeble lay,
Then pause to smile if we but hear
The praise of fellows in our ear;
But he—his one desire is strong
To rid his little soul of song,
That he may drop to earth, and rest
Beside his mate upon her nest.

Dear heaven! can it ever be
The city hath lain hands on me—
That I have trod its streets, whose dust
Has clung around my thoughts like rust
Till all my old delight in woods
And hills with streamy solitudes
Sank, leaving in its place instead
The moan of traffic and the tread
Of pitiless feet, whose echoes fall
To send a threnody through all?

Nay, let not such a thought come nigh
To shadow me as here I lie,
Lost in a dream that still perceives
In waving grass and tremulous leaves
A bliss, that were it put in speech
Would place that pleasure out of reach.

The summer winds that come and go
Are fresh from distant fields I know;
They loiter here to waft around
A symphony of sighing sound,



"It is a summer day."



And touch with unseen fingers keys
That thrill with nature's minstrelsies.
A thousand leaves burst into song,
A thousand murmurs slip along
From bough to bough, and, as they pass,
A quiver through the waving grass
Answers in sympathy and love
The rippling wealth of life above.

Dear heaven ! it can never be
The city hath lain hands on me ?
Alas ! I waken up to hear
The sound of streets within my ear,

To see beneath me crowds that throng
In double lanes, and rush along
After a thousand bubbles blown,
Each keeping well in view his own.

A dream—no more—of woodlands green
That came to me ; for having seen
A band of children, gay and bright,
Pass down the street in evening light,
The hawthorn blooms and ferns they bore
Made all my fancy dream once more
Of woods with wealth of leaves, where they,
The children, had been all the day.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

FIVE LESSONS FROM THE MARRIAGE IN CANA OF GALILEE.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR JANUARY.

By ALEXANDER WHYTE, D.D.

I.—A LESSON FOR YOUNG MEN AND MAIDENS.

Read Proverbs xxxi. 10—31 ; John ii. 1—11.

IT is necessary to a right understanding of this interesting narrative that we have some knowledge of the way a marriage was celebrated in the days of our Lord. On the evening of his marriage day, the bridegroom, accompanied by his groomsmen, the children of the bride-chamber, as our Lord calls them, went to the house of the bride, and, amid great demonstrations of joy, conducted her to her future home. We have many references in the Scriptures to the hilarity of the bridal procession, and to the protracted festivities that followed it. So far back as Laban's day we find that churl complaining that Jacob did not give him the opportunity of sending away Rachel with songs and tabret and harp. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of it as a sign of the divine anger, that the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, were no more heard in the streets of Jerusalem. And, in His parable of the ten virgins, our Lord makes the whole scene to rise like life itself before our eyes. "While the bridegroom tarried in coming to claim the bride, the virgins, her companions, all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps." In the bridegroom's house, meantime, a sumptuous feast was prepared to which a great company of friends and neighbours were invited, and at which the festivities

were usually lengthened out for a week and sometimes for as many as fourteen days. Music, songs, riddles, wagers, and merry conversation formed a long-remembered feature at Samson's marriage feast. These and such-like things, with the most generous eating and drinking, filled up the four, or seven, or fourteen days, as the case might be, of a Jewish marriage feast.

The marriage at Cana, however, was a marriage among the poorer classes of the people, the classes to which Mary the mother of Jesus belonged, and among which her children had all been brought up. Most likely the bridegroom, or the bride, or both, were not far-off relations of her humble Nazareth household.

This happy bridegroom then had Jesus Christ at his marriage, either because he himself belonged to Mary's family, or because he had married a wife who did. And a marriage so contracted will secure the divine presence and blessing still. Yes, and more than that, if you so contract and so marry you may count on God's presence and His blessing more surely than though you had been married in Cana and had had Christ at the ceremony and at the supper-table after it. For I have no assurance that that marriage in Cana was, after all, "a marriage in the Lord." I do not know that it came up to Paul's ideal of a New Testament marriage, even though Paul's master was present, and by His divine power purveyed for the feast. That only is a marriage in the Lord, when two of God's children have been created and kept for one another, and have both asked and received His fatherly consent to love and

serve one another, for a lifetime, as man and wife. Our Lord's very presence, with all His disciples around Him, would not make that a true marriage which was otherwise contracted and otherwise consummated. If you would have Jesus Christ in the fulness of His grace and power at your marriage, and would also, reciprocally, have a place at His, take good heed that you marry into the family of God. And since it has been so often found that neighbourhood and opportunity have had so much to do with this important matter, choose your neighbourhood and your neighbours wisely, and let God's gracious providence direct the opportunity. And you cannot make any mistake as to who are and who are not Christ's true kindred, for He is every day stretching forth His hand toward them, saying unto you, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

II.—A LESSON FOR TOTAL ABSTAINERS.

Read Rom. xiv. 7—23; 1 Cor. viii. 9—13.

Michael's address to Adam.—*Paradise Lost*, XI.

THE extraordinary abuse of strong drink, in our day, has led many worthy people to look at the marriage of Cana with some misgiving, if not secret aversion; and efforts have been made at their instigation to show that the wine our Lord supplied to the governor of that feast was not true wine at all. But we are not left to this passage alone, to learn the mind of our Master as to the moralities of meats and drinks, in His kingdom. The doctrine of Jesus Christ on this whole subject is delivered in a hundred passages of the New Testament, he that runs may read it, and when it is read it is this: temperance in all things is one of the plainest of Christian virtues, and total abstinence from some things is another. And these two virtues stand related to each other in this way: a Christian man is temperate when, in the possession of all the comforts or even luxuries of this life, he yet uses them so as never to fall into excess, but so partakes of meats and drinks, and all other like gifts of God, as to make and keep himself a better man, a better servant of God, and a closer follower of Jesus Christ. The truly temperate man lives among the satisfactions and embellishments and luxuries of this life uncontaminated, simple, severe, master of himself, and master of all those seductive things that so often master others. Total abstinence, on the other hand, is a virtue of quite another nature. To abjure

the natural and legitimate use of any meat or drink, to mortify any appetite of the body or any affection of the heart, for a moral or a religious reason is assuredly a far nobler virtue than to live even in the most temperate use of these pleasant things. At the same time, it must always be remembered that it is entirely the motive and the will with which all our acts of self-denial are done that give them their value in the sight of God, and their place among the moralities of his kingdom. The morality or immorality of all our habits and practices, both ascetic and self-indulgent, is ultimately to be tested by a standard that goes to the very core and bottom of the human heart. To deny ourselves marriage, or a meat or a drink for Christ's sake, as so many men and women have done in all ages of the Church, is surely a far nobler and more martyr-like grace than without care, or consideration, or a cross, to enjoy to indulgence all these permitted things. Nor will he, who is either unable or unwilling to take up that cross, expect the corresponding crown. But, on the other hand, that the very noblest and most self-sacrificing service in the cause of Christ and the ripest attainments in evangelical morality and personal holiness are incompatible with a married life, or with the most genial, joyful, and, indeed, luxurious lot, can no more be contended, since Christ countenanced the lengthened festivities of a marriage with His blessed presence, and by His divine power contributed so bountifully thereto. Solomon, indeed, says that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, as also that sorrow is better than laughter. And most men will agree with the preacher in his experience. But that, too, depends on whose house the mirth goes on in, on who makes the mirth and who leads the laughter. There was no little mirth and laughter in Cana of Galilee that week, and yet I feel sure that if Solomon in his bitterest and most misanthropical mood had been there, he would have been the last to leave the feast.

The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and He took this open and unmistakable way of altogether repudiating for Himself and His followers the Johannine morality of self-denial and corporal mortification. Our Lord was preparing the way for the bringing in of far deeper views of the real evil of human life than had ever yet obtained when He, as a first step, thus openly and conclusively set aside the whole ascetical system of John and the Essenic monks. Our Saviour's

conception of life and religion was infinitely deeper and loftier, infinitely more inward and spiritual, than it was possible for the Baptist's to be, and accordingly, while finding much that was worthy of all praise in John personally, he yet set aside as a delusion and a snare all his eremitic ideals and ascetical methods, and introduced in room of them a moral ideal and a spiritual method far more full of true self-denial and inward mortification. At one stroke, that day in Cana, our Lord for ever set aside John's whole system of solitude and celibacy and abstinence from meat and drink, with the whole rubric of morose morality and superficial sanctification, that these things tended to produce. These things, our Lord was continually teaching, never touch the real root of moral evil in a man. Nay, so far from that, some of the worst vices of the human heart thrive best when they put on the cloak of a severe and self-imposed morality. Jesus Christ continually directs the thoughts of all his disciples to what constitutes the true life of religion and morality, the intense inwardness, fine spirituality, and keen severity of God's holy law, and then teaches them to value and employ outward rules and ascetical and self-mortifying practices, only so far as they harmonize with and experimentally assist that divine life that has its seat and sphere not in the body of a man, but in his soul.

III.—A LESSON FOR THE UNDECIDED.

Read 1 Kings xviii. 21; Psalm cxix. 112.

Dr. Newman's sermon, "Dispositions for Faith."

"THIS beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him." "Probability," says Butler, "is to us the very guide of life." That is to say, the whole of human life, and every step of it, is taken by us on a balance of probabilities; we continually decide and act on what seems to us most likely to be true and safe. But, then, probabilities are balanced in the mind; and what is probable, and likely, and certain, and necessary to one mind may be the very opposite to another. Now, it was the previous state of the disciples' minds that made them so easy of belief in Jesus Christ compared with others. There was, to them, a strong antecedent probability that manifestations of divine power would some time or other accompany and authenticate divine truth. It had always been so in the past history of their nation, and the probability was that the same thing would hold true at the present crisis. Nay, if what the Baptist had

said of their Master was at all true—and it must be true, it could not be a lie—what might they not expect to see of deeds and hear of doctrines, if He was indeed the Lamb of God that should come into the world? And thus the moral and religious character of the disciples, their sense of sin, their fear of death and judgment, their hunger for a Redeemer, and their waiting faith in Jehovah's prophets; all this worked together to make Christ's mightiest works credible, and even probable, to them; likely, and even necessary; and then those mighty works of His shed back a new certainty into their minds that their Master was indeed the Christ and the Son of God. Probability is to us the guide of life; but it cannot be too much pressed upon us that probability and improbability, doubt and certainty, dislike and desire, hope and fear are all just as the mind is that entertains them. What is certain to one man is doubtful to another; what is probable to my mind is improbable to yours; and what I love and long for you hate and hide away. In short, in all things, but in religion above all things, the mind is as the heart beneath it is; and the will is as the inclinations are on which the will hangs. And thus the very laws of nature, the very constitution and principles of the human mind, shut us up under this solemn truth, that we are as responsible for our faith as we are for our works; for what we think of Christ and believe about Him and look for from Him, as we are for how we obey His and His Father's commandments. This, indeed, is the work of God, that we believe on Jesus Christ, whom God hath sent.

So true is it that it is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness. Men just see what they bring eyes to see, and they just hear what they bring ears to hear; and in like manner they believe or disbelieve, love or hate, just as their hearts are. At the marriage-feast in Cana the bridegroom and the bride were sufficient for one another; the governor of the feast was absorbed in his duties; the servants were attending to what they were commanded, and the guests were delighted above measure because they drank better and more abundant wine at the end of the feast than they had had at the beginning. But there were some men there that day whose god was not their belly. There were some guests at that feast who had not come to eat and drink and dance. They had come to this marriage in order to be beside Jesus of Nazareth. It was only yesterday that they had found Him of whom Moses in

the law and the prophets did write, and they had no heart left for any one else. They sat silent at the hilarious feast, and forgot to eat or drink, as, continually looking at their Master, they pondered in their hearts the heart-burning words, "THE LAMB OF GOD WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD." And, after the miracle, they were to themselves and to one another like men possessed. "We beheld his glory," says one who was present, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Now, if you had been at that marriage, what part would you have taken in it? And where would your eyes and your heart have been? Would they have been with the bridegroom in his strength, and with the bride in her beauty, and with the guests at their replenished table? or would your eyes and your heart have been with the disciples as they secretly worshipped their manifested Master? Would you have been found drinking that mantling wine, blessing yourself over its goodness and abundance? or would you have drunk it as if it were an awful sacrament, all the time full of a holy joy that you had been chosen to sit beside Him who made it, and to be one of His first disciples? You may know what you would have done at Cana by what you do every day here. For the Son of God manifests His divine glory still. Not in the same way, indeed, but in ways not less glorious, not less impressive, not one whit less commanding and less convincing than when He turned water into wine, and multiplied the loaves, and said to Lazarus, Come forth! He who made all things, and without whom was not anything made that was made, still upholds them. By Him all things consist. He stands among the foundations of the earth, and says, I bear up the pillars of it. He still turns water into wine in every sunny vineyard; He still multiplies the loaves in every harvest-field; it is He who maketh all things beautiful and fruitful in their season. And lest all these things, through their familiarity, should escape you, lest they should all fail to lead you to think of Him who makes them all, He comes still nearer you. He besets you behind and before by His providence, and all but lays His very hand upon you. And with what result? "His disciples believed on Him." Are you among them? Have you believed on their Master through their word? If you have believed, He will increase your faith, He will help your unbelief. If you once truly believe, you will find more faith

easy. And faith worketh by love. If your love is only warm enough, neither the creeds of the Church nor the commandments of her Head will be felt by you to be grievous. And if you once aright believe, your faith will, like that of John and Peter, grow every day. You will be on the outlook for Christ in your own life, and in the life of the Church, and in the life of the world continually. "On Thee do I wait all the day," will be your words to Him. And, consequently, you will discover Him in a thousand things that love alone, and a faith that worketh by love alone, will see. And He, finding such a heart in you, will come unto you, and will manifest Himself unto you in a way He will not unto the world. Indeed, He will. Only let your saying be to every law of nature, to every ordinance of revelation, and to every means of grace, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?

IV.—A LESSON FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES.

Read Prov. ix. 9; Matt. xxv. 28.

John Foster's Notes on Deuteronomy xv. 5; Robert Browning's "Christmas Eve," IV.

THE immediate intention of our Lord in the miracle at Cana was to relieve the distress of his mother and her poor kindred, but the ultimate design and evangelical issue of the miracle was to confirm the faith of his lately enlisted disciples. And accordingly, John adds emphatically that, "His disciples believed on Him." His disciples believed because they were His disciples, and were on that account predisposed to believe. The truth is they had believed already. They were present at the marriage because they had believed. They were there, not as friends of the bride or bridegroom, but as the disciples of Jesus the Christ. And, being disciples already, they were naturally confirmed in their faith by this new manifestation of their Master's glory.

I do not read that Jesus made any new disciples at the marriage of Cana. I do not read that either the bridegroom, or the bride, or the governor of the feast, or any of the guests, or any of the servants believed on our Lord because of this His first miracle. His disciples alone believed. They had their first faith increased. They had their remaining unbelief helped. This miracle mightily fortified the faith they already had. They had left all to follow Christ, and, naturally, they were disposed to accept any testimony to their Master's Messianic position and divine power. You may say, if you please, that they were committed to Christ and were

thus prejudiced in His favour. So they were. That is my contention. Undoubtedly their minds were biassed; that was their happiness. They eagerly hailed all that magnified their Master. This miracle magnified Him greatly, for it set forth for the first time His divine glory, and whatever effect it might have on others, it could not fail in the nature of things to have this blessed effect on them, that their new-born faith was thereby mightily fortified.

And what is this but another illustration of that truth of which both Scripture and human life are full, that "to him that hath shall be given." The disciples believed because they were disciples already. They had their early discipleship justified and fortified by the great manifestation of their Master's glory. They felt so under this outburst of His divine power, that they said to one another, "We have never aright believed till now: we were never wholly sure till now." And, thus, from this time forward till the last and greatest miracle of all, each fresh manifestation of their Master's glory was not only an added confirmation of what they had already accepted, but each new miracle was also the opening up of a fresh field of revelation, and thus the deepening and enriching of their discipleship life of thought and imagination, reflection and adoration, wonder, praise, trust, and hope. And thus it came to pass that a new world, a new heaven and a new earth, gradually, but surely, took possession of those privileged men till, in a few years, nay, almost months, they were prepared to be the apostles and martyrs of Jesus Christ, in His name and in His strength turning the world upside down.

But, all the time, this solemn side of the same great moral law was being fulfilled in other men who were not Christ's disciples. To them who had faith and love more were given, while from them who had none, that was taken away which they seemed to have. For this same evangelist who records with rapture the result of this miracle at Cana, has to add in an after part of his book this sad contrast, and adds it with mingled sorrow and anger, "Then gathered the chief priests and the pharisees a council, and said, What do we, for this man doeth many miracles? . . . Then from that day forth they took council together for to put him to death." His disciples loved Jesus Christ, and His miracles only grounded their faith the more firmly on Him as on a rock, and every fresh manifestation of His glory afresh inflamed and ennobled their love till it burned like an altar

fire; while the very same words and works only the more mortified and exasperated His enemies. Till, as time went on, since His enemies would not give over their enmity, since they would not confess the tremendous mistake they had made when He first appeared among them, since they would not yield themselves up to His deeds and His doctrines, His character and His claims, there was nothing left for them to do but to take counsel to put Him to death. Dreadful result of Christ's mighty works! Deadly shadow cast by the out-shining of His divine glory!

V.—A LESSON FOR DIVINITY STUDENTS.

Read Prov. viii. 22—36, with Cowper's paraphrase of the passage; John i. 1—12.

THE coming of the Son of God to the earth to save us, was at once an astounding act of divine condescension and a startling innovation on the order of nature. And in both aspects, His advent demanded the very strongest accompanying proofs, in divine miracles and mighty works, before the straitened and suspicious hearts of sinful men could be invited or expected to believe that the Eternal Son was actually to be found, in flesh and blood, on such an errand. The incarnation of the Son of God was itself by far the most stupendous miracle the world has ever seen; more stupendous by far than the creation of the world; but then, the incarnation was an invisible miracle, it was wrought in secret, and it could not be alleged in proof of itself. The doctrine of all doctrines, the doctrine of the Word made flesh, demanded its own appropriate evidence, and adequate proof, if it was to be announced among men, and if their faith and obedience were to be invited to rest upon it. And not the incarnation alone, but also all that is involved in it, and that flows out of it. The all-obedient life, sin-atoning death, glorious resurrection, and high-priestly session of Jesus Christ, with the mission and work of the Holy Ghost—all this is, more or less, like the incarnation itself, more or less secret and matter of faith to us as yet at best; and thus it was that the introduction and first proclamation among men of this vast evangelical system was advertised and authenticated by a series of supernatural works, such that even the enemies of our Lord were compelled to confess that no man could possibly do such things if God were not with him. John, his forerunner, did no miracle; he offered no such credentials, and no man asked them

of him; and the reason was because his doctrine and baptism needed no seal beyond themselves to authenticate and support them. An indignant summons to honesty, purity, truth, and repentance, needed no divine endorsement to support him who boldly uttered it. The aroused and responsive conscience of the Baptist's hearers was a sufficient witness to the divinity of his doctrine. But when One came after him who laid the foundations of the doctrines of grace in His own person, and above all in His coming death on the cross, that was a revelation and a hope that demanded nothing short of supernatural seals to certify and support Him who uttered it.

And, on the other hand, while the majesty and grace of the message needed correspondingly majestic and gracious seals to be set to it, the humility of the messenger was at the same time such that He had to be accompanied through life with divine acknowledgments and evidences, lest men should wholly overlook Him and fatally neglect His message. The truth is, the Son of God had descended almost too low. Not lower than our need and the nature of His mission demanded: but almost too low for our recognition and acceptance. And therefore it was that, while Jesus Christ remained in His estate of humiliation, it was helpful to Him and needful for us that we should be reminded from time to time that the carpenter's son was not what He seemed to be, that there was more here than appeared to the carnal eye; and, in short, that Jesus of Nazareth was all that in His loftiest utterances about Himself He ever said He was, and all that His redeeming mission demanded He should be. His most hidden life, His walk and conversation where He was brought up, must have contained abundant proof that He was not one of Adam's fallen race; but the men of that day had not eyes to see His moral and spiritual glory as yet, and thus His coming, and character, and teaching would have been lost upon the world had His hidden glory not been from time to time manifested in those mighty works, which by God's blessing arrested and awakened and subdued some of the most opposed and prejudiced of men.

Now what was the nature of the glory that Jesus manifested forth when He turned water into wine at the marriage of Cana? Clearly, the glory that belonged to Him as the incarnate Creator and Upholder of all things. John supplies us with a key to his meaning in the eleventh verse of his second

chapter, in what he says in the prologue to his book: "All things were made by the Word before He Himself was made flesh, and without Him was not anything made that was made." The power, therefore, He put forth when He changed water into wine was the very same power He had put forth when, in the beginning, He created the heavens and the earth; and the glory He manifested forth to His disciples, to their great gladness, was the very same glory He had manifested in heaven when all the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. It was part of our blessed Lord's humiliation, that He should come to this earth, and on it become one of His own creatures; to take to Him our flesh, so as for a time to hide behind it His own proper glory; but it was necessary, at the same time, that some gleams of that glory should sometimes break through the veil of His flesh, in order that men might not altogether miss the saving discovery of who He was they had among them. "This beginning of miracles, therefore, did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory."

But there is a more excellent glory manifested forth here than even that of the incarnate Creator. The glory of divine power is seen when water is turned into wine. No power short of divine power could do that; but the yet nobler power of divine love and compassion is seen in the immediate motive for this miracle, in our Lord's kind consideration for the embarrassment and distress of this poor household. Dante tells us that he heard the souls who were being purged of envy and ill-will chanting out of this scripture, as they sped on their deeds of kindness, "They have no wine!" Mary's glory and her best ornament that day were that the law of kindness was in her tongue; and her Son's truest glory shone forth when He showed that He was so moved by her appeal and by her friends' poverty, as to put forth His divine power to relieve their distress. The divine goodness of Jesus Christ is to us the surest seal of His divinity; His loving-kindness is the best proof to us that He is the only-begotten Son of Him whose name is love. And thus it was that our Lord first manifested forth at this marriage what appeared in all His words and works, that He was the very Son of God incarnate, that He was the Creator and Upholder of all things, and that His highest glory was that He was full of grace and truth, of loving-kindness and tender mercy.

W. FLEMING STEVENSON.

En Memoriam.

BY the death of the late Dr. W. Fleming Stevenson, the Irish Presbyterian Church has been bereaved of perhaps its brightest ornament, and the church at large of one of its most earnest workers. He deserves a special tribute to his memory in this Magazine, for from the very commencement he was a valued and ever welcome contributor to its pages.

The influence which men exercise over their fellows is as diverse as their own individual peculiarities or personal gifts. Some few, of the highest class of mind, wield a distinctly formative, though often unconscious power, over those with whom they are brought into close contact. Two such men were among the early and staunch friends of William Fleming Stevenson. The first was James Morgan, a man little known beyond the confines of the Irish Presbyterian Church. The other was Norman Macleod, held in reverence from the Highland palace at Balmoral down to the humblest home—such as the little southern sea-side cottage where we once found a boy in tears over “The Starling.”

The facts of Stevenson's life are simple enough. A little town in the north of Ireland was his birth-place. The favourable conditions of his home made it possible for him to enjoy a broader education than fell to the lot of some of his contemporaries. All the new, short, and easy methods for obtaining degrees in Ireland, touching the working of which thoughtful men now stand in doubt, being then unknown, the young student, with his heart early and wholly set upon the ministry, was sent by his father to Scotland, where he studied at Glasgow and Edinburgh. After graduating he returned home, and was licensed to preach by his own presbytery of Strabane.

Belfast was then rapidly rising into prominence, and the ready American markets for all Irish produce worked an unprecedented revolution in its commerce. Fortunes were made out of Irish linens and Irish pigs, in an incredibly short time, and to an amount which now, in retrospect, seems well-nigh apocryphal. James Morgan had been for years the unostentatious, hard-working minister of one of the three important Presbyterian churches in Belfast, that of Fishervick Place. The rapidly successful trading of many of its chief members made it influ-

ential in point of finance, as well as in numbers. Dr. Morgan, assisted by his brother ministers, planned a scheme for influencing the increasing mixed multitude of mill and factory workers, by employing as town missionaries some duly qualified licentiates of the Presbyterian Church, and among those engaged was Stevenson.

The district assigned to him is still, unhappily, as notorious as it was in his day. In every riot, down to those of last summer, the dwellers in “Brown Square” hold a foremost place in the ranks of belligerents. Here, with courts and alleys reeking of herring-heads, decaying vegetables, and all possible human filth, bad as any “close” in the Edinburgh Canongate, this cultivated, refined young fellow spent days and nights. One who worked side by side with him, to whom we are indebted for many particulars, testifies to his quiet earnestness and unobtrusive zeal. His addresses (they could hardly be called sermons), whether in dirty kitchen, larger school-room, or an open street, were simple, short, and telling. Reputation as an orator, he never could have gained. Even then, he spoke ungracefully, with a curious unpleasant upward heave of the shoulders, as if the act of speaking was physically difficult, if not painful. On the one occasion, we believe, when he made anything that might be called an oration in the Irish General Assembly, we well remember the whisper of a friend, “That man will never live to be old. He will drop down some day in either apoplexy or heart-disease.” The prophecy has come true.

After a brief initiation into evangelistic work, Stevenson was struck down by the low gastric fever, which always lurks about the alleys of Belfast. He lay, for several weary weeks, in a ward of the General Hospital. His delirious utterances were often upon the topics which formed favourite subjects in his preaching. On recovering, he resumed visitation, and spoke of his earnest desire to spend his life among the poor. Our informant, before alluded to, had gathered about fifty such families into something like a church organization, and “hived off” into a newer locality, to build a mission church. Into the first edifice thus vacated, another licentiate entered, who was assisted by Stevenson. When, through Dr. Morgan's influence, the removal to Dublin was first suggested, his hesitation was great. Purely

mission work had real charms for him, and it was with much lingering regret that the proposal was entertained. Very different the two places were; Dublin had its University and its traditions, Belfast its commerce and its *parvenus*. It was an ambitious move for a young town missionary, and was finally made. The building where he ministered has since been sold, and is now used as a linen warehouse. But the seed of his words blossomed, and fruited into a healthy, vigorous, working church, whose membership equalled his own at Rathgar.

Previous to this time, he made the friendship of Dr. Norman Macleod, the second great factor in his life. Stevenson had been for some time in Germany, and had become greatly interested in several works of Christian usefulness, the impression he gained being published by him in various articles in GOOD WORDS. Readers of the early volumes will remember his papers on "Dr. Chalmers at Elberfeld," "Kaiserswerth and its Deaconesses," "Gossner," "Pastor Harms," &c. These were afterwards gathered and re-issued in the well-known volume, "Praying and Working," a title which might well be used as expressing his own life.

Dr. Macleod opened his church in Rathgar, a new suburb of Dublin, in 1862, and two years later officiated with Dr. Morgan at his marriage.

Missions, both at home and abroad, were a life-long passion with Dr. Morgan. This affinity of sympathies drew him to Stevenson, and led him in his old age to request the latter to act with him, as joint convener of the Irish Foreign Mission. When the elder man passed away, Stevenson bulked as the only possible successor, and, as we believe, not a little influenced thereto by the example of Dr. Macleod, he visited our missions in the East. His church gave him leave for a year, while the expense was borne by a friend to missions. The chief lessons of that remarkable tour were given, by Stevenson, in a series of articles, "The Mission Fields of India, China, and Japan," which appeared in GOOD WORDS in 1879. His last contribution to these pages was in 1882, when he published a series of papers on "Bible Truths and Eastern Ways," being a further instalment of the lessons he had learned in his mission travels.

In the multiplied duties of pastor, lecturer, convener, educational commissioner, and for the last few months chaplain to the Lord Lieutenant, the busy years flew by. Often complaining of weariness, but seldom actually

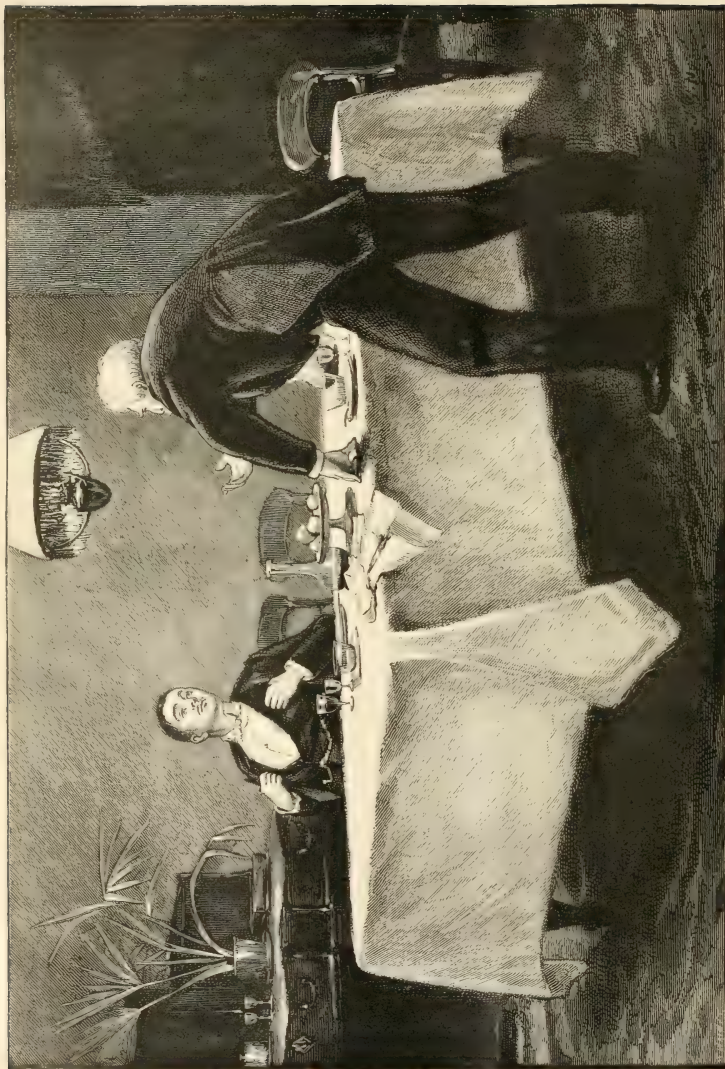
ill, no one thought of him as standing next to the breach. A severe sickness of some days seemed the less alarming, and he put from him the idea of rest. So he preached one Sunday, in fulfilment of a long-standing engagement, and before the next the Master, ever watchful over His weary disciples, had called him to rest, not for awhile, but for ever. "The sharpness of death" was over in a brief passage of some twenty minutes. That heart-spasm, which had been as suddenly fatal to two other members of his family, closed too early the life of a minister whom the Church Militant mourned.

The quietness of his work was one of his characteristics. In the courts of his Church his voice was rarely heard, save in connection with that foreign mission, now indissolubly linked with his name. He sat quietly, the broad figure, the bald head with bushy beard, the face of care, certainly ten years older looking than his age—noting everything while other men talked, or turning to his packet of papers if a new idea struck him. For scenes of religious strife he had as little aptitude as inclination. He was shy in manner, and though at all times most ready to give any information sought from him, he could be silent, as well as show himself a most interesting conversationalist.

His dogged perseverance was another characteristic. In his manifold forms of Christian activity he worked with a will. It was from his lips we first heard the proverb, "An hour a day will go through a stone wall." His work meant effort, and that always means exhaustion; neither speaking nor writing came easily. There are sad rumours of nights spent in penning with bandaged brow, when a less conscientious man would scribble off by the yard. The world is slowly coming to believe that the brain-product which costs little is just worth the little that it costs. Fleming Stevenson's activities have been at the price of his life. But he never gave in!

That a man with no one very striking talent should, by quiet force of character, indomitable industry, purity of purpose and life, and intense Christian earnestness, come to the forefront of his Church and his community, is a fact worth studying. He has proved, what Englishmen do not believe, and even the Scotch (who should be our brothers) are half inclined to doubt, that it is possible for a man to be a gentleman, a scholar, something of a courtier, an able administrator, and above all a Christian, and yet—be Irish to the backbone.

M. B. M.



"When it is too late, you will, perhaps, be sorry for having defied me."

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

ON a winter night half-a-dozen children romping in a roomy kitchen made a noise like the confusion of Babel. They were all well clad, and well-to-do in aspect, flaxen-haired, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, and wholesome. Within certain conditions a pleasanter sight than they afforded could hardly be asked for, though their presence and the noise they made gave but poor assistance to the study of the higher mathematics. A bearded young fellow of six-and-twenty, or thereabouts, with a penholder between his teeth, and a heap of papers scattered loosely before him, sat with both hands in his hair at a big table by the window and looked about him occasionally with an air of abstraction which always melted more or less quickly into a smile. The smile was invariably followed by a momentary relaxation from study, whilst the young man watched the joyous gambadoes of the children, who shouted all together with a wild hilarity and seemed to acquire fresh vigour each time from the mere fact of remaining unrebuked. Always in a little time the young man's smile grew abstracted and faded slowly away as his thoughts gradually drew back to their own refuge.

A great fire with a solid core of red heat burned without noise or flicker on the hearth, and on one side of it sat an elderly woman in a widow's cap, and a gown of respectable black. With all the diversity of feature and expression which marked the group of children there was so strong a likeness between the elderly woman in the chimney corner and every individual member of the noisy little assembly, that a stranger would have had no difficulty in deciding their relationship. Like the children, the woman in the widow's cap and the respectable stuff gown was plump, blue-eyed, rosy, and flaxen-haired. In her case the flax was marked by a thread or two of silver, though not so strongly as to be at first sight noticeable, and her countenance for all its rosy plumpness was drawn to an expression of complaining resignation. She sat with her hands—which like her face were plump and helpless-looking—in her lap, and, with eyebrows raised, as who should say that things were intolerable, and must yet be borne with, she looked into the glowing coals.

Facing her sat a woman of a different pattern—bolt upright, lean, and full of nervous energy. Her knitting needles, which in the light of the glowing coals had a quite startling look of being red-hot at moments, clicked with an amazing swiftness and determination. Every little motion of the flashing needles was as brusque, decided, and imperative as the "shoulder arms" of a martinet drill sergeant. Every little tug which unwound the ball of worsted lying in her lap was marked by the same energy and decision.

Her evening dress of clean-washed and primly-starched light print fitted tightly about arms, bust, and waist, and gave to her ungainly figure something of the look of an unsymmetrically packed pin-cushion into which the bran has been rammed too hard. She sat so rigid and unbending whilst the quick knitting needles clicked with their alternate flash from the look of red-hot steel to silver, and silver to red-hot steel, that only head and hands seemed alive, and one might have fancied it possible to stick pins into any part of the print-clad bust and arms without fear of exciting sensation.

There was a momentary hush amongst the children whilst they took breath, and evolved plans for the making of wilder noise than they had yet created. After the recent hubbub the kitchen seemed almost at peace by contrast. Then in a moment of inspiration one of the group proposed that their next amusement should be the game of Sacks to the Mill. This cheerful and invigorating indoor pastime begins by everybody trying to catch hold of somebody else's ankle with a view to bringing him or her to the ground. This object in any one case once achieved, it becomes the business of the rest swiftly and unanimously to choose a victim, and forcibly to deposit that victim upon the recumbent figure. This point is no sooner gained than a similar choice, as swift and unanimous, remains to be made. Finally the game develops into a wrestle of two, and that happy child who lies uppermost on the struggling pile is conqueror. Since it rarely happens that the infant councils are prompt and decided enough to pinion the first body with a second before the fallen one can rise, the game is capable of an almost infinite expansion. Another advantage is that from beginning to end every player can shout his loudest.

The new game had only lasted for a minute or two when at one appalling and universal shriek, mingled of joy, terror, triumph, and excitement, the woman in the print dress bundled her knitting needles, the unfinished stocking, and the ball of worsted all together, slapped them resoundingly upon the big table, and charged upon the struggling mob of infantry. She sorted them from the confused heap in which they lay upon the floor, and set them on their feet with a swiftness and dexterity which looked dangerous. There was a dreadful silence.

The domestic resumed her knitting and her seat. The flashing needles clicked audibly for half a minute, and the children looked at each other with shy and disconcerted glances.

"And how do you think your brother Edward can do his figures, I should like to know!" the decided female demanded after this terror-stricken pause.

"Oh, let the children play, Hepzibah," said the young man, looking up smilingly. "They don't hurt me." He had removed the penholder to make way for this brief speech, but now he gagged himself with it anew, and turned back to the consideration of his papers.

"You was never like other folks," said Hepzibah. "It's all very well for the children to play, no doubt, but leave 'em to go on in that way and there wouldn't be a decent rag left on their backs for 'em to be seen in the street with. Them as has the rips to mend knows what that sort o' game'll end in. Besides which a body can't hear their own ears for 'em."

"Ah!" said the widow, shaking her head dolefully, "the children are a dreadful trouble. It wasn't so i' my days. If I'd ha' dared to ha' spoke above a whisper I should ha' been reproved. Little gells was made to go about like little ladies i' my time, an' little b'ys as wouldn't be told had them about 'em as ud make 'em."

"Well," said the young man, rising and stretching himself, and then stooping over the table to arrange his papers, "I'm very glad the times have altered, mother—

'I thank the goodness and the grace
That on my birth have smiled,
And made me in these Christian days
A happy English child.'

"Don't you be blasphemous, Edward," said his mother feebly.

"Not I," returned Edward, taking his place behind her chair and caressing her cheek with his hand. "Why, I'm old enough to remember when you liked a bit of fun

yourself as well as any one of 'em, and looked as bright and pretty at it too."

"Ah! them days soon pass by, Edward," answered the widow, feeling for her pocket-handkerchief. "There's no abiding joy i' this world."

"And that's the best reason for making the most of it while it lasts," said Edward, coming from behind her chair and taking up a place before the fire. He stood there looking down upon his mother.

"If it's mekin' the best of it to squall i' that way," said Hepzibah, knitting with added energy, "and to rive the very frocks on their backs into tatters, I should like to be told on it."

The young man, with his hands in his pockets, turned round good-humouredly on Hepzibah.

"I've seen Sacks to the Mill played before to-night," he said laughing. "I remember when I was quite a little chap going with a nurse of mine to some sort of Christmas merry-making at Farmer Bache's. She was a buxom, strapping girl of about seventeen or eighteen as near as I can guess, and she had an eye like a sloe and a cheek like a cherry in those days."

"Get along with you, Master Edward," said Hepzibah, cutting the story short, and rising with an air of displeasure not too well affected. "I can't stay listenin' to your nonsense all night. Children! it's time you was in bed. Kiss your mother, and troop up-stairs with you, while I get the candle, there's good b'ys and gells."

Whilst the ceremony of kissing and saying good night was in progress, there came a rap at the front door of the house, and Hepzibah having disappeared into some darkened backward region in search of a candle, Edward himself answered the summons. The open door admitted a draught of keen and wintry air, and a cloud of whirling snow-flakes. The white carpet on the road was unmarred except by the track of the new-comer.

"That you, Shadrach?" Edward asked.

"Why, yes, Mister Ned," said the arrival humbly. "I thought I'd tek the liberty of mekin' a call this evenin', if I'm not held to be i' the way."

"Not a bit of it," responded Edward.

"Come in."

The arrival kicked his toes noisily against the doorstep to clear his boots from the snow, and then mounting the step turned about and repeated the process with his heels.

"Come in, Shadrach, come in," repeated Edward, standing half-sheltered from the roaring wind behind the door. "We shall have the house full of snow."

"Hepzibah's rare an' particular about her kitchen quarries, Mister Ned," responded the other, entering with a clumsy step. "I've ketched it too often not to have growed a bit particular myself."

Having entered, he stood stamping in the dark and polishing his feet upon the door-mat, and Edward returning to the kitchen left him to follow.

"Here's Shadrach," he said, addressing Hepzibah, who had by this time found her candle, and was now pecking cautiously at the glowing fire with a very small scrap of paper to secure a light.

"Oh," said Hepzibah; "and what might he want, trapesing all the mud out of the street into the kitchen, as was only clean swilled this blessed afternoon?"

"Perhaps he'll tell you," said Edward with a look of humorous mischief. "I've often thought he would, and perhaps he may to-night. Who knows?"

Hepzibah made no answer, but having secured a light, trooped the children out of the room before her, bestowing a passing nod upon the arrival, who was in the act of entering the kitchen, and stood on one side to let her and her charges pass. Shadrach, who had a long meek face, and habitually wore his mouth a little open, was dressed in his Sunday black. The more overlapping folds and wrinkles a tailor could get into a suit the better his clients used to be satisfied a score and a half years ago in that part of the country. There was a taint of meanness and sparseness about the fashion of giving merely cloth enough to fit the figure, and it was held desirable that a coat especially should be large and roomy. The tips of Shadrach's horny fingers just emerged from his sleeves, and his coat collar irritated the hair at the back of his head. A woollen comforter with all the colours of the rainbow in it surrounded his neck and dangled to his knees.

He entered with a propitiatory and apologetic aspect, smoothing his hair as if he were entering chapel, and sitting on the extreme edge of the chair assigned to him, hid his fingers in the voluminous cuffs of his coat, and concealed them further between his knees as if it were a point of etiquette, painfully to be observed, that the hands should be invisible. His eyes, which were round, pale grey, and as wonderingly wide open as

a baby's, were carefully directed to objects which did not come well within their sphere; as the shells on the high mantelpiece, the clock face to his left, and an almanack tacked to the wall on his right. Since he made it a point of honour with himself not to move his head whilst he regarded these things, and carefully refrained from looking at anything which it would have been easy and natural for him to look at, the effect, to a sympathising observer, was a little embarrassing. The greetings extended to him he answered in a deprecatory peacemaking sort of murmur, and altogether he was most exasperatingly humble and unobtrusive.

By-and-by, however, he thawed so far as to observe that it was deadly cold, and bitter seasonable for the time of year; but Hepzibah's entrance froze the conversational fount again, and he resumed his sheepish examination of the shells, the clock face, and the almanack.

Mister Edward glanced now and again at him and Hepzibah with an outer seriousness, which was belied by the twinkling of his eye, and after a pause, in which little was audible except the click of the knitting-needles and the rumbling of the winter wind in the chimney, the widow cleared her throat as if to speak, but Hepzibah held up the ball of worsted with an air of warning, and Shadrach spoke in her stead.

"The night," said Shadrach, rolling his round eyes from the shells to the clock, and from the clock to the almanack, "The night is dark, the snow comes down, The wind is like the gaffer's frown, It stops the heart and chills the blood, An' does no mortal mon no good."

"Theer!" said Hepzibah, dropping her work into her lap, and laying her hands upon it with a look of answered expectation and wonder. "Did you mek that up as you come along, Shadrach?" she demanded.

"Finished it that instant minute," returned Shadrach mildly. "It's a gift," he added, "as I wouldn't tek no credit for, not if it was offered me. The highdears is put into the head. That's how it is. They'm *put* there."

"Ah!" said Mister Edward with great solemnity. "That's how it is, I should suppose, Shadrach."

"Yes, Mister Edward," Shadrach answered. "Theer's no account of the thing to be given, not by the cliverest. I'n heerd it said as Dr. Watts himself could niver mek out how it happened."

"Really!" said Mister Edward, and then bolted with a haste which, to a bard less

simple-minded, might have looked suspicious.

When he returned Shadrach had somewhat recovered from the seer-like trance, and was talking humbly and with an obvious fear of trespass to Hepzibah and the widow.

"That's how it seems to be, Hepzibah," he was saying. "Young Mr. Hackett's said to have surrounded the old mon's scruples, and he's gi'en in his consentment, and his promise to as much as two hundred pounds in golden money on the weddin'-day."

"Will Hackett?" said Mr. Edward rather sharply. "Will Hackett isn't going to be married?"

"That's how it's gi'en out, Mister Edward, the village over," returned Shadrach.

If the bard had been less concerned with the clock-face and the shells he would have seen that Hepzibah was signalling to him, and had been from the moment of the young man's return. Mr. Edward stooped over the table, and turned the figured papers about with an assumption of carelessness.

"And who may be the young lady that's been so happy as to win Will Hackett?" he asked.

Hepzibah dropped her signals, and, plunging back into her chair, took up a dozen false stitches with her knitting-needles, and stopped the rapid clicking to undo them.

"It's said to be Miss Mary Howarth, Mister Edward," replied the unsuspecting Shadrach.

There was silence again for the space of a minute or two. The young man bent over his papers, took up his pen, dipped it in the ink-pot, and made an unmeaning sign or two amongst his figures. Then he spoke in a voice of commonplace with the faintest touch of scorn.

"That sounds a likely story, Shadrach. Where did you get it?"

"Why," said Shadrach, "it's not looked on for a likely sort o' story, Mister Edward, but it's known to be true. Mr. Hackett's been a ractory sort of a chap, and Miss Howarth has allays been that quiet and chapel-going, it's a bit of a shake for folks."

"H'm!" said Edward. "I should think so." He laid his pen down carefully after wiping it on the skirt of his coat, and taking the papers in both hands shook them delicately into order. "I am going out for a while, mother," he said as he bestowed the papers in a drawer below the table. "I shan't be long."

"You'd better say good night now then," returned the widow. "I'm going to bed,

and I shall leave Hepzibah to sit up for you."

He stooped over her and kissed her and said good night.

"I wish you'd bring your table nearer to the fire, Edward," said the widow. "You get chilly out there, sitting so near the winder."

Edward left the room without response, and a moment later the front door was heard to close behind him. The widow dispatched Hepzibah for a candle, and on its arrival bade the domestic and the visitor good night and withdrew.

"Well," said Hepzibah in a bitter whisper when her mistress's back was turned; "of all the wool-gathering fools as ever wool-gathered I do believe as you're the king and captain."

"Why?" asked Shadrach. "What have I done now?"

"Done!" cried Hepzibah, throwing her knitting on the table. "Done!"

"Done was the word I used, Hepzibah," the bard responded.

"Couldn't you see what iverybody else in the village could see, as Mr. Edward worshipped the very ground as Mary Howarth trod on? And you must come and blurt out afore him as her's going to wed that scamp of a Will Hackett, as'll mek her sup sorrow by the spoonful afore she's done with him!"

"They didn't seem to tek on about it much," said Shadrach, mildly self-defensive, "nayther him nor his mother."

"Tek on?" said Hepzibah, rising and snatching at the knitting with a gesture of complete exasperation. "What did you expect him to do?—get on the table and howl? And as for his mother, her's a creature as niver saw nothin' in her born days and ud niver ha' found so much as a church door unless her'd had somebody to arm her into it."

Shadrach sat wisely silent, and after a lengthy pause Hepzibah, having buried her wrath in the knitting with a multitude of wrathful snorts and clickings, spoke in a more moderated tone.

"He'd ha' learned it somewhere anyhow," she said; "and perhaps it was as well he should hear it when there was nobody by as could understand his feelings except me. I nussed him when I was a gell, and perhaps it stands to reason as I should think well of him; but it passes me to think how any maid could go by him and light on that Will Hackett, as is the roysterer and taverner of

the country-side. Not as he isn't well-looking enough with his moustaches and his swaggerin' airs, and there's them as ud break their heart to please their eye, and a body ud think it was the will o' Providence to give the prettiest outsiders to the platters as is the dirtiest in."

Still Shadrach thought it wisest to say nothing until the storm had blown itself out. When Hepzibah had been silent for something like half an hour he broke in upon the clicking of the needles, the ticking of the clock, and the rumbling of the wind—

"The tongue's a block of sore offence, And runs away with men's good sense; And in this month of cold December, I've sinned with that onruly member. Hepzyber! may the lesson be Of use to thee—of use to me!"

"Shadrach," said Hepzibah with a sigh of admiration, "it's wonderful!"

CHAPTER II.

IN an upper room in the Chase Arms on this same night of wind and snow there sat an assemblage of vocal amateurs whose use and wont it was to gather for their own amusement, and the practice of their favourite art, on Wednesday nights throughout the winter. The party consisted mainly of the younger tradesmen of the town, with here and there a mechanic whose musical loves had lifted him a rung or two on the social ladder. The especial charm which this gathering presented for the observer lay in the fact that every member of the circle was convinced that he could sing, and that his compeers could not. It happened—as it often happens—that the general opinion was truer than the individual.

Down below, in the bar-parlour, sat the oldsters of the place, whose tastes ran rather for politics than music. To them, as they sat arranging the affairs of Europe over their pipes and grog, entered with something of a noisy swagger a young man of handsome but dissipated appearance, who bestowed a general salute upon the company, and called for cold brandy. He was received with cordiality and a touch of respect not accorded to every comer, and whilst he stood sipping his brandy and chatting with the hostess there rose in the upper room a clatter of glasses and stamping of feet which communicated a sensible vibration to the floor and set swinging the jugs and cups which hung above the window. Then a piano began to tinkle and a ventriloquial rendering of "The Mistletoe Bough" made itself faintly heard

at intervals. The jingling piano filled in the pauses and the chorus rose in a defiant howl: "Oh-h the mistletoe bough! Oh-h the mistletoe bough!"

"What's that?" asked the latest comer, setting down his glass and appealing to the company.

"Why," said one, "it's held to pass for music with some on 'em up-stairs."

"It's well to know what it's meant for," said another.

"Ah!" said a third, "if Mr. Hackett ud goo up-stairs an' show 'em what it means to sing a song! It's a goodish while, Mr. Hackett, since that counter-tenor o' thine was heard in the Chase Arms."

"I doubt," said the first man, rubbing the tip of his nose meditatively with the back of his hand, "I doubt whether Sims Reeves himself has got a nobler organ. It's a gift as is known to run in a family, an' I can remember, when I was a lad, standing under the wall o' the Manor House of a summer hevenin'—nigh on sixty year ago it is now—and hearing thy grandfather, Mr. Hackett. The winders was up wide an' I heard him sing, right through, from start to finish, 'If ever I plant in thy bosom a thorn.' I never heard it sung like he sung it from that day to this."

"Hasn't?" said the landlord. "Then thee'st niver heard Mr. Hackett sing himself. I can remember Mr. Hackett's grandfather, an' his singin', quite as fur back as thee canst. A beautiful organ it was. A fine organ. But not to be counted alongside of his grandson's, or named i' the same day with it. I'm only a sayin' afore Mr. Hackett's face," pursued the landlord, with an air of laboured impartiality, "what I've said behind his back, ah! many and many's the time."

Mr. Hackett swaggered a little, tapped at his legs with the riding whip he carried, and asked for more brandy.

"Come, now," said Hazeltine, the job-master, who had first ventured to broach the topic. "You might do a thing as 'ud please the present company a good deal less than by singing a song for us, Mr. Hackett."

"I'm in no great voice to-night," said Mr. Hackett, swaggering and sipping. "I'll see how I feel by-and-by perhaps."

"Come!" cried the landlord, "that's as good as a promise. But thou'lt niver clear thy pipes wi' that cold stuff, Mr. Hackett. Let me put that glass o' one side, an' give thee a drop of summat warm—summat as 'll put thee in proper fettle for a song!"

"No no, Warden," said Mr. Hackett, with

an easy air of lordship. "Leave it. Leave it. Let us go up-stairs, and see what the piano's like."

The landlord threw open the door. The owner of the counter-tenor passed out, and the company streamed after him. The young fellow's appearance in the upper room was hailed with a mighty shouting and beating of tables, and like a man to whom this sort of reception was customary and commonplace he nodded here and there about him, and seated himself in a chair which one of his admirers had obsequiously vacated. The landlord had carried up Mr. Hackett's glass, and the young man sat sipping its contents, and chatting with affability and condescension to those about him. All but the more important people stood in an admiring and expectant circle.

Mr. Hackett himself was a great deal too well pleased with this sort of popular incense to wish to put an end to it, and he sat there, delightfully conscious inside, and delightfully unconscious on the outside, until from the farther circle there arose an occasional feeble clapping of hands, accompanied by murmurs of invitation.

"Let it be 'The Death of Nelson,' Mr. Hackett."

"Give us 'Tom Bowling.'"

"Let's have 'The Thorn.'"

"You might let's have 'Sally in our Alley,' again, sir."

One bolder than the rest said with a respectful facetiousness:—

"We'll hangeore him till he gives us the lot of them. Hey, Mr. Hackett?"

"Oh!" said the landlord, "thee seest how the public opinion runs, sir. Now we've got thee here, thee seest, and if thou happen'st to be in a yielding temper, it'll be some time afore thee gettest away again."

"Very well, gentlemen," said the centre of interest, rising. "If you will have it, you will have it. I'm as hoarse as a crow, but if you make me sing it's no fault of mine, and you must put up with it."

"No hard job to do that, Mr. Hackett."

"To put up with it!" in a voice of genial complimentary scorn.

"We'll do that, sir. You see who gets tired first, thee or we."

Mr. Hackett threw down his riding whip, and sauntered to the piano. He struck a chord or two and the character of the instrument seemed to change. It jingled still—it would have jingled under the hands of the king of pianists—but its voice was richer, fuller, and softer, than it had been. Even

now he was not going to waste a sniff of the incense which was wafted about him, and was at once so common and so delightful. He preluded at half random for a minute or two, and when he had whetted expectancy to its keenest edge he struck the opening chords of "The Bay of Biscay," and in due time began to sing.

His voice was of that rare and exquisite quality which inspires immediate confidence in the listener. On the song of nature's born singers the soul embarks without hesitation at the call of the first true note. It is likely enough that Mr. Hackett had more to learn than he imagined, but he sang with a dramatic passion so genuine, and by turns so fiery, so despairing, so triumphant, that to every hearer the walls of the chamber made themselves air, and the wide waste of heaving sea—which no eye in that assembly of inland men had ever actually beheld—lay tossing and raging below black sky and howling wind, and the first glare of dawn arose to mock despairing hearts, and the white glint of the sail which brought the hope of life again was seen as clearly as the ringing cry of joy was heard.

If there had been nothing else to have accounted for it, it would have been a remarkable tribute to Will Hackett's vocal powers that a wayfarer should have paused in the street at the first note of his song and should have stood stock still in the wind and snow to listen. There was, however, much else to account for this circumstance, for the wayfarer was none other than Will Hackett's unsuccessful rival. He had forgotten the wind and the snow half an hour before, and now in the very act of standing still to listen he forgot the song. He doubted the news he had heard, and had tried vainly to persuade himself that he had no belief in it at all, but his thoughts were comfortless and disturbed. He had been Mary Howarth's servant and suitor these two years, and though he had been more than sufficiently shy in his suit and timid enough in his hopes, he had hardly identified swaggering Will Hackett as a rival. Other rivals there had seemed to be in plenty. It is natural to a young man in love to detect rivalries easily and occasionally to create them, and he had been so far gone in love that it had seemed inevitable to him that the whole world should covet the particular treasure he prized. It was almost outside the range of possibility to his mind that a young man should know Mary Howarth and not fall in love with her, but he had always felt safe from the one man whom

it now seemed he ought most to have dreaded. With Shadrach's news in his mind he began to dread Hackett in more senses than one. It is a bitter business to have one's suit set aside in another's favour, but it is bitterer still to know that the choice is altogether mistaken, and that the girl to whom a lad has given his heart is throwing her own away.

The Hacketts had been gentlefolks time out of mind, but for the last three or four generations the family had been rolling so industriously down hill that it was a marvel they had not long since reached the bottom. This sweet-throated Will's great-grandfather had in his time drunk and gambled away one half the family belongings. The grandfather had in like manner reduced his share by a moiety, and the father, whose career was briefer and more rapid than that of his predecessors, had left the remnant of the property so heavily mortgaged as to be almost valueless. Since his death the Manor House had been closed and was likely to remain so, for the mining resources of the district round about were fast being opened up, and coal-pits and blasting-furnaces are undesirable neighbours for a country seat. Twenty or thirty years earlier the placid landscape smiled fair with pasture-land and wheat, but now it was scarred and riven on every side, and defaced by unsightly mounds of mine and furnace refuse. In winter the snow that lay upon the ground grew dingy in a day, and in any summer-shower the sickly trees dripped ink. The discovery of the mineral resources of the land would have made careful people wealthy, but it had only encouraged the later generations of the Hacketts to larger extravagances. Master Will had inherited the tastes and proclivities of his ancestors, and was as deep in debt as he knew how to be; the depth depending not on the boldness of his own venture—in which case he would cheerfully have braved an Atlantic of liabilities—but on the confidence and courage of his creditors.

If there had been nothing worse than the fallen fortunes of his family with which to reproach Will Hackett, the thing might have been borne with an approach to equanimity; but the young fellow kept the family reputation alive in all ways, and the graver sort of people shrugged their shoulders at the mention of him, whilst the feebler held up their hands in horror. The long and the short of it is, he was a rake and a *roué*, and the last sort of man in the world for an innocent girl to think of marrying. Now the disappointed

lover knew all these things, and they galled him terribly. He had always known them, for Hackett and he had been chums so far as that was possible for the steadiest and for the unsteadiest of all the youngsters of the neighbourhood, and the young Sobersides had more than once helped to smooth over the consequences of the rake's escapades.

He had liked him greatly once upon a time—almost everybody had liked the ne'er-do-weel in his earlier days. Bright, handsome, loud, jovial, generous, always ready to lend or spend, though sore unwilling to expend present coin on parted joys, he had been an almost universal favourite. But now most men, and it need hardly be said most women, fought a little shy of him. His father's old friends died off, or grew more careful than they had been in their younger days, or turned a cold shoulder on poverty. There were few in what he thought his own station to consort with him, and so he came to be on terms of pot-and-pipe intimacy with sporting landlords, and people of their kidney, and was away down hill on the family route as fast as he could travel.

Edward Blane, sunk deep in the memory of these things, stood in the storm, wrathful, sore-hearted, and piteous. It takes no great time to sing through "The Bay of Biscay," but when the song was finished and the applause which followed it aroused him from his thoughts, he awoke out of a dream which had carried him both into the past and the future by a year or two. He could not have told then or afterwards what impulse drew him into the hotel and led him to the upper room in which the singing was going on. The thing he seemed most to desire just then was solitude, and he had no mind to exchange unmeaning talk with people he did not care for, or even to listen to Will Hackett's delightful singing. Yet he entered and stood rather moodily propping himself against the door, until his old half-abandoned croney discovered him, and crossed the room to shake hands.

"Why, Ned, old lad, it's a hundred years since I saw the last of you. What brings you here?"

"I heard your singing as I was going by," said Ned. "I wouldn't come up till you'd finished."

"And now," cried the landlord, "it's pretty well beknown as there's nothing Mr. Hackett wouldn't be willin' to do to oblige Mr. Blane, and he can hardly do less than sing another song to pay him for standin' out i' the cold to listen to the first un."

"Ay, sing us a song, Will," said his old companion. "They're all rarely pleased to hear you."

"Why, so I will," answered Hackett, "but I'll have a little brandy-and-water first, if you please, Warden."

The landlord bustled from the room and came back with the glass. Then Hackett, having disposed of the brandy-and-water, sang another song. This time he chose "Sally in our Alley," and the unlucky lover, though not easily disposed to be affronted as a rule, felt a personal application in the ditty and took umbrage at it. The joyful and tender exultation of the line, "Oh, then I'll marry Sally," especially wounded him, and the singer's accidental smiling look in his direction seemed to his raw and distempered fancy as if it were meant to barb the shaft. He leaned moodily against the wall, with his hands behind him, and resigned himself to bitter fancies.

Hackett, his song being over, began to rally him upon his gloomy temper and pressed him to drink.

"You're taking rather more yourself than's good for you," said the sufferer. "Better stop it and go home."

"Who? I?" cries Hackett. "Not a bit of it. To-day's the only day we own. We mayn't be alive to enjoy ourselves to-morrow."

'And that, I think, 's a reason fair,
To fill the glass again.'

Fill up, landlord."

The foolish youngster spoke with so much aplomb, and with an air so gay and sprightly, and laughed so heartily in his speech, that everybody but Ned Blane took the speech itself to be full of wit and humour, and laughed loudly with him. But Ned Blane was known to be a trifle stricter than most men in his way of thinking, and therefore surprised nobody by his solemnity.

And in brief the popular tenor sang so often, and found it so essential to drink between songs, that when but an hour had gone by his ditties were all of the Bacchanalian sort, and were sung with less taste and refinement than might have been asked for from so accomplished a vocalist.

All this was gall and wormwood to the unfortunate lover. His thoughts ran before him into the future, and he saw the girl he cared for sitting lonely and pale and sad at home, and in the same flash of time saw her husband as he saw him now, swaggering and roystering with boon companions who were unworthy of him. These fancies cut him to

the heart, and at last, taking Hackett by the arm, he whispered in a tone which sounded a trifle fierce from so ordinarily mild a man,

"Come home, Hackett. If you can't see when you're on the way to make a fool of yourself your friends must see it for you."

"In vino veritas" is a very old proverb, and if it have truth in it, it may be allowed that, along with his congenial vices, Mr. Hackett had at least the congenital merit of being good-tempered. He laughed allowingly, and suffered himself to be drawn away, but in the keen fresh air of the streets he began to reel and to talk thickly, and his rival, with a heart growing momentarily heavier and sorer, piloted him home, and, bidding him good night at the door, turned away, feeling as blank and desolate as the night itself.

CHAPTER III.

CHURCH bells were ringing on a March morning. They rang under a sky half covered with a tatter of ragged cloud, through the vivid rents whereof broad sunshine poured. The wind, which buffeted the music of the bells, chased the tattered clouds so swiftly that the sunlight flowed over the heath, the cluster of cottages, and the church, like a series of charging waves. What with the wild wind, and the racing waves of light, and the metallic clangor of the bells there was a sense of rollicking jocundity abroad. The day seemed to brag of its own rude health and vigour.

A quarter of a mile away from the centre of the music which tumbled in such exuberant and wind-swept mirth, stood a sign-post holding four gaunt arms abroad and pointing down four roads. Against the sign-post leaned Ned Blane, wearing an air of deep chagrin, and kicking with occasional sudden emphasis at any projecting bit of turf which lay within reach of his feet. Ned was a handsome and well-proportioned fellow, and his figure showed signs of unusual agility and strength, but—when he was not animated by some transient spurt of anger at the projecting bits of turf—every line of it seemed to indicate a sort of lassitude of resignation. His soft felt hat raked over his eyes and half obscured them, his crisp brown beard jutted out forlornly as his chin reposed upon his breast. At times he rolled his broad back about the sign-post in a fashion indicative at once of restlessness and fatigue, and his clenched fists were rammed hard into his side pockets. The young man's attitude was an acceptance of the inevitable and a protest against things in general.

Whilst he lounged there thus dejected he was unaware of the approach of a portly broadclothed personage who picked his way with a catlike nicety and deliberation amongst the shining puddles on the western road. This gentleman shone all over with a subdued lustre of newness. His hat, his satin scarf, his broadcloth overcoat, his gloves, his boots, were all offensively shiny and rigid, but their wearer was tall and plump and of a smooth and plastic aspect, so that they sat upon him with less aggressiveness than they might have worn upon another man. He had the air of an ecclesiastical dignitary in disguise.

The broadclothed portly man had for a long time held in view the figure of the melancholy loungeur at the sign-post, for the post stood upon an eminence and was visible on three sides from a distance of a mile or thereabout. He glanced round a dozen times from the church tower whence the windy bluster of the bells was pealing to the lounging figure and back again, as if he coupled the music and the dejected young man in his mind.

Finding himself still unnoticed when he had grown quite near he coughed behind one of his glossy gloves with an air of accident, and having thus attracted the loungeur's notice he bade him good morning. There are people who in speaking convey the impression that their vocal organs are oiled. Mr. Horatio Lowther was one of these. His salute was a benediction, and he emphasised the "good" as though he lavished the kindly wishes of his heart upon it.

At the sound of the cough Ned drew himself up with a start and blushed like fire. He pushed back the soft felt hat and nodded in answer to the salutation.

"It is a lovely morning," said Mr. Lowther pausing. "It gives one a sense of——" He did not say what it gave one a sense of, but he waved his shining black gloves hither and thither, and smiled with the look of a man who has achieved a conversational felicity.

Ned's face wore an expression of disgusted weariness which he tried in vain to replace by one of interest as he surveyed the landscape, in answer to the invitation conveyed by the waving black gloves.

"The weather's right enough," he answered.

"The bells," said Mr. Lowther. "The bells. Those morning bells. How many a tale their music tells. I perrisume"—he had a knack which suited his voice and face to perfection, of lengthening certain words in this way—

"I perrisume they are ringing for young Hackett."

Ned looked at him with sudden keenness. Mr. Lowther, with his head slightly thrown back and a little on one side, was smiling softly and benevolently at nature and the bells, and appeared to be unaware of the other's gaze. Observing this, the young man put off his startled and angry air, and drew both hands from his pockets. A pipe came forth with one and a tobacco pouch with the other; and he busied himself with these, looking down the while. He answered in an uninterested tone,

"Yes, they're ringing for Will Hackett."

"Has it occurred to you?" asked Mr. Lowther, preserving his attitude and his smile. "Do you think——"

"Has what occurred to me?" asked the other, looking up at him.

"That Hackett might have done—— I wouldn't indicate a breath to disparage the young lady." He was still smiling softly at the landscape and the bells, and could not be supposed to know that Blane was looking at him with eyes of wrath and wonder. "But might he not now——, might he not have done a little better?"

"Perhaps he might." The answer sounded as uninterested as before, and the speaker stooping for a reed of grass, began to probe his pipe with it. "I don't know where though," he added in the same casual tone. "It seems to me he has done a lot better than he deserves."

"It may be so," responded Mr. Lowther. "It may be so. But in a worldly sense."

"It's his own affair," said Blane, as if the talk wearied him.

"Assuredly," Mr. Lowther answered. "Oh, yes. Assuredly. Quite his own affair." He paused there and smiled on his companion. "I do not say that we should set too lofty a valley on our worldly goods, but it befits us to be careful even of our own temporary welfare. Do you happen to know if our young friend receives anything with the bride?"

"No," said the other gruffly, "I don't."

"No?" returned Mr. Lowther, half questioning and half assenting. Perhaps to Ned's ear the tone may have seemed to indicate a shade of doubt of his veracity. Perhaps the young man may have had something to disturb him that morning. He turned wrathfully upon Mr. Lowther.

"No," he said loudly and with angry emphasis.

"My dear young friend," cried Mr. Lowther, somewhat taken aback by this

unlooked-for vehemence, and recoiling a pace or two.

"I am not your dear young friend," said Ned with a smile, which had as much anger as amusement in it. "I have nothing in the world to talk to you about; and I would a great deal rather be alone."

"That," replied Mr. Lowther very sweetly, "is an intimation not to linger. I will accept it in that sense, Mr. Blane, and will wish you good morning. . Good morning, Mr. Blane."

The windy music of the bells and the swiftly alternating bands of shade and shine were still careering over the heath as Mr. Lowther turned his broadcloth back upon the finger-post, and left the young man staring sadly after him.

"What do *you* want to know about Will Hackett's affairs for? Is he in your clutches, you fat old spider? Heaven help him if he is! The bit he has left won't be long in going after what he used to have, if he has got into your web."

Until the actual coming of the wedding-day he had never been able to convince himself that his sweetheart would really make so bad a business of herself as to marry Will Hackett. Something was to have turned up to prevent so egregious a sacrifice, some outbreak on the part of the intended bridegroom, or discovery on the side of his victim. His wife could be nothing less than a victim, to the unlucky rival's fancy, and he found people enough to agree with him and confirm him in his opinion. Not that he traduced the man who had won, or gave anybody reason to guess of his own condition. But people talked, and Hackett's prospects were pretty freely canvassed in Ned Blane's hearing, and out of it. It was generally agreed that his wife that was to be had thrown herself away, and the public sentiment was blended of surprise and pity. For Mary Howarth was a girl of unusual intelligence, was supposed by those who knew her to have much firmness of character, and was known to be serious in her thoughts and ways.

Ned had quite resolved to see nothing of the wedding ceremony, for to what good end should he vex himself by that? And yet here he was, a mile nearer the parish church than he had a right to be, and hankering after pain with that unreasoning instinct which prompts children to irritate sore places. When Mr. Horatio Lowther had got some two or three hundred yards away Ned lounged after him slowly and irresolutely, and often turning about as if to regard the

landscape. He was too sick at heart and self-occupied to see anything in Nature's face that morning, though, curiously enough, in later days there was no scene more vividly and clearly marked on his mind. Many a time he recalled the blustering wind and pealing bells and changing light, and the keen, fresh odours of any wild spring morning would come to him with a memory of heartache.

Mr. Lowther entered at the lych-gate, and Blane still followed at a distance. There were no faces at the cottage windows and no idlers or wayfarers in the road. The bells were silent now, for the wedding procession had entered the church. He must needs enter the porch, and there, in company with two or three peeping children, whom his presence awed into supernatural gravity and silence, listen to the murmuring and echoing voice of the curate as it rolled indistinctly about the hollow building, which was more than five-sixths empty. He heard the groom's voice more clearly, for Hackett's loud swagger was but little tempered by the place and the occasion. The listener turned away and stood at the entrance to the porch, looking out upon the graveyard for a little while, and then, stepping lightly by instinct, walked down the path and into the village street.

It was all bare and empty as he had left it, but a sudden unreasonable fear of being observed set him walking rapidly, and he felt as if any one who should chance to see him must know how raw and desolate and heart-broken he was. His being in that neighbourhood at all became on a sudden a proclamation of all that he suffered, and the more this mood grew upon him the faster he walked. The road he traversed was lonely and houseless, for the parish church was a mile from the town, which had grown up away from it, and had left it as the centre of a mere hamlet.

Behind him and somewhat gaining upon him, though not rapidly, was a man on horseback. The horse, fat and unwieldy, was urged into a joggling shuffle, and a number of harness chains which hung about it kept up a monotonous jangle. The rider was black as coal from head to foot, and his white eyeballs and white teeth gleamed like those of a negro. He had no saddle, his bridle was a rough piece of cord knotted about the nose of his steed, and he held on precariously by the mane. He was sweating and breathless, and an occasional attempt at a holloa after the retreating figure died off ineffectually within him. But by dint of

hard kicking and tight holding he quickened his pace and kept his seat until he came on a level with the foot passenger and gasped his name.

"Mr. Edward."

Ned Blane looked up and recognised the Bard.

"What's the matter?" he asked, for Shadrach's face was wild.

"The Blazer; the Old Blazer," said Shadrach, breathing hard.

"What? Not on fire again?"

"No; drowned out this time. Seven-and-forty down. You'm wanted. I seen you by the church an' I've been tryin' to holler iver sence, but I've had all the breath shook out o' me."

The first feeling in the wounded lover's heart was so terribly like thankfulness that some absorbing duty called him from himself that he stood stock still for a moment, more horrified at himself than at the news. In the next instant he turned back upon the way he had travelled, running like a deer.

EARTHQUAKES.

By ARCHIBALD GEIKIE, F.R.S.

SECOND PAPER.

SINCE man first set foot upon the earth probably no part of its surface has remained wholly unreached by an earthquake. While every region is liable to the visitation, certain belts of territory are specially so. Chief among these earthquake zones are the borders of the continents that surround the vast basins in which the oceans lie. Along the western margin of the Pacific Ocean, for example, stands Japan, one of the most frequently shaken countries in the world; on the east side lie the slopes and plains between the coast line and the base of the Andes, a tract continually being convulsed. The Atlantic displays a similar but less constant and violent phase of instability along its rim. The West India Islands and Central America are often disturbed, while, as happened only last summer, the eastern States of the American Union are, from time to time, seriously shaken. On the European side of the ocean earthquakes are well known along the western sea-board, whence they extend their domain eastward throughout that wide depression which holds the Mediterranean, Black, and Caspian Seas. In these various earthquake belts there is a general tendency of the subterranean movements to be propagated along certain lines, particularly along the flanks of mountains, tracts of valley and lines of important fracture in the crust of the earth.

Situated on the western margin of the great plateau of the Old World, whence the slope shelves down steeply towards the abysses of the Atlantic, the British Islands lie in a tract that might be expected to be particularly liable to shocks of earthquake. In the chronicles of such events as have been deemed worthy of record since history first began to be written here, we find many notices of damage done by earthquakes.

Naturally only such shocks as injured property or destroyed life would be likely to be chronicled, so that the total number of recorded earthquakes is no doubt far short of that which actually occurred. From the remote Shetlands to the Scilly Isles, and from Donegal to the Straits of Dover, no large section of the country seems to have entirely escaped, though, so far as the records go, the west of Ireland has enjoyed almost complete exemption. During the last fifteen centuries several hundred earthquakes have been chronicled within our borders. While some of these, especially the feebler ones, may have travelled from centres of disturbance lying altogether outside of our region, there can be no doubt that the great majority took their rise within the limits of Britain. So slight have they for the most part been as to pass unnoticed by many people in the very districts where they took place. Now and again a more violent concussion has carried consternation through a large part of the kingdom. But putting aside the older narratives, which are almost certainly exaggerations, we may conclude that within historic times only some half-dozen British earthquakes deserve to be singled out as memorable for the destruction of property, injury to limb, or loss of life which they caused—viz. those of 1185, 1248, 1275, 1382, 1480, and 1884.

The characteristics of the earthquakes that have shaken the British Islands are similar to those observed elsewhere. But manifested at our own doors, and in the personal experience of many now living, they have a special interest to us. First of all and conspicuous among them are the sounds so generally heard either just before or accompanying the shock. In reading the narratives of the observers it is curious to note the diffe-

rence of the impression made upon the ear in different individuals. To some the noise seems like the hissing of steam escaping from a locomotive, to others it recalls the rushing of wind in a gale, or the roar and thunder of a waterfall, or the rumbling of a heavily-laden waggon, or the harsh grating sound produced by the emptying of stones out of a cart, or the sharper explosive report of cannons firing. No doubt these differences are not all merely personal, but probably in some measure indicate differences in the nature of the underground movements themselves. Other senses have also frequently been affected. A feeling of giddiness or sickness is not uncommon, such as to remind the percipients of being at sea. People in bed have felt first one end and then the other end of the bed lifted up and let down again. Others have had their chairs rock under them; while, where the shock has been more than usually violent, people have been actually thrown down from a sitting posture. Many accounts testify to the alarm expressed by animals, both before and during the earthquakes. Dogs, horses, and cattle show in their several characteristic ways the terror which evidently affects them. Birds, too, share in the general feeling of alarm, and cases are on record where they have been shaken off their perches.

But in Britain, as elsewhere, it is the effects of the subterranean disturbance upon buildings that have been most observed and described, and that enable us best to judge of the nature and intensity of the different earthquakes. When the shock is slight, houses are felt to vibrate, but the movement may not be more perceptible than such as would be produced by the lumbering of a heavy lorry along a roughly causewayed street. From such a minimum of effect a gradually increasing intensity may be traced. Hanging objects, such as lamps and pictures, are made to swing. Bells are set ringing; sometimes with a curious appropriateness it is the town-bell, usually sounded in case of fires, that is rung by the earthquake to announce its passage. Furniture is shifted from its position, sometimes even tossed about. Plaster is dislodged from ceilings and walls. Slates or tiles on roofs are made to rattle or are jerked off to the ground. Houses are so strained and distorted that, though no apparent structural damage is done, the doors will no longer open or shut without the carpenter's assistance. Chimneys are twisted round or overturned. Walls are cracked or thrown down, sometimes killing persons below.

Churches and cathedrals, from their size and height, have more especially suffered. In the year 1185 an earthquake, which was felt all over England, but more especially in the eastern districts, threw down the cathedral of Lincoln and many other buildings. Sixty-three years afterwards (1248) a still severer shock passed over the western counties and Wales; the cathedral of Wells was much injured, part of its tower being thrown down; the cathedral of St. David's was partially destroyed, and bears witness to the calamity still; while many churches in Somerset were damaged.

Rivers and lakes being particularly sensitive to the disturbances that affect the surface of the earth, numerous instances are on record of their sympathetic movements at the time of earthquakes in this country. The deep Scottish lochs were repeatedly agitated during the eighteenth century. Besides their disturbance at the time of the passage of the earth-wave from the centre of the great Lisbon earthquake of 1755, they were at least thrice thrown into commotion during the next thirty years. In 1761, in connection with another violent earthquake in the Iberian peninsula, the waters of Loch Ness rose, moving about two feet above their previous level on the shore, and with such violence as to sweep away boats from their moorings. In 1782 the lonely Loch Rannoch, in the very heart of Scotland, was thrown into agitation. In 1784 Loch Tay, for six successive days, showed an unwonted throbbing of its waters.

During some of the more serious earthquakes alterations have also taken place in the surface of the ground. The older narratives give sensational accounts of huge yawning chasms that opened and closed again, engulfing whatever stood on the surface—cattle, men, houses, and even entire towns. Putting these stories aside as probably exaggerations and as possibly indicative rather of land-slips caused by the operation of subterranean water, we yet find examples in which there seems no reason to doubt that the ground has actually been rent open and chasms of varying breadth and length have been left in it. The production of such cracks depends in large measure upon the nature of the materials at the surface and immediately below it. Indeed the character of the rocks has probably modified the effects even of the comparatively slight earthquakes of Great Britain. This influence was perceptible at the time of the last considerable shock—that of 1884 in Essex. Houses that stood imme-

diately upon clay or near the junction of geological formations suffered more than those on gravel or other loose materials.

From an early period the narratives of earthquakes have commonly included references to the state of the weather at the time, and by many writers these underground commotions have been tacitly assumed to be part of the meteorological phenomena of our globe. Many examples of this association of ideas may be found in the earthquake registers of this country. At one time we hear of great heat and oppressive sultriness having preceded an earthquake; at another time it is a hurricane of wind with thunder and lightning and deluges of rain. That there may be some relation between the pressure of the atmosphere and the liability of subterranean rocks in a condition of strain to yield to any such disturbance of equilibrium as would be caused by the atmospheric change that produces a great fall of the barometer is not at all unlikely. But there can be no doubt that in the great majority of cases the connection supposed to be traceable between earthquakes and peculiar states of the atmosphere is imaginary. In the singular earthquake district of Perthshire, every variety of atmospheric condition has had its concomitant underground disturbance, so that Deacon Reid, a former worthy of Comrie, might well say that according to his observation there was "aye some kind o' wather when earthquakes happened." In like manner, every season can boast of its subterranean disturbances in Britain, but there is a decided preponderance in the number of those which have fallen in the winter half of the year. The earth's crust in this region seems to undergo a maximum of agitation in November and another in March, and to reach its most stable condition in May.

A good many of the recorded earthquakes are said to have been felt over the greater part of the country. From the latter half of the tenth century to the close of the seventeenth, somewhere about thirty are recorded to have shaken all England. But in most cases, even where the damage has been heaviest, only certain districts have been affected, in which moreover it has usually been possible to fix on some limited area where the shock has been most severe, and which consequently may be supposed to lie somewhere about the centre of origin. A considerable number of earthquakes have been experienced in the West of England throughout the basin of the Irish Sea and

northwards along the western part of the Scottish Highlands. A smaller proportion has been felt in the eastern part of the country, and more especially in the south-eastern counties from the Humber to the English Channel. I have referred to the rarity of recorded shocks in the West of Ireland, where from the analogy of other parts of the globe they might be expected to be more numerous than in the tracts lying farther from the rim of the Atlantic basin. While their comparative scarcity in Western Ireland is probably a fact, we must at the same time remember that this region is but thinly peopled, and that the houses are mostly mere loosely-built cabins, in which a shock that would produce considerable vibration in a house or church might not be felt at all.

Undoubtedly the most curious earthquake district of the British Island is that of Comrie, in Perthshire, to which allusion has just been made. It lies on the southern edge of the Highland mountains, which are marked off from the region of the Lowlands by a great line of fracture in the earth's crust, that runs across the island from sea to sea. Towards the close of last century the earliest recorded underground movements of that locality were observed. In the year 1839 the shocks began to be more frequent and violent, and they continued with such vigour that no fewer than two hundred and forty-seven were counted in the two years that followed 3rd of October, 1839. Since that time there has been comparative quiescence, though every now and then another tremor occurs to remind the inhabitants that the rocks below have by no means come to a final condition of equilibrium.

On my first visit to this district, never having had any personal experience of an earthquake, I lingered for awhile half hoping that by some lucky chance I might be favoured at last. It was the gloomy autumnal season when rumblings below ground might be expected. I remember listening long to the roar of the swollen streams and the sigh of the wind down the glen; but the sounds were all those of the upper air. My disappointment, however, was changed into chagrin to find, on getting up next morning at Crieff, only some six miles off, that there had been an earthquake through the night. There can be little doubt that these frequent shocks in the Comrie valley arise from displacements of the rocks along the line of the ancient dislocation underneath.

What traveller who has passed up the line of the Great Glen of Scotland will forget his first impression of that longest, straightest, and deepest valley in the British Isles? From the firth that opens out where the mountains of Mull and of Jura catch the first clouds from the Atlantic far away northward to the North Sea beyond Inverness, that valley runs straight as if traced with a ruler. Glens enter it now from one side now from another. It sends a narrow fjord filled with the tides of the salt sea far up into the wilds of Lochail. Mountains, huge and massive enough, if wanting in variety and picturesqueness, advance upon it from the right and left as if to push it aside. But it swerves not from its rectilinear course, and passes across Scotland from sea to sea. Singular as it is above ground, it is no less strange beneath the surface. A chain of lakes makes it an almost continuous water-way, and the bottom of one of these hollows sinks to a lower level than any part of the floor of the North Sea. No wonder then that this profound depression, marking as it does one of the great fractures of the earth's crust and one of the lines of weakness in the geological structure of the British Isles, should have been a ready pathway for the passage of the waves of disturbance which travel through the solid earth, or that the lakes which fill it should have shown themselves strangely sensitive to shocks that had their origin far beyond the limits of this country. Some of the most memorable earthquakes which have been experienced in Scotland had their origin on this vast rent. In the year 1816, for example, a severe shock, which was felt all over the kingdom, had its centre of greatest intensity at the northern end of the Great Glen. The spire of the county jail of Inverness was split across, and the part above the fracture was twisted round several inches, while the mason-lodge was rent from top to bottom. In 1880 a smart concussion, which was felt from the utmost Hebrides to Armagh in Ireland, and across to the centre of Scotland, over a total area of about 19,000 square miles, had its focus of energy somewhere about the southern end of the same great fissure.

The last earthquake of some violence which has occurred in Britain was that which took place in the Eastern Counties on 22nd April, 1884. It affected a total area, estimated at about fifty thousand square miles, for its effects were felt as far north as Lincolnshire, as far south as the coast of Sussex, and from the centre of England to the north-west of

France. The greatest amount of damage was done in north-east Essex, within an area of about fifty or sixty square miles, no fewer than between one thousand two hundred and one thousand three hundred buildings having been more or less injured, including twenty churches and eleven chapels. This earthquake has a special interest, from the fact that it occurred in a district which, within historical times, has been seldom affected by any such disturbances, and those only of a feeble kind. The surface is occupied by masses of gravel and clay, and there are no great lines of hill or valley pointing to any structure of the earth's crust underneath that might be favourable to the production or propagation of subterranean movements.

If now from these modern instances of the instability of the ground beneath our feet we cast our eyes backward into the geological history of this country, we meet with proofs of great terrestrial movements, probably accompanied with earthquakes, to which those within human experience are utterly insignificant. Two periods stand out with especial prominence for the magnitude of their convulsions, and for the profound influence which these have had upon the scenery of our islands. The first of these periods lies far back in the dim eras of geological history. In the earliest glimpse that is obtainable of primeval Britain we can faintly descry a few scattered islets, bare, perhaps, of vegetation, or at least clothed only with plants of a humble grade, such as club-mosses and ferns. Round these rocky prominences a wide but shallow sea swept eastwards across what is now Europe, with here and there a ridge or island marking where some of the great mountain chains of the Continent have since been upheaved. To the north lay a mass of land that stretched across where Scandinavia and Finland now lie, and may also have extended westwards into America—a wide arctic continent out of whose waste came the materials that have served as the foundations for the superstructure both of Europe and of North America. Spreading eastwards and southwards across the site of the European continent, the sea, which was probably an eastward extension of the original Atlantic Ocean, received a continual supply of mud, silt, and sand, swept into it from the shores of its islands and from the northern land. Slowly its floor sank down and the sediments gathered there, until the islands were one by one submerged and buried under an ever-increasing load of detritus. But as the supply of sediment seems to have

kept pace, on the whole, with the depression, the sea never became abysmal. Its depth may not have greatly varied, but over its floor there came eventually to be accumulated a depth of sediment amounting to many thousands of feet.

While these events were transpiring over the area of the future Europe a long succession of submarine volcanic outbursts took place in the west, across the tract that now forms the basin of the Irish Sea. Thick sheets of lava and copious showers of ashes were poured forth, which spread out upon the floor of the sea, and probably in some cases built themselves up into volcanic islands. As one centre of eruption died out another would break forth from where are now the hills of Waterford and the headlands of Pembroke-shire northward to the borders of Scotland. But the volcanic energy at last expended itself. The volcanoes sank one by one into the sea, and over their submerged streams of lava and hardened sheets of ashes the sea-borne sand and mud once more gathered. As the downward movement went on not only were the volcanoes obliterated, but their very sites were buried under thousands of feet of sediment.

Even if we greatly cut down the excessive demands of time made by geologists in explanation of the old revolutions of the globe, enough is left to baffle the imagination that tries to realise the vastness of the periods which these changes witnessed. It might have seemed to a human eye—had human eye been there to see—that the islands and volcanoes of this primeval era had been for ever entombed, buried under such a deep covering of far-spread sediment, hardening by degrees into sheets of solid rock, that no convulsion would ever be likely to raise them up again to the surface. Yet such an anticipation would have been strangely falsified. By a series of convulsions, the most gigantic that have ever befallen the west of Europe, the huge pile of accumulated detritus, consolidated into sandstone, shale, and other solid rocks, and reaching a depth of at least three or four miles, was crumpled and upheaved. The movements in the more westerly districts were directed from south-east to north-west. The sheets of rock were accordingly ridged up into folds, which ran in a general north-east and south-west direction. Such was the force employed, and such the pressure under which it acted, that hard crystalline rocks were crushed and drawn out, as lead may be rolled beneath a heavy roller, or squeezed under a hydraulic press

until it flows into all the crevices of a mould. The flinty quartz pebbles of the old submerged gravel beaches were flattened and welded on each other as if they had been made of dough. Huge masses of rock were sliced off and driven over each other for miles. The ruptures within the crust of the earth were so many and so enormous that if, as is probable, they were in numerous instances produced by sudden snaps after prolonged tension, they must have given rise to earthquakes of altogether inconceivable violence. It was long before a condition of quiet settled down once more upon these regions. During successive ages renewed disturbances, still following the lines of the previous foldings, ruptured the crust of the earth, and produced such dislocations as those of the Great Glen and of the Highland border. Along many of these lines of fracture the rocks are probably still in a state of strain, so that the shocks which from time to time excite curiosity, or, when more pronounced, awaken consternation in the Highlands, are actually the descendants and feeble representatives of those titanic throes which convulsed Western Europe in the early days of geological history.

Out of the mass of rock dislocated and upheaved by these ancient cataclysms, the present high grounds of Britain and Scandinavia have in the course of ages been gradually carved by the working of the elements at the surface. It is strange to find among these rocks relics of the primeval islands that were so long and so deeply buried out of sight. Strange, too, to learn that out of the lava and ashes of the long extinct volcanoes, after their entombment under thousands of feet of sediment, some of the most picturesque scenery of Wales and the Lake district have been sculptured—the cwms of Snowdon, the peaks of Cader Idris, and the scarps of Helvellyn. Many of the prominent uplands of the country are memorials of the same great period of disturbance, showing still in their direction from south-west to north-east the lines of the undulations into which the solid crust of the earth was thrown, such as the ridges of the south-east and north-east of Ireland, of Wales, of the Lake country, of the southern uplands of Scotland, and of the Scottish Highlands.

The other great period of convulsion to which I have alluded brings us to a comparatively late era in geological history—a time of warm and equable climate, when over the hills and plains of Central Europe there spread a vegetation akin to that of the Medi-

terranean, or even of countries nearer the equator. Man had not yet appeared, but there was an abundant and varied development of animal life, belonging for the most part to types that have long since passed away, but including a few, such as the rhinoceros and tapir, which still survive. So far as geological evidence goes, there had been a prolonged period of quiescence in the volcanic history of the British area. After continuing for a long succession of ages, volcanic action at last died out, the latest explosions occurring somewhere in the neighbourhood of Exeter. But eventually a new series of eruptions began, and gradually spread over the wide hollow that extends from Loch Neagh through the line of the Inner Hebrides to beyond the far headlands of Skye. As earthquakes are usual accompaniments of volcanic outbursts, we may well believe that they played their part in the phenomena of these north-western volcanoes. But there was a remarkable feature in the eruptions which distinguished them from all the other volcanic phenomena of Britain, and which shows that the earthquakes associated with them must have been of an altogether exceptionally severe kind. The crust of the earth was rent open by thousands of long straight fissures, sometimes extending for sixty miles or more. These dislocations took place over an area of many thousand square miles, stretching across what is now the north of England, the greater part of Scotland, the north of Ireland, and the northern half of the Irish Sea. Up these yawning rents molten lava rose from below, probably in many places reaching the surface and pouring forth there in vast floods. The terraced hills of Antrim, Skye, Mull, and the adjacent islands are memorials of these eruptions. The lava that solidified within the walls of the perpendicular fissures now forms what are known as dykes, which make not the least singular feature of the scenery in the wide districts through which they range. Most sojourners by the shore of the Firth of Clyde remember them as long walls of dark brown rock which, standing out prominently above the rich red sandstone of the shore, strike on the one hand boldly out to sea as reefs on which the heaviest tangles swing, and on the other run straight as walls up the cliffs, amid the hanging festoons of honeysuckle and wild briar.

It would be striking enough if the dykes were confined to the lower grounds. Their number, breadth, and persistence would

afford a sufficiently vivid conception of the gigantic operations that produced them. But our wonder increases greatly when we discover that they mount even over the crests of some of the higher hills. In the uplands of the south of Scotland they may be traced for many miles, pursuing their course across moor and fell with such undeviating persistence towards the north-west, that the wanderer who knows their trend, can with their aid pilot himself even through a mist. Still more astonishing is the way in which they traverse the mountains of the Highlands. For instance, they cross Loch Lomond and climb across the lofty crests on either side of that deep depression. The Cuchullin Hills of Skye have been cleft by them from bottom to top, a height of 3,000 feet. Through these solid mountainous masses they cut their way with the same sharpness and in the same direction as among the softer strata of the lower grounds.

After such convulsions, the earthquakes recorded within human experience in Great Britain seem puny indeed. It might be thought that the subterranean forces have expended their energy, and that only prolonged quiescence is now to be looked for. But such an anticipation would be founded on no reliable evidence. We are still so profoundly ignorant of the prime causes of earthquakes, that it is impossible to offer any well-grounded opinion as to the future character of underground movements in this, or, indeed, in any country. Where for centuries only feeble shocks have been experienced, it may be expected, or at least hoped, that such will continue to be the case for centuries to come. But we cannot say that the conditions for a violent concussion do not exist beneath us, and may not at any moment make themselves evident. This possibility may be remote, but it must be allowed to be a possibility. It will not, however, even when adequately realised, affect men's happiness or influence their conduct. The survivors of a volcanic eruption plant their vines once more trustfully on the slopes of the slumbering and treacherous volcano, and those who have barely escaped from the destruction caused by an earthquake, seek to build their homes again where they stood before. The awfulness of the catastrophe may for a while paralyse their minds; but time, which heals the wounds inflicted on the fair face of nature, softens the memory of the calamity, and life once more becomes as gay and hopeful as ever, as sordid and selfish, as miserable and despairing.

ROBERTSON OF IRVINE.

By WALTER C. SMITH, D.D.

ON the 27th of June, 1886, Scotland lost one of her choicest spirits—one of the brightest, nimblest souls it has ever been my good fortune to meet, and I have known a few, like Norman MacLeod and Dr. John Brown, who were brilliant enough to have mothers bidding their children note them as they passed, and remember in the coming years that their eyes had once seen them. William

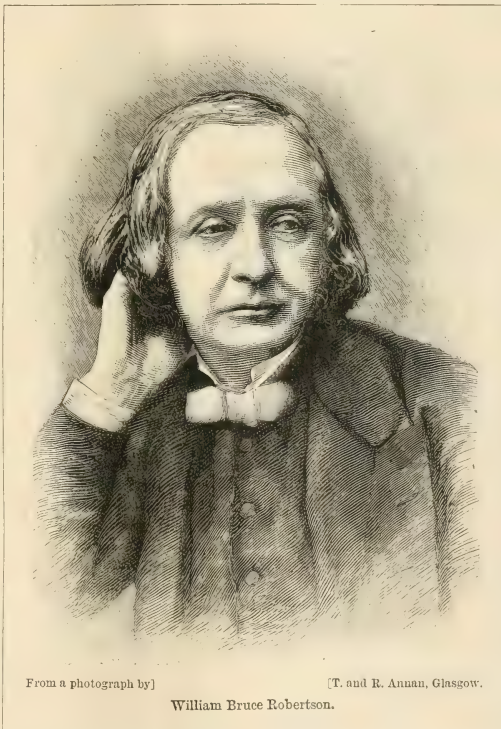
Robertson, indeed, had not made a name for himself in literature, and was not widely known where his voice had not been heard. A Scottish minister has not much chance to do that, unless he neglect his proper work, or is gifted with a superabundance of bodily strength. He has too much preaching to do, too many visits to pay to his flock, too many meetings to attend, and in general too much "serving of tables," for nothing in his town or parish goes on well without him; and being at everybody's

call, he has little leisure, and less calm for the kind of study that literary work requires. Robertson had not a robust constitution, had indeed no more vigour than was needed for his day's work, which was often interrupted by uncertain health. Besides, he was not very methodical, and did not economise time, not being ambitious of fame, but only faithful to do his duty. Had he been different, he would have left, I think, a bigger mark

than any other Scotsman of his age. For no one ever met him who did not feel the spell and the charm of subtle genius which he threw on all around him.

And now he has "gone over to the majority"—the first time he ever did so, for his way in life was apart, among the few who think for themselves, and mostly think what will be a faith to the coming generation. A

little band of such men, without any concert, though they came in the long run to know each other well, has for many years now been quietly leavening the Scottish Church, in all its branches, with ideas that have already wrought a deeper change than any we have had since the Reformation—deeper, perhaps, in its spiritual issues than even that great movement wrought. They were not given to polemics; they were more reflective than combative; they were also rather eclectic in their philosophy; mostly believing that no



From a photograph by

[T. and R. Annon, Glasgow.]

William Bruce Robertson.

single school of opinion embraced the whole truth, while some, like Robertson, held the Hegelian doctrine of "the harmony of contraries," and regarded Calvinist and Arminian as both alike right, and both alike wrong, and both reconcilable when looked at from the proper point of view. They had caught their inspiration, no doubt, from John MacLeod Campbell of Row, and Erskine of Linlathen, at

whose flame also Maurice had lighted his torch; but unlike these, they did not quarrel with the common creed of the Church, which they mainly accepted as one side of the truth, though nowise the most important side of it; meanwhile they gave special prominence to its other and weightier aspect, which was the faith whereon their own souls lived. Hence the moral idea of God's Fatherhood took the place in their teaching which used to be held by the metaphysical idea of Infinite Power and Will. They did not deny the latter doctrine, but they exalted the other above it, as being greatly more significant, and also more of a spiritual power to touch the human heart. At first people shook their heads, and doubted whereto such things were tending. An atmosphere of suspicion surrounded them, and had they not been mostly effective preachers, they would soon have been stranded as "stickit-ministers," who must drift into school teaching of the humblest sort. But they were some of them orators, some poets, some scholars, and all honest workers whose power in the community could not be overlooked, and by their labours the Scottish pulpit has quietly passed through a very remarkable change. You shall hear there now very little about the divine sovereignty, and far more about the divine love. Calvinistic decrees and predestinations are no longer allowed to direct and limit the grace of God. The atonement is no more preached as a bargain according to which so much suffering was endured for so many souls, neither is the shedding of animal blood regarded as the master-key to open up its meaning, for it was not meant to appease an angry God, but to reveal a God of love. Least of all are the terrors of hell any more brandished with the view of driving those by fear who will not be drawn to God by love. Divine Sovereignty, Predestination, Atonement, Wrath are nowise denied, for there is, beyond doubt, a truth in the heart of each of them. But the other side of the medal is now chiefly presented as being most potent for good; and that other side the Church never questioned, though it was but dimly present in her creed, and often strangely absent from her pulpits. Among those who helped to work this great revolution William Robertson was one of the foremost, and he was, I think, more typical of their special work than any other man. Norman MacLeod roused antagonisms; Principal Tulloch created doubts as to his orthodoxy; John Ker was hardly reckoned to belong to the party, though in truth he

helped it into a wide popularity. But William Robertson was one who heartily and consciously worked for this very end, with a faith which never wavered, and a brilliancy of eloquence which carried persuasion to all who heard him. "He gave none offence," he was never suspected of heresy, though at one time he had a little foolish trouble about a Christmas service. Perhaps one reason for this immunity was that his way of working was so purely artistic, for his sermons were rather poems than speeches, and moved in a region high above our common wranglings—a region of vision and affirmation that took little note of denials. But however it was, he had a great part in the revolution which has so clothed the hard skeleton of seventeenth-century Calvinism with living flesh and glowing beauty, as to make that winning which aforetime was to many almost revolting. They are nearly all gone now, the men who wrought this change, and the rising generation has hardly yet had time to develop others of equal mark to some of them, so that it feels as if our Scottish world was a good deal poorer to-day than it was while they lived. But though the falling of the leaf may bring sad thoughts, no doubt the next spring will bourgeon as rich as ever. The younger race have a wider culture on the whole than that which is passing away; and as I think of the graves which have lately closed over some of our noblest and best, I read in their "Resurgam" that their spirit shall not die out among us, but revive in a fit succession of like-minded men to carry on the good work they began.

It is now just four-and-twenty years since I first came to know William Robertson, then in the prime of his life and fulness of his fame as a preacher. He was to lecture in the Glasgow Corporation Gallery on "Martin Luther," and having myself to address a meeting that evening, I came to the hall late, after hurrying through my work, I fear, in a rather unsatisfactory way. There was, as usual when he appeared in public, a dense crowd, and it was with difficulty I squeezed into the place, where the passages were as closely packed as the seats by a throng of breathless hearers—breathless in more senses than one, for if the speaker entranced them, the air was like to choke them. On the platform I saw a young-looking figure, rather below the middle height, with a rolling Byronic collar, and long, waving, sandy-coloured hair, and my first feeling was one of disappointment, as if he had "got himself up" in the picturesque, poetic fashion which young

men affected who wrote sonnets to the moon. That, however, soon vanished. It was impossible to look on that fine face, with its great dome of forehead, its large grey-blue eye, and the mouth with its lines of blended humour and pathos, and especially it was impossible to listen to that rich, mellow, musical voice, and not feel that here was a man of veritable power, with a strange mastery of all human emotions. When I came in, he was describing the condition of Europe, and the helplessness of its leaders to understand their age and the little monk who was beginning to make such a stir. As his manner was, he sketched a series of vivid pictures, each wonderfully perfect as an historic portraiture, and at the close of each, as if it were the only argument worthy of its impotence, he repeated the same refrain, "Cuckoo! cuckoo!" The effect was perfect. As learned doctors of divinity, subtle but worldly cardinals, shrewd but nowise far-seeing statesmen, counselled what was to be done about this new thing, of whose real meaning none of them had the dimmest idea, because it was spiritual and they were not, nothing could well have expressed how utterly helpless they were in such an emergency like that quietly-spoken "cuckoo! cuckoo!" which was all the discussion he gave them. I do not now remember the general drift of the lecture, which he often delivered after that, though I think it never was written out. But I remember very well coming away from the meeting and saying to myself, "That is a man I must know, for it will do me good to know him." Nor was it long till we became acquaintances—friends, brothers knit close to each other by ties which only death could break, and not even death, for they are as strong to-day as ever. I forget where we first met—perhaps at Norman MacLeod's, perhaps at Dr. A. B. McGrigor's; I cannot tell where our hands first clasped; but our souls came together that night, though he knew it not, as he discoursed of Martin Luther to the more thoughtful and cultured citizens of Glasgow in their Corporation Gallery, and from that day till now, whether we met often or only after long intervals, there never was a shadow came between us, except this last sad shadow of death.

A fitter hand than mine will, I trust, yet tell the story of his life, though truly of story there is very little to tell. Commonly there is not much incident in a thoughtful student's career—not, at least, of the kind that the unthinking care for. He was born

in 1820, near Stirling, where his father, a solid, judicious, much-esteemed man in his day, cultivated a farm, and had charge of the collieries of Plean, being greatly trusted both for his faculty and his probity. I have heard Robertson speak of him lovingly; but he seems to have had more affinity with his mother, a Bruce, and, as he believed, lineal descendant of that Rev. Robert Bruce who was one of Knox's immediate successors in the High Kirk of Edinburgh, and showed a good deal of Knox's spirit during the stormy days of James VI. and his son Charles. They say the royal blood of the Bruces was in that minister of St. Giles'. I cannot tell; but, at any rate, he had not a little of the patience and the courage that conquered freedom at Bannockburn. On that side Robertson was rather proud of his lineage. He would joke about it, and yet at bottom one felt that he clung to it. His earlier education he got at home from his brother James, who had been taught by a man of some note in his day, Browning of Tillie-coultry. James was afterwards a minister in Edinburgh, and somewhat narrow in his views; but he introduced his brothers and sisters to Shakspeare, and taught them even to act one of his plays, which was a bold thing to do in a pious dissenting household hitherto more familiar with Ralph Erskine's "godly sonnets" than with stage plays of any kind. From his brother's instructions William passed to Glasgow University; but what was his record there I do not know. Afterwards he seems to have studied theology in Edinburgh, for it was during those early years that he formed a close friendship with De Quincey, whose memory was dear to him to the end of his days. At that time the bright, little, eloquent opium-dreamer was in one of his many monetary troubles, and having gone to visit his lawyer on some business, had been asked to spend the night there, and prolonged his stay for several months, never going out of doors, seldom out of his bedroom. Robertson seems to have been acquainted with his host, and through him was introduced to his strangely interesting, and rather perplexing guest. I never heard any details of their intercourse, though he has often told me of the bright evenings he had in that old house in Prince's Street—now swept away to make room for the Conservative Club. They were both night-birds, whose discourse grew brighter as the small hours of the morning passed, and I can easily picture the eager lad—for he was still in his teens—and the thoughtful, broken visionary

prolonging their talk till the sun began to gleam on Arthur's Seat, and loth to part even then, for in all their life neither of them was ever quite done with what he had to say. After his theological studies were finished, being still too young to be "licensed" as a preacher—for he was not yet of age—Robertson went to Germany, where he learnt church history from Neander, and made the acquaintance of Ulrici. Many years after, I think during the closing year of his life, these two met again for the last time, and he described to me with effusion the kindly greeting he had got from the old Shakspearian critic, who, after the lapse of more than forty years, had not forgotten the "kneipé" where they had discoursed of the Elizabethan drama together. In Germany he learnt much which he could not have learnt in Scotland—got new glimpses into theology, caught up the spirit of Hegel, and kept to it all his life, but, above all, came to know the great literature of its later days, and the new and serious art, too, which had its birth about those times. Perhaps this last had the strongest influence on his character, which was essentially artistic, embodying all its thoughts in pictures, and expressing them in rhythmic sentences.

Leaving Germany he travelled into Italy in company with two other youths, and got his first glimpse of the land of beauty in which he was to spend so many fruitful days ere the end. But it was only a glimpse at this time, for he must return home, and become a preacher, which he did, I think, when only twenty-one years old, soon getting settled in Irvine, where his whole ministerial life was passed. In those days it was a pretty little town on the river of the same name, with only a stretch of grey sand dunes between it and the sea, and the hills of Arran looming large in the golden twilights. It was not very different, I dare say, from what it had been when Burns came there, a simple-hearted youth, to learn flax-dressing, and mend the poor fare in his father's house at Ayr; and there he met Highland Mary, the redeeming angel of his life, as well as Davie Sillar and others, who helped so much to wreck it. When Robertson went there, it had still a deal of old Scottish character to show—men and women whose humours added to his store of jest and tale. But he had a pastor's work specially to do there, and ere long his presence filled and pervaded the whole town. There was of course a parish kirk, and two free kirks, besides others of less weight; but his church very soon became the kirk of Irvine,

where people of all sorts came to get their souls fed and refreshed. I heard him preach there only once, in the handsome new church which he built, and which was not exactly in such pure taste as I should have expected from him; but his architect was a man of some genius, and not much culture, and on the whole he adapted Gothic architecture to preaching purposes, perhaps, as well as can easily be done. Robertson's church must be a place to speak in, and sing in, if it was to be of any use to him, and this had been managed along with a good deal of architectural efficiency. I do not remember much of his sermon that day. We had sat up too late the night before, singing old Latin hymns, and talking of new modern teachings, and I think he had made only a few notes on the backs of letters and other accidental scraps of paper. But I remember well how his musical voice rang through all the house, and its lowest notes were heard by a vast congregation, all eager not to lose a syllable, as he discoursed on the words, "There was silence in Heaven for the space of half an hour." What his line of thought was, I cannot now tell. But I remember a series of pictures, of the white horse, the red horse, the black horse, and the pale horse with its rider Death, and how the preacher declined to give any historic account of those symbols, but wrought out a high ethical purpose from the apocalyptic vision. That was the first time I heard him preach, and the effect he produced on me was exactly the same as I have often experienced since. It was not the power of eloquence, but of poetry. He was an *improvisatore* rather than an orator. You were not so much roused to action as rapt in wonder and delight, and as I listened, and thought that I had to preach in the afternoon, it seemed to me that I should be offering a glass of beer to people who had been quaffing at champagne all the morning.

I do not think he ever wrote either lecture or sermon in full. For essentially he was a speaker, or rather singer, and the subtler spirit in him was apt to evaporate in the process of writing. Certainly nothing of his I ever read possessed the wonderful charm of all that came from his lips. Of course, voice and look, and dramatic action, are always main elements in the power of an orator; and in his case they united to form quite a unique type of eloquence. But the difference between his speaking and his writing was so marked that I can only explain it on the principle that, never being meant for writing, it was spoilt by the mechanical pro-

cess through which it was made to pass. People advised him often—after a long monologue on some favourite theme, I frequently entreated him—to set down and prepare his bright suggestive thoughts for the press. But he never did, and latterly I came to the conclusion that he was right, and that the only way to save those thoughts from perishing would have been to keep a short-hand writer at his elbow. Only, the presence of such a chield “takin’ notes” would most likely have tied his tongue. Certainly he needed a Boswell, and I often blame myself that, content with the pleasure he gave me, I never wrote down what I had heard. Had I done so, we should have had a book to-day that men would not willingly let die—a book of the higher art criticism that Ruskin would have rejoiced in, a book of theology that the Church would have held most precious. Those who did not know the man may naturally think I exaggerate, and that I see him large through the golden haze of affection and regret. How otherwise could one so gifted pass away, and leave so little trace that he ever had been? Yet I am sure that every one who ever met him even for a passing evening will endorse what I have said, and that multitudes, not in Scotland only, but in England and in Italy, will be ready to affirm that, if he has done little or nothing, he appeared to them capable of doing anything he chose.

It was often hoped that he might be persuaded to leave Irvine, and take some leading charge either in Glasgow or Edinburgh. But he could do what he liked with the good folk in Irvine. He could be frequently away from home, which was a necessity to him, and they were always delighted to see him back. A legal wit said, when he was called to that Church, that the Presbytery “might induct him into Irvine, but they could never settle him there.” And it was true; he had to move about a good deal; people wished him to go here and there, and stir up their souls a bit; and besides, he needed, himself, to have frequent changes and large human fellowships. Therefore his heart clung to Irvine because it “gave him a longer tether” than he could well have got elsewhere, and so his first was also the only charge he ever had. In connection with one of these attempts to remove him, a story is told which well illustrates his ready and nimble humour. Dr. T., a brother minister and friend, undertook to sound him, before a certain influential congregation took any formal steps to “call” him. T. was very well fitted for this task,

but after spending a whole day had to give it up in despair. So he took his way home, and Robertson accompanied him to the train. Just as it was about to start, T. looked out of the window and said, “Well, you’re a queer fish, Robertson,” to which he got an instantaneous reply, “Well, you’re a queerer fisher, T.,” and the train steamed away. Many similar stories are told of his bright and nimble wit which never failed, and yet never stung. I have heard that one day, as Principal Caird, I think, was walking down Irvine High Street with him, a girl carrying a pat of butter came flying up to him, for girls everywhere, and girls of all ranks, took instinctively to him. After speaking a few words, he rejoined the Principal, who remarked, “I suppose that is one of the pillars of your church.” “No,” was the answer, “only a flying butt(e)ress.” One rarely met him without carrying away some “small change” of this kind along with the heavier sums which he drew from the bank at will. And besides such trifles as these, he had commonly some fresh stroke of humour to provide laughter for a serious talk. Adventures happen to the adventurous, and the humorist is sure to meet with incidents to feed his humour. Thus, speaking one day in Glasgow City Hall to some three thousand children, after delighting them with a variety of stories, he thought it might be well to point the moral of one of them. He had hardly, however, begun to say, “Now, this teaches us,” when a little ragamuffin in the front bench cried out, “Never mind what it teaches. Gie’s another story.” “Ilearnt from that rascal,” he said, “to wrap the moral well in the heart of the story, not to put it as a sting into the tail. For stories are like pictures, and their lesson should be felt, but never obtruded.” But humour is near of kin to pathos, and sometimes, after a long evening’s talk, it was hard to say whether the outcome of it was mirth or sadness, he passed with such rapid alternation “from grave to gay, from lively to severe.” I remember vividly an account he once gave me of the death of a young Scotch engineer at Pontresina, and his burial there under the snowy Alps on a wild stormy day, which touched me, I think, more than anything I ever heard. It is too long to repeat here, and besides, I should only mar it in the telling, so that all who heard it from his own lips will probably thank me for not “ploughing with his heifer,” but leaving them the memory of his touching pathos unspoilt.

Thus the years sped on amid preaching,

lecturing, teaching, advising, for everyone in Irvine sought counsel of its "living oracle," and the house of this dissenting minister was a kind of priestly confessional for all who were in trouble. All counted on his tender sympathy, and all confided in his insight and wisdom. No one was more entirely loved and trusted, and probably he knew more family secrets than the most approved family solicitor. A bachelor, living with a devoted sister, yet women of all kinds, married and single, brought their burden of cares to him, for he was a natural-born priest, without a shadow of the "craft." Trust came to him: he never sought it. He was at home in the human heart; but he never seemed to probe it. He did not handle cases of conscience in his pulpit, yet people brought their doubts and scruples to get direction from him, and I doubt not that he helped them, for his heart felt with them. So the years passed amid the love and the honour of all who knew him, till, in 1871, he was laid down by an attack of pleurisy and effusion, which brought him nigh the brink of the grave. For many days his life was despaired of, and the only hope rested on a very delicate and critical operation. Happily it was successful so far, and he lived for a good many years after, but his work as minister of Irvine was ended. Henceforth he only preached occasionally at distant intervals, mostly for friends. His many admirers cheerfully made up a purse to provide for his remaining years, and he left Scotland to seek a milder air in Italy.

Robertson's artistic instincts had always craved for that land of sunshine and beauty, and now they could be gratified to the full. Ere long his health in a great measure was restored, so far at least that he could make a home in Florence in spite of the Tramontana. For Florence was more to him than Rome, and ere long he pervaded the Tuscan capital almost as he had done Irvine. At least, few English-speaking folk went there who did not see it through his eyes, for he had studied and knew its treasures as only Ruskin among living men had done. Its architecture, its paintings, its sculpture, the lives of its great men, the story of its rise and decay, its religious life and its common life, both past and present—he soon became familiar with all, and discoursed of them by the hour as one who loved them, and brought all the wealth of a vivid imagination to illustrate them. And love them he did, in spite of his staunch Presbyterian Protestantism which remained for all that as staunch as ever to the end.

He formed many warm friendships among the higher class of Italian priests, and often spoke to me in after years of the joy it gave him to find so much Christian fellowship with them. He could understand, he said, how Leighton often left the Presbytery to get his heart refreshed in a monastery like La Trappe. At times, he even went so far as to join in services which would have made some of his brethren stare and gasp. On one occasion, *e.g.* driving with his sister into a town, they met a procession marching to the shrine of their patron saint, headed by the priests, and chanting one of the old Latin hymns. Whereupon he ordered the carriage to stop, and jumped out and joined them, singing with his deep musical bass the grand old strain, as probably no one else was able to do. He was passionately fond of music, especially of the ancient ecclesiastical chants and plain-songs, and would sit at his chamber organ dreaming over them far into the night. I doubt not it was this feeling—essentially artistic, not religious—which led him, as the procession came up with banners flying and boy-voices piping the hymn which he had probably often sung to himself, to take his place in the throng, and give a more musical as well as a more spiritual voice to its sacred song. He could not help himself. He was like Saul among the prophets, and must needs sing with them, only he was the real prophet, and the procession were probably rather a lot of Sauls. And yet, who knows?

Of all the books which I often hoped he might be persuaded to write, the one which latterly I urged most strongly on him was a work on Religious Art, and there were times when I fancied he might be got to do it. I tried hard to persuade him to prepare a couple of lectures on the subject for the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, which, even if they were not written out, might by means of the reporter be made the nucleus of a more complete work in due time. For without pretending myself to have any knowledge on the subject, or to say whether his ideas were sound or not, it was clear that he had ideas on the subject, very many, and full of interest and of beauty. He had seen and pondered and sought the meaning of Florentine art as no one I ever met had done, and he had compared it with the current of Italian literature and history from Giotto and Dante down to Raphael and Vasari. The colours, the faces, the postures of almost every picture were familiar to him, and he traced a meaning through them all, and an historical relation to the spiritual decay of the people. I can-

not help regretting that he was not permitted to give us his deliberate thoughts on the subject, as he promised me often to do. They might be right, or they might be wrong, but I am convinced they would have been helpful and suggestive. Like many another scheme, however, they were talked of, and that was all. It is a fatal gift, that gift of brilliant conversation, for it spoils much needed work, if it gives much passing enjoyment.

Robertson spent several winters in Italy, and became so fond of it that his friends here began to fear he would settle there for good. But he was a genuine Scot, after all, and his "heart untravelling" brought him home by-and-by. One of his wealthy admirers, the late Dr. Young, of Kelly, offered him the life-lease of an old country house near West Calder, in the "shale" neighbourhood, but fairly well away from the smoke of paraffin. There was a pleasant old garden and some fine trees, and the mansion, which had long stood empty, soon became bright and cheery when he set up there his *Lares et Penates*, and gathered his friends about him. One began to hope that life had still something worth looking forward to now that he was back among us, and within easy call by rail. Now and then he was persuaded to come into Edinburgh, and we had bright little symposia with Dr. John Brown, and Sir Daniel Macnee, and Sir Douglas Maclagan, and Professor Blackie, and what other elements of culture and faculty London has not drawn away from the northern metropolis. Occasionally Robertson was even persuaded to preach one of those strangely beautiful discourses which were so unlike the ordinary sermon that regular sermon-lovers knew not what to make of them, or whether to approve or condemn. They had very little doctrine, almost as little exhortation; but with a central nucleus of clear thought, surrounded by a nimbus of varying, many-tinted poetry, they lifted one up into regions where sermons rarely go. But he could not often yield to the entreaty of friends for such service. His health could not bear the strain. It was only too clear that his working day was done. What he liked best was to gather a few of us on a summer day round his table, and to saunter about the grounds, and to hold large discourse which "wandered at its own sweet will." There he exercised a generous hospitality—too generous, I used to think, for his means were limited, and he never knew the value of money, yet neither did he become the slave of debt.

If possible, there were always some ladies at those meetings—mostly young and beautiful—and he would make the prettiest speeches to them, which yet had none of the impertinence of compliments. Women he honoured with a kind of chivalrous courtesy, which they repaid with an absolute confidence; but when they had youth and beauty, he gave the reins to fancy, and to the play of quaint and graceful humour. So his latter days passed among his books and friends, in solitude often and yet never alone, for the trees and the brooks and the whispering winds were a living fellowship to him, and he had always his chamber-organ to discourse with in those grand old hymns, which lifted up his soul to a higher world than this. A purer, simpler, nobler nature, or one more richly endowed with all that goes to make a beautiful life, in all my pilgrimage I have never happened to meet. Dr. John Brown, Norman McLeod, Daniel Macnee, all the world knows them, and will be ready to believe that they were choice friends and goodly company. Yet an evening with William Robertson was a joy to me at least as memorable as any I had with them, and a sermon from him was more wonderful than aught I ever heard or read. Yet of this man there is no record, save in the loving memory of his friends. As I ventured to say elsewhere, he is like James among the Apostles, who wrote nothing at all, and said nothing we know, and yet was one of the chosen three who were with the Master that day when His glory was revealed, and that night when His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.

I had not met my friend for some time, for my life was very busy and also somewhat burdened at that time, and I had no idea that he was suffering from any illness. But one day in that sadly memorable June an old friend called and told me he had been to see him in Bridge of Allan, whither he had gone to be with a sister who resided there, and that he had found him very low, and, as he feared, near the end. I wrote immediately to say that I would go out on the Monday—it was then Saturday—and I hoped he would be able to see me also. On the Monday morning I got a note to say that he had passed away shortly after my letter arrived. I had hoped once more to hold his hand and to hear his voice; and I cannot describe the sense of choking that came over me when I read that he was no more—yet he is for evermore!

A COLLIERY EXPLOSION.

By PROFESSOR THORPE, F.R.S.



Searching for Fire-damp.

"SHE'S fired!" Of all the cries which a sense of sudden peril wrings from men there is surely none more awful than this. Try to realise what it means. In the language of the colliery, it means that the pitman, whose trained ear enables him to identify and localise each one of that curious medley of sounds to be met with in a mine, has heard the dull thud which he knows full well will be followed in a few seconds by a blast of scorching flame and the rush of ignited dust, by darkness and the suffocating after-damp, and, it may be, death. A resolute man, strong in his power of helpfulness, may feel the calmness which is born of hope if he realises that his courage or his skill or his physical strength may save him from impending danger. The cry of "Breakers ahead!" loses half its terror to the seaman who knows that his ship is good and true, and that her crew are smart and active. Seamanship and willing service may keep him off the rocks. But what glimmer of hope is there for the poor wretch who does his race for dear life in utter darkness, and, as he staggers along the uneven roadway, knows that he is matched against time and the rush of the deadly after-damp? Frequently, however, the men are struck down without a note of warning; they are found close to their tools, and with their lamps hanging near, often in attitudes which indicate that the wave of stupefying gas had come upon them unawares, and that they had passed into the "silent land" without a struggle, and in the

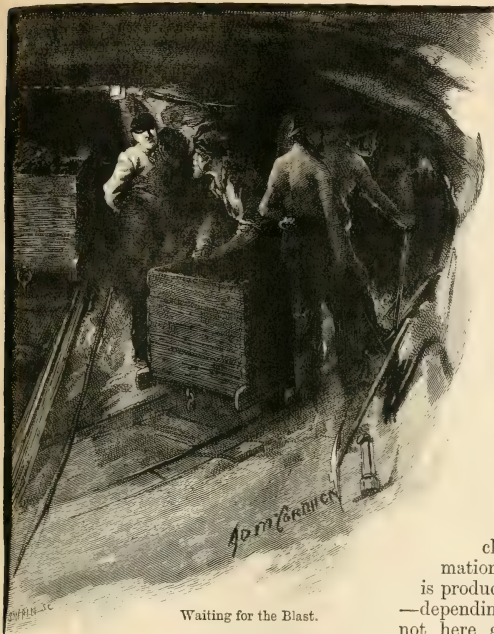
twinkling of an eye. Sometimes the men are imprisoned behind a fall of the roof, such as almost invariably follows from a violent explosion, when the timbering is blown down for hundreds of yards along the roads, and they sit there without the hope of succour, waiting for death in the darkness of their tomb. What lengthened agony men in such a situation suffer we can but dimly realise. Of all "messages from the deep" of which history has any record, there is none more touching in its simple pathos than that found scratched with a rusty brattice nail on the bottom of his tin-can, in which an entombed miner takes farewell of his wife and bids her kiss the little ones whose faces he was never more to see.*

But it is not to be supposed that explosions are the chief causes of casualties in collieries. During the ten years prior to 1885, 11,165 men and boys met their deaths in coal-pits; of these 2,562 were killed by explosions. The greater number of the casualties are due to falls of the roof and sides, and to accidents in the roadways and shafts. Without doubt, much of this waste of human life is preventable, for, in the opinion of those well qualified to judge, it is in great part due to carelessness and to the lack of early training. The Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into accidents in coal-mines, in their report of last spring made a number of recommendations which, it is to be hoped, will do much towards lessening the



Preparing for the Blast.

* This incident happened on the occasion of the Seaham explosion in 1880, by which 164 men and boys were killed. In dying the man clasped the tin bottle so tightly under his right arm that it escaped the notice of the explorers, and it was the wife herself who discovered it when the body was brought to the surface.



Waiting for the Blast.

number of accidents of this class. What seems to be required is a more constant inspection of the working-places; the maintenance, in places convenient to the workmen, of an ample supply of timber for propping up the roof; the proper training of the miner as to the best mode of protecting his working-place; the exercise of greater care on his part in watching the roof, sides, and face; the introduction of arrangements with the workmen which will make it their interest not to avoid the labour of putting up the necessary timber, &c., for their proper protection; and the employment of special workmen to look after the timbering and the main-ways, and the drawing of the timber from the disused working-places. There is no question also that many of the accidents which are classed together as "miscellaneous" might be obviated by improved discipline, and by the exercise of greater care on the part of those who are employed on the engine-planes and other roadways.

But as regards casualties from explosions, the case is somewhat different. We have here to do with an enemy which is always, so to say, on our flank, which sometimes

does its work insidiously, and at other times by sudden onslaught, and which can only be successfully met by unceasing vigilance, a trained intelligence, and scientific knowledge.

The causes of colliery explosions have seemed at times inscrutable, but, thanks to the labours of the Royal Commissioners, whose report has already been referred to, and to the work of mining engineers and colliery managers in this country and on the continent, we are gradually dispelling the mystery. It is the purpose of this paper to explain what we now know concerning the origin, in general, of these catastrophes, and to indicate how we may hope, in the light of this knowledge, to lessen the frequency of their occurrence.

In the course of the chemical changes accompanying the transformation of vegetable matter into coal there is produced, in greater or less abundance—depending upon conditions which we need not here go into—a gaseous compound of carbon and hydrogen, commonly known as marsh gas. It is so named because it is to be met with in marshy places as a product of the decay of vegetable matter in contact with water. This gas was thought by the older chemists to be identical with the inflammable air formed by the solution of certain metals, as, for example, iron or zinc, in the common acids. The two gases were shown to be distinct by the Italian physicist Volta and by our countryman John Dalton, who pointed out that in the act of burning or by explosion with air marsh gas forms carbonic acid in addition to water, whereas hydrogen—the gas evolved on the solution of metals—under the same conditions gives rise to water only. Marsh gas, however, resembles hydrogen in being much lighter than air, and in being colourless, tasteless, and odourless. When it is mixed with air in due proportion the mixture, if heated by contact with a flame or in other ways to a sufficiently high temperature, gives rise to an explosion, the violence of which depends upon the amount of the admixed air. The most violent explosion is given with an admixture of from nine to ten volumes of air, but air containing only

one-twentieth of its volume of marsh gas is still highly explosive.

Every gas which has the power of combining with oxygen to form a flame, or, in other words, which is capable of burning in the air, needs to have its temperature raised to a certain point before it will ignite. There are certain gases which take fire spontaneously when they come in contact with the air; this means that their ignition temperature is the ordinary temperature of the air. There are other gases which will ignite at the temperature of boiling water. Hydrogen ignites at a low red heat; marsh gas, on the other hand, requires a much higher temperature to bring about its ignition—a red-hot poker, which instantly determines the explosive combination of a mixture of hydrogen and air, may be thrust with impunity into a mixture of marsh gas and air. This peculiarity of marsh gas has an important bearing upon the theory of the safety lamp.

Now the fire-damp of the coal-miner consists mainly of marsh gas associated with more or less carbonic acid, or choke-damp, and nitrogen gas. It should be noted that relatively small quantities of the last-named gases greatly affect both the explosive violence of the fire-damp and the amount of air determining the explosive limit. There are certain other conditions which modify the violence of the explosion by influencing the temperature of the flame and the increase of pressure at the moment of chemical change, but as their consideration hardly affects the general question it is unnecessary to dwell upon them now.

Coal has been worked in this country since the time of the Normans; but it was only in the beginning of the seventeenth century that explosions in collieries appear to have been heard of. Even then they were seldom fatal. One which occurred at Mostyn, on the Dee, in 1676, and which killed a man and blew off the winding-drum at the top of the pit, was apparently so novel an event as to be thought worthy of description in the "Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society."

This comparative infrequency of explosions in the early workings is readily accounted for by the mode in which coal was got at that time. The pits were very shallow; indeed, at the beginning of the eighteenth century no pit had reached a greater depth than sixty fathoms; commonly they were not more than from twenty to thirty fathoms deep. To-day some of our pits are half a mile in depth; the Ashton Moss pit at Audenshaw, for example, is close upon four hundred

and fifty fathoms deep. Moreover, the old workings did not extend to any considerable distance from the shafts. In fact, in the early days of coal-getting, the miners were more hindered by water and choke-damp than by explosive gas. Choke-damp must, indeed, have been a sore trouble, if we may judge from the old-fashioned method of bringing round asphyxiated colliers. The remedy, we are told, "was to dig a hole in the earth and lay them on their bellies with their mouths in it; if that fail they tun them full of good ale; but if that fail they conclude them desperate."

It was only towards the beginning of the last century that fire-damp became really formidable, and as the pits increased in depth the evil became more and more seriously felt. It was quickly recognised that the best method of dealing with the gas was to sweep it out of the workings by a vigorous air-current; but this, in the early days of coal-getting, was not always practicable. The old proverb that "a prudent miner minds the wind," had its origin in the days when the ventilation of the mines was solely dependent on the difference between the temperatures of the air in the pit and above ground. When the atmosphere was stagnant, or when the workings were at too great a distance from the shaft, the only method of preventing the accumulation of the gas was to fire it from time to time. The "fireman," covered with sackcloth saturated with water, crept along the ground, inch by inch, towards the spot where the fire-damp lurked, holding out before him a long pole carrying a couple of lighted candles. These he cautiously pushed towards the roof, and as the gas ignited he pressed his face to the earth to escape the scorching flame. As the pits were deepened and the workings extended, this method, at all times dangerous, became at length impracticable, and many collieries had to be abandoned owing to the impossibility of working in them with naked lamps or candles. About the middle of the eighteenth century an ingenious mine-manager named Spedding invented the *steel-mill*, in which a disc of steel is caused to revolve rapidly against a piece of flint. It was by the feeble radiance of the shower of sparks thus caused that the work of the miner could alone be carried on in a so-called "fiery" pit. The action of the instrument was, however, very uncertain, and many ignitions of gas were traceable to its use.

The atmosphere of every coal-mine probably contains more or less marsh gas,

although in some the amount is so very small that the air within them could never become explosive under ordinary conditions of working. There is no doubt that gas frequently escapes detection owing to the imperfection of the means employed for its recognition. If present in certain proportion the marsh gas is revealed by the elongation of the flame of a safety-lamp, or by the appearance of what is known as a "cap" upon the flame. An experienced eye can determine pretty accurately the relative amount of the fire-damp from the size and character of the cap upon a properly trimmed flame; but the test altogether fails when the proportion of gas falls below two per cent. This amount, small as it may seem, may, under certain circumstances, prove highly dangerous. The mine-manager and the "firemen" require to use some more delicate method of detecting small quantities of fire-damp than that usually employed. Fortunately such methods are not unknown. Mr. Liveing has devised a very ingenious indicator, by which the existence of marsh gas can be detected and its amount estimated even when the quantity is as low as a quarter per cent. Two precisely similar pieces of thin platinum wire are simultaneously heated to bright redness by the action of a small magneto-electric machine worked by hand. One of the wires is contained in a small tube filled with pure air; the other can be surrounded at will, and in a minute or two, with air from any part of the mine. If fire-damp is present it burns round the hot wire, which is thereby increased in temperature and emits a more brilliant light. By comparing the intensities of the light emitted by the two wires by the aid of a very simple photometric arrangement the percentage amount of fire-damp present may be at once determined. The apparatus is portable and easily worked, and is well adapted for use underground.

Seventy years have elapsed since Sir Humphrey Davy invented the safety lamp which is associated with his name. It is almost impossible to overestimate the influence of that invention in the development of coal-mining—in the development indeed of our national prosperity. It has unquestionably saved thousands of lives, and has enabled millions of tons of coal to be raised which without it could not possibly have been won.

It is related that when Mr. Buddle, whose name is well known in the history of coal-mining for the improvements he introduced

into the system of ventilating collieries, took down one of the first Davy lamps into a fiery pit and beheld the fire-damp "cap" playing round the light and apparently imprisoned within the wire-gauze cylinder, he exclaimed exultingly, "At last we have subdued this monster!"

Not a year passes, however, without the 'monster' showing us that he is still very far from subjection; and, strange to say, *the Davy lamp itself and the very system of ventilation which we owe to Mr. Buddle, as developed in these later times, have conspired to aid the 'monster' in his work of havoc and disaster.*

How this has come about may be told in a very few words. When the lamp was first introduced the ventilating currents in mines seldom exceeded a velocity of three hundred feet per minute in the air-ways, and they were usually very feeble in the working places. Nowadays the enormous fans and other mechanical ventilators which are employed cause the air to travel at velocities approaching two thousand feet per minute in the air-ways, and currents of more than four hundred feet per minute are not unfrequently met with at the working places. Under these conditions the Davy lamp and, in a lesser degree, two other well-known forms of safety lamp—the Clanny and the Stephenson lamps—become absolutely unsafe in an explosive atmosphere. Indeed, the ordinary Davy lamp will ignite gas outside it if exposed to an explosive current travelling at less than four hundred feet per minute.

The Royal Commissioners, as far back as 1880, directed the attention of the Home Secretary to the fact "that the employment of the ordinary Davy lamp without a shield of metal or of glass, in an explosive mixture, when the air currents exceed six feet per second, is attended with risk of accident almost amounting to certainty." Indeed, merely attempting to blow out the flame within the lamp may cause it to ignite an inflammable mixture. Happily invention has not been long behind necessity, and there are at least half-a-dozen forms of lamp which are safe under current velocities exceeding three thousand feet per minute. Everybody will agree with the conclusion of the Royal Commissioners that whilst it would be unwise to make a particular lamp compulsory on the ground that difficulties might thereby be thrown in the way of introducing improvements in future, it is nevertheless desirable that some control should be exercised in reference to the kind of lamps to be employed in coal-mines, and that only those

lamps should be used which are authorised from time to time by the Secretary of State.

Fire-damp, however, is not the most formidable of the causes of colliery explosions. It is doubtful, indeed, whether a single one of the more disastrous explosions of modern times can be directly and wholly attributed to its action. It is significant that violent explosions seldom occur nowadays in very wet pits, although the air in them frequently contains fire-damp. Moreover, when explosions do occur in such pits they rarely extend over

a large area, and the loss of life from them is comparatively small. Such catastrophes as those of Abercarne, Risca, Seaham, and Penygraig, where hundreds of men and boys are killed, and where evidence of the explosion is to be met with in nearly all parts of the pits, almost invariably happen in dry and dusty pits. *It hardly admits of question that explosions of this kind are dependent*

upon the presence of this dust. Dust explosions in flour-mills have long been known, but it is only within the last few years that the action of finely divided coal-dust in initiating or propagating a colliery explosion has received much attention. The atmosphere of a deep dry mine is always impregnated with more or less dust. It settles everywhere, not only in the working places, but in the intake and haulage roads. It is not only on the floor, but hangs from the roof and timbers, and is heaped up on the ledges. A violent movement of the air dislodges it in clouds; if a naked flame be introduced into such a cloud it in-

flames with explosive violence and the concussion of air is followed by fresh clouds of dust through which the flame is propagated.

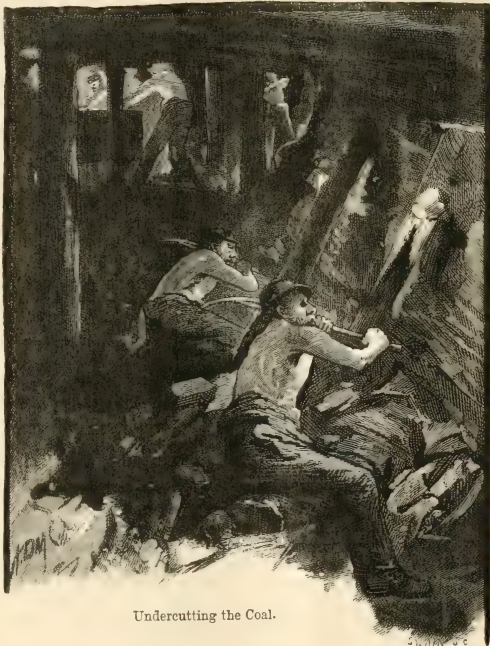
"——— the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffus'd inflames the air."

Milton said this of gunpowder: it is even truer of coal-dust.

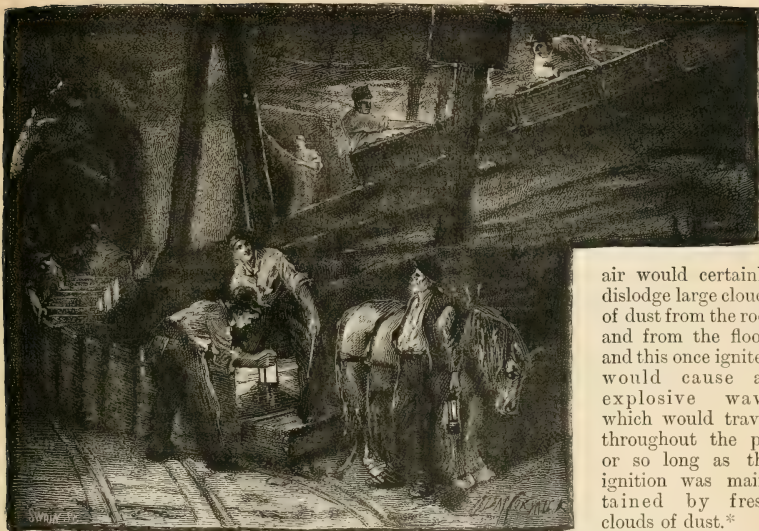
Now there are many conditions in the ordinary working of a coal-mine which may occasion these violent movements of the air, and chief among them is the prevalence of what is technically known as "shot-firing"

—that is, blasting by means of gunpowder. Gunpowder is used in the mine either for bringing down the coal or for removing stone, in order, for example, to make roads for the passage of horses, and foreengine planes, &c. A hole is driven or drilled into the coal or stone, into which a certain quantity of powder, together with a fuze, is introduced, and the rest of the hole is "stemmed" or "tamped"

—that is, filled up with small stones and earth or, too frequently, with small coal itself. The fuse is ignited and the workmen retire either into a "refuge hole" or round a corner until the blast is made. Occasionally it happens when the charge of gunpowder is too large, or when it is imperfectly stemmed, or when the rock is unusually hard, that the powder blows out the stemming and there is a violent concussion of air, and from the mouth of the drill-hole there issues a flame the length of which will be greatly increased if small coal has been used in the stemming. Indeed, it is



Undercutting the Coal.



A Roadway.

air would certainly dislodge large clouds of dust from the roof and from the floor, and this once ignited would cause an explosive wave which would travel throughout the pit or so long as the ignition was maintained by fresh clouds of dust.*

Of late years the use of explosives in

not necessary for the shot to be "blown out" to produce either the flame or a concussion of air sufficient to dislodge the inflammable dust. We have here a condition of things which may be highly dangerous in dusty pits. It has been proved over and over again that shot-firing has been the immediate precursor of some of the most disastrous colliery explosions on record. The influence of dust in at least propagating an explosion is now generally recognised by mining engineers and colliery managers, but it is still a moot point with some whether it is capable of initiating an explosion or, indeed, of propagating it in the absence of fire-damp. There is, however, a considerable body of evidence to show that whilst the explosive character of a dusty atmosphere may be greatly augmented by the presence of fire-damp, dust alone may be sufficient to bring about the most disastrous explosions. It is known that explosions have occurred simultaneously with the firing of shots in stone, and certain of these shots have been fired in a dusty main intake-road, and at points where currents of air of over 20,000 cubic feet per minute were passing. It is almost inconceivable, except on the theory of the sudden outburst of gas at places where it is in the highest degree improbable that such outbursts could occur, that such air could contain any sensible quantity of fire-damp. The concussion of

coal-mines has been considerably restricted, and some people have gone so far as to demand their absolute prohibition. Explosive agents are, however, much too powerful auxiliaries in colliery working to be readily given up, and indeed if they are used intelligently there seems no reason why they should be discarded. In the case of gunpowder much may be done to minimise the evil by watering the roadways and roofs, and by preventing as far as possible the accumulation of dust. In the haulage-ways and engine-planes the dust is largely due to the action of the air currents impinging against the broken coal in the tubs, which frequently run from ten to fifteen miles an hour along the roads. A variety of methods have been suggested for keeping down the dust, but nothing seems to have been attempted on a sufficiently large scale. This much seems certain: if the continuance of shot-firing by means of gunpowder is to be permitted, this question of dust will have to be more seriously grappled with than it has been hitherto. The Royal Commissioners have reported that they are convinced, from extensive practical experiments carried out by themselves and others, that the abolition of the use of powder in

* Messrs. W. N. and J. B. Atkinson, two of H.M. Inspectors of Mines, have recently published a very careful analysis of the circumstances connected with certain explosions in the county of Durham: they seek to prove that coal-dust alone was the explosive agent in most of the cases.

dry and dusty mines will not generally involve any formidable inconvenience. There are other methods of getting coal than by the use of gunpowder, and some of these are quite as efficient as, and scarcely more expensive than powder. Blasting by means of lime has of late years been extensively practised. In this process the expansive effect which follows the slaking of quicklime, finely powdered and pressed by hydraulic power into small cylindrical blocks, is made use of. It is the opinion of the Commissioners that in some coal seams the lime cartridges will perform work quite equal to that accomplished by powder, at no greater cost and with absolute immunity from risk of explosions. Dynamite, tonite, and explosives of this class can also safely be used in conjunction with

water for blasting in stone, or shale, or coal, even in dusty air containing fire-damp. There are also various mechanical appliances which will do efficient work both in coal and stone, and in which blasting is altogether obviated.

The limits of this paper will not allow us to go into these matters at greater length. It will be sufficiently evident, however, that we are rapidly dispelling much of the obscurity which has hitherto surrounded the origin of many colliery explosions. There is good reason to hope, therefore, that the time is not far distant when in the light of this fuller knowledge and with the more intelligent supervision which should follow from it, the frequency of these disasters will be very greatly diminished.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.—A PROVINCIAL COTILLON.

"WELL, this is indeed an unexpected honour!" exclaimed Mrs. Greenwood when, on the evening of her dance, she advanced to welcome Gilbert Segrave and found herself confronted not only with that indispensable personage, but with the towering figure of his elder brother.

"You invited me, didn't you?" said Brian.

"Of course I did; and I have been inviting you to every entertainment that we have given since Kitty came out; but this is the first time that you have deigned to accept my invitation."

"Shall I go away again?" asked the young man, smiling.

"No, indeed! Now that you have come, you will have to stay till the very end of the evening, and dance twice as much as anybody else to make up for lost time."

It seemed, however, that Brian had not come to Mrs. Greenwood's dance with any intention of doing his duty. When his hostess left him he did not make even a pretence of seeking for a partner, but backed into a recess, where he stood with folded arms, surveying the scene, occasionally nodding to some man of his acquaintance, but apparently failing to recognise any friend among the ladies.

A provincial ball-room generally presents a cheerful and animated spectacle to lookers-

on, whose spirits are more liable to be affected by the aspect of the dancers than by that of the room itself. Mural decoration is probably neither conspicuous nor costly; but the people who attend these gatherings appear to do so with a view to enjoying themselves, and look not less happy over their dancing than they do profoundly dejected over their dinner parties. In London, on the other hand, in spite of all the money that is spent upon flowers and suppers and ingenious systems of lighting, the tendency would seem to be rather in the contrary direction. But Brian was not occupied in drawing comparisons, for which, indeed, he did not possess the necessary data; nor, judging by the gradual look of disappointment which settled down upon his face, did he find the energetic capers of his fellow-guests in the least exhilarating to contemplate. Pretty little Miss Greenwood found him out after a time and tried to entice him out of his retreat; but he alleged that he was too poor a performer to adventure himself in such a crowd, and, to avoid further importunity, sidled away, leaving her to wonder why, if he did not mean to dance, he had taken the trouble to put on his evening clothes and stick a gardenia and a spray of maidenhair in his buttonhole.

If this problem had interested her much, and if she had had leisure to study the features of its subject, she might have been able to bring forward a plausible solution a

few minutes after the clocks struck eleven. It was at that unheard-of hour that Miss Huntley, whose experience of provincial habits was limited, thought fit to put in an appearance; and her hostess's ejaculation of "At last! Why, we gave you up more than an hour ago!" drew forth no apology from her. It would be doing her a great injustice to say that she had purposely arrived late, with a view to effect; but it is likely enough that she was not insensible to the very obvious stir created by her entrance, for she resembled all other women, good and bad, in liking admiration. She was dressed very simply in two shades of pink; but then she employed a dressmaker whose simple frocks cost a great deal more than any inhabitant of Kingscliff ever thought of paying for an elaborate one; so that it really was not easy for those good ladies to examine her without a bitter sense of the inequalities of life. Still they abstained as far as they could from saying ill-natured things about her, and tried not to notice the deplorable taste exhibited by their partners in staring at her, as though a pretty or a well-dressed woman had never been seen in the west of England before.

Miss Huntley moved down the room, escorted by the Admiral, who had all his life appreciated feminine beauty very highly, and followed by Miss Joy, resplendent in ruby velvet. When she recognised Brian she greeted him with a little nod and a bright smile, which drew him out of his corner as a magnet draws a needle.

"How do you do?" she said; "I thought I should perhaps meet you here this evening. Admiral Greenwood, I mustn't monopolise you any longer; but it would be very kind of you if you would find a seat for Miss Joy somewhere."

Then, as the Admiral obediently retired, with Miss Joy on his arm, she continued: "Yes; I had an idea that we should meet to-night, although you told me that you were not much of a ball-goer. And do you know what I have done in anticipation of this pleasure? I have kept the cotillon for you."

Brian was so gratified, and at the same time so very much astonished, that these emotions quite deprived him for the moment of the use of his tongue. Miss Huntley looked at him, laughing softly.

"Am I going to be put to the open shame of a refusal?" she asked. "It will serve me right if I am. Please spare my feelings, though, by saying how very sorry you are that you are already engaged."

"But I am not engaged," answered Brian eagerly; "and if you will really do me such an honour—only I think I ought in honesty to tell you that I have never taken part in a cotillon in my life."

"I will teach you," said Miss Huntley, composedly. "Wasn't there a sort of understanding between us that you were to be my pupil in certain accomplishments?"

"I shall be only too proud if you will undertake my education. But won't you give me a dance before the cotillon begins?"

Miss Huntley glanced at some ivory tablets which hung from her fan.

"Ah, I don't know about that; I am afraid you are a little late. You ought to have asked me the day before yesterday. However, I think I can manage to let you have the last waltz on the list, if that will do. And now will you do me a favour?"

"Of course I will."

"Then go and dance with Miss Joy."

Brian looked slightly taken aback.

"Does she dance?" he asked.

"Yes, when she is asked; and she dances very well too. I don't want to pass my partners on to her, because if I do she thinks they only ask her to please me; but you might introduce one or two people to her, might you not?"

Now Miss Joy was a lady of imposing proportions, and no stretch of charity could have set down her age at less than two or three-and-forty; so that Brian could only say, doubtfully, "Well, I will do my best." But his reply was not heard by Miss Huntley, who had already moved away on the arm of a partner.

Brian's step was an erratic *deux-temps*, acquired with much difficulty in boyhood, and not transmutable into anything resembling the more graceful movements which go by the name of waltzing in these days. Such as it was, Miss Joy speedily fell into it, and by personal solidity and skilful control of momentum, got him twice round the room without a mishap; so that when she paused, he remarked with some complacency, "I think we did that rather well."

"Very well, indeed," she agreed. "Suppose we sit down for a few minutes now." And then she threw her partner into utter confusion by saying placidly: "I suppose Beatrice told you to dance with me, didn't she?"

"She told me that you were a very good dancer," he replied; "and I am sure that is quite true."

Miss Joy broke into a loud, but not unmu-

sical laugh. She had a pleasant, honest, full-moon of a face, Brian noticed, surrounded by a sort of halo of fluffy light-brown hair, which was brushed up from her forehead. She opened her mouth very wide, and her little pale blue eyes disappeared altogether when she laughed.

"I ought to know something about dancing," said she; "I was a dancing-mistress in London for fifteen years."

"Were you indeed?" said Brian, much interested.

"Yes; it is more than fifteen years since I found it necessary to do something for my living. Not being very well educated, I thought I had better try to teach the one thing that I was really capable of teaching; so I applied at a ladies' school and soon established a large connection; for I have always been a most fortunate woman and have met with the greatest kindness everywhere. It was at a school that I first became acquainted with my dear Beatrice—such a charming girl as she was! Fond of taking her own way, no doubt; but what better way could she take, I should like to know? The schoolmistress used to moan and groan over her, because she was not like other girls; and it is not everybody who can make her out, and schoolmistresses naturally don't like girls whom they can't make out. But she and I became friends at once; and when she grew up and wanted a companion to live with her, what did she do but think of me and offer me the place. You may imagine how I jumped at it."

"Do you like that life so much better than giving dancing lessons then?" Brian inquired.

"Oh, dear me, yes! Beyond all comparison. First of all, there is the delight of being always with Beatrice, which, as I often tell her, is like reading a 'perpetual three-volume novel, without the slightest idea of how it is going to end. And then, you know, there are anxieties about a professional career. One can't lay by as much as one would wish, and sometimes one feels a little afraid of old age and what it may bring."

"I suppose one would," agreed Brian, half-amused, half-touched by these candid confidences. "Why do you say that living with Miss Huntley is like reading a novel?" he asked presently.

"Because she is so fond of fresh scenes and fresh people, and she has a way of interesting herself in them which makes me intensely interested too, until I discover that

they are not really going to exercise any influence over her life. Sometimes, you understand, it looks as if they would; but Beatrice has such wonderful penetration that she very soon gets to the bottom of a person's character, and then——"

"And then she throws that person over?" suggested Brian, with a shade of anxiety.

"Oh, no; she is far too kind to do that; but the person generally seems to fade away, as it were, and somebody else takes his place."

"It is always *his* place, then?"

Miss Joy burst into another of her loud laughs.

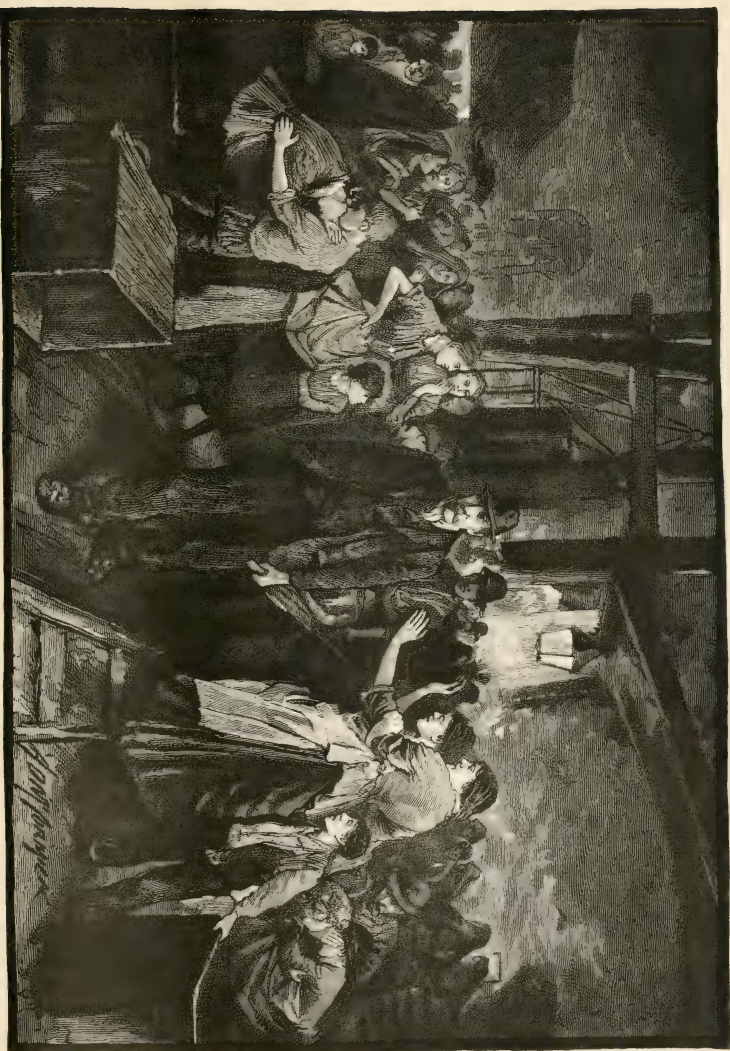
"No; it isn't always a *he*, and I am giving you quite a wrong impression of Beatrice," she answered. "Beatrice is indescribable; to understand her you must know her, and even then!—However, it is not necessary to know her well to see how kind-hearted she is. Your being here at this moment is a proof of it. The truth is that a dance is a great treat to me. It is ridiculous that it should be so at my age; but so it is; and that dear girl is for ever trying to get partners for me and make me believe that they come forward of their own accord."

"May I, quite of my own accord, beg you to dance with me again?" asked Brian.

"Thank you very much; and I would with pleasure, only I know you don't enjoy dancing, and—does plain language affront you?"

"Not a bit; I prefer it; and it doesn't affront me in the least to be told that I am a shocking bad dancer, if that is what you mean. I won't insist, then; but I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll get you a really good partner—Mitchell, who commands the coast-guard down here. He is the best-natured fellow in the world, and I'm sure he'll be delighted to give you a turn."

Having thus incidentally shown that his preference for plain language was not merely theoretical, Brian jumped up, crossed the room, and presently returned, bringing with him a strapping, black-bearded young man, whom he introduced as Captain Mitchell, and who incontinently whirled Miss Joy away in the throng. He himself, after performing this charitable action, was pounced upon by Mrs. Greenwood, and commanded to take an old lady into the supper-room, whence he did not succeed in escaping until the time came for him to claim his promised dance from Miss Huntley. He found her standing in the doorway, surrounded by a little knot of white-waistcoated youths of



A COLLIERY EXPLOSION.



the watering-place type (for Kingscliff now had its share of these not very attractive beings). She was looking absently over their heads, and seemed relieved when she descried Brian.

"Oh, here you are!" she said, taking his arm. "Would you mind sitting this dance out? We shall have plenty of exercise in the cotillon."

"I would much rather talk than dance," he replied.

So she led him into the library and, ensconcing herself comfortably in the corner of a low sofa, motioned to him to seat himself beside her. "Well," she said, "how did you get on with Miss Joy?"

"Capitally," answered Brian. "We had a most interesting conversation—principally about you."

"Really! Then suppose, for a change, we have an interesting conversation about you now."

"I'm afraid that's impossible; you wouldn't find me an interesting subject of study."

"Who knows? My own impression is that I shall. For one thing, I hear that you are a great musician, which is decidedly interesting in itself—I mean it isn't what one expects in a country gentleman."

"So my father is fond of telling me."

"Your father, I should think, doesn't mean that for a compliment. He is alarmed about you; he thinks you clever, but eccentric, and he wishes you were more like your brother, who is clever without being eccentric."

"Well, yes, I suppose that is about the state of the case; but how did you know?"

"I guessed. Do you think you will be content to remain down here all the days of your life?"

"I think I shall," answered Brian consideringly. "It is my own home, you see, and I am fond of it. Of course I should like well enough to travel, and see something of the world; but it isn't likely that I shall ever be able to afford that, so I don't think about it."

"But don't you want to see the world in another sense—the world of men and women?"

"There are men and women everywhere—even at Kingscliff," answered Brian, smiling; "and, from all that one hears and reads, I should fancy that human nature was much the same in other places as it is here."

"Yes; but if you confine yourself to a microcosm you must use a microscope, which is tedious and laborious work. By going

out into the larger world you can read while you run. All sorts of events and catastrophes and imbroglis keep on passing before your eyes. You watch them; you take notes; you make comparisons; you feel that you are a human being, not a vegetable."

"And sometimes, perhaps, you get involved in one of the imbroglis or catastrophes."

"Well, perhaps. At any rate there is the possibility of it, and that is what makes life exciting."

"To many people that would be an important point, I dare say; but excitement is not what I care for personally. My notion of a happy man is a man who has a few plain duties to occupy him, and does them to the best of his ability."

"The flattest of flat prose, in fact."

"I suppose so. I am not poetical."

"You must be, or you would never have formed such an absurd ideal. Don't you know that people's ideals always lie off the road that they are bound to travel?"

"I can't say that I have observed it. What is yours?"

"I am sorry to tell you that it is as yet unformed. Hitherto I have generally managed to get exactly what I have wanted; but I dare say I shall be able to think of something preposterous and unattainable in due time. When can one hear you play the organ?"

Brian's face, which had worn a somewhat perplexed look up to now, brightened at this abrupt question. "Are you fond of music?" he asked. "They have a very good organ at St. Michael's, and if you really cared to hear it you might walk up there some afternoon. I practise on most days between four and five o'clock."

"To-morrow afternoon, for instance?"

"Yes, to-morrow, if you like."

"I will be there," said Miss Huntley; "then perhaps I shall find out whether you are poetical or not. In the meantime one of the plain duties which you value so much lies before you. We must go and take our places for the cotillon."

No small surprise was created in the ball-room by the appearance of this couple among the dancers, and more than one knowing old lady whispered to her neighbour that the beauty was setting her cap at the Squire's eldest son. For the Segraves are an ancient family, highly thought of in the West, and Miss Huntley, after all, was only a contractor's daughter. These good people little knew to what social heights the daughters of contractors may aspire nowadays, nor

could they be aware that what they considered a fine match would be regarded as a hopeless misalliance by Miss Huntley's relations.

Gilbert, hurrying to and fro across the open space which had been cleared, and whispering last instructions to those upon whose support he counted, smiled and raised his eyebrows as he passed his brother's chair.

"What next!" he exclaimed under his breath. And then, to Miss Huntley, "I beg your pardon, but is it a wager?"

"You shut up, Gilbert," said Brian good-humouredly, "and don't chaff your elder brother, or I'll run round the wrong way in one of your elaborate figures and get you all hopelessly clubbed."

"I wish you would!" cried a loud voice on the speaker's right hand. "That young brother of yours fancies himself altogether too much!"

Commander Mitchell, R.N., was one of the very few people who did not like Gilbert Segrave, and, being a man of straightforward habit, he did not trouble himself to conceal his dislike. Nor, for that matter, did he make much secret of its cause. Everybody in Kingscliff was aware that Mitchell had fallen a victim to the charms of Miss Greenwood, and that that young lady would have nothing at all to say to him. At the cricket-matches and lawn-tennis tournaments, where he was wont to shine supreme, it was notorious that he became paralysed and utterly useless the moment that Miss Kitty appeared upon the scene. He prostrated himself upon the earth before her, figuratively speaking, and, as usually happens in such cases, she trampled upon him without mercy. Now Captain Mitchell, having found Miss Joy to be in many respects a kindred spirit, and being perfectly indifferent as to the age and looks of all partners save one, had engaged that lady for the cotillon, and when, in answer to his last remark, she whispered, "Do you know, I think I agree with you," he felt that Providence had perhaps placed in his hands a fit instrument for the discomfiture of his rival. He therefore suggested that it would be amusing and productive of good results if they were to devote their joint energies to the marring of all Gilbert's combinations. But to this proposition Miss Joy was much too good-natured to accede.

"We could not spoil everybody's pleasure for the sake of annoying one person, who looks as if nothing would put him out of countenance," she urged. "Besides, Beatrice

has been practising these figures with him and Miss Greenwood for the last few days, and I am sure she would be vexed if they turned out a failure."

In Miss Joy's eyes this last consideration was evidently final, and as her partner was in reality not less kind-hearted than she, he was forced to admit the justice of her reasoning, though with a mental reservation.

So the leader of the cotillon was suffered to work out his designs unmolested, and made a great success of them. In the intricate manoeuvres which he directed, and the moving kaleidoscopic patterns which he formed with his living material, Brian contrived, by dint of keeping his eye steadily on Miss Huntley, and obeying her signs, to take part without signal disgrace; but he did not find the process very enjoyable, and confessed as much when interrogated.

"It seems to me," said he, "that the chief peculiarity of a cotillon is that you never dance with your partner in it. You can't even talk to her, because you are obliged to give your whole attention to your work."

"You will be able to do both now if you like," answered Miss Huntley. "The pretty figures are over, and the silly ones are getting to begin."

What Miss Huntley called the silly figures—that is to say the presentations of bouquets and badges, and the time-honoured jocularities, carried out by the help of looking-glasses, umbrellas, oranges, and the like—were evidently more popular than their predecessors, and were perhaps as new to a large proportion of the company as they were to Brian. It was, at all events, an undoubted novelty to most of those present to see a gentleman take the mirror in his hand and prepare to seat himself in the middle of the room, in order to exercise the privilege which is commonly reserved for the ladies; and to one spectator this proceeding appeared to be a piece of quite intolerable impudence.

"Just look at that self-satisfied young puppy!" Miss Joy's partner exclaimed, pointing to Gilbert. "Come, I'll take you up to him and see whether he'll have the cheek to refuse you."

"I don't feel the smallest doubt about it; and besides, it isn't our turn," protested Miss Joy.

But Captain Mitchell already had his arm round her waist, and had begun to waltz with such impetuosity that she was powerless to hold him back. Gilbert glanced up in some surprise as this ponderous couple bore down upon him. Not liking, however to order

them back to their places, he accepted the situation with a smile, and was in the act of seating himself when Mitchell, who had been circling round him like a hawk, suddenly reversed his step. Miss Joy's heavy velvet skirt, swinging out, caught the chair and whisked it away, and Gilbert, unable to save himself, descended upon the floor with a crash, looking-glass and all.

The episode, as was natural, produced a good deal of merriment; the author of it chuckled gleefully, while the victim, who, as Miss Joy had observed, was not easily put out of countenance, picked himself up, laughing, and went on with the figure as if nothing had happened. But little Miss Greenwood's cheeks flushed, and her eyes shot an indignant glance at Captain Mitchell, which boded that reckless man no good.

"Jealousy?" inquired Miss Huntley, indicating with a slight movement of her fan the three persons last named.

"Oh, I suppose so," answered Brian, with something of a laugh. "It's all nonsense, you know; I don't think Gilbert is serious, and he can't afford to marry."

"You really do seem to take prosaic views," she rejoined; "it must be the atmosphere of the ball-room that affects you in that way! Well, you have spent a very dull evening, haven't you? But cheer up, for it is over now, and we are all going away."

A few minutes later, while Brian was leading Miss Huntley to her carriage, and Gilbert was gallantly escorting Miss Joy, Mitchell came striding across the hall towards them, with the half-penitent air of a schoolboy who has been caught in some delinquency, and is resigned to the consequences thereof.

"Oh, Segrave," said he, "the Admiral thinks I owe you an apology."

"My dear fellow, pray don't mention it," answered Gilbert pleasantly.

"The fact is," went on the other, "that I thought you wanted taking down a peg. Well, I suppose I must beg your pardon for knocking your chair from under you; but I can't say that I've altered my opinion."

"Hadn't you better go and back up your brother?" suggested Miss Huntley, as she stepped into her carriage. "Miss Joy's friend looks capable of eating him up."

"Oh, they are always going on like that," answered Brian; "they're very good friends really."

Then the carriage disappeared into the darkness, and he turned back into the house, marvelling inwardly at the infatuation which could lead two men with eyes in their heads to

fall out over a Kitty Greenwood when there was a Beatrice Huntley in the same room.

CHAPTER V.—AT ST. MICHAEL'S.

THERE is a prevalent impression that slums of the worst kind—districts inhabited by a population which will not suffer the intrusion of a respectably-clad person into its midst—are peculiar to large cities. That this is very far from being the case any one may satisfy himself by exploring the by-ways of most country towns, or even of such as can hardly be called more than large villages; and in the east end of Kingscliff there was a quarter which for many years possessed a reputation so evil that very few people cared to find out by personal inspection whether it was deserved or not. That it was a disgrace to the town was admitted on all hands; and when Kingscliff became a flourishing watering-place the disgrace became somewhat more acutely felt, because it was found to be a source of annoyance to the visitors. Nevertheless, it was not easy to see how matters were to be remedied. Sir Brian Segrave, to whom this collection of wretched tenements belonged, was willing to do all in his power; but that was not much, for he had no spare cash, and such improvements, sanitary and other, as he contrived to introduce, were deeply resented and promptly annihilated by his tenants. At length, however, a step was taken in the right direction. That part of the town was made into a separate parish, and, partly by a general subscription, partly by the benefactions of sundry rich old ladies, the church of St. Michael and All Angels was built upon the slope of the hill overlooking it.

Whether this would have mended matters much if the Reverend John Monckton had not been appointed to the living may be doubted; but in an auspicious hour John Monckton, who at that time was working in the East-end of London, heard what was required and offered himself for a post which no one else, up to then, had been found willing to undertake. He was warned that his salary would have to come out of the offertory, from which source also the church expenses must be defrayed, and as a matter of fact he never received a penny of pay; but his means were sufficient to make that a subject of indifference to him. A high churchman of the most advanced school (indeed he admitted himself to be a ritualist, holding that names signify little), he had at first some opposition to encounter, not so much from his own flock as from outsiders; but this was soon overcome, and in less than

a twelvemonth he had successfully accomplished a task which had hitherto baffled clergy, squire, and local authorities alike.

The methods by which he achieved this revolution were, of course, ostensibly various and capable of being noted, commented upon and approved, or the reverse, by bishops, archdeacons and others in authority; but the truth is that not one of them would have had a chance of success but for the magic of his personal influence; and if one might venture to criticise such a work, one would perhaps say that the danger of it lay in its absolute dependence upon one man and its very probable collapse on that man's death or removal. But, after all, the majority of revolutions, both small and great, are open to this objection. Mr. Monckton's wild parishioners adored him; he did what he liked with them; to please him they went to church, forswore drink, and even gave up thrashing their wives; and if, to begin with, they were actuated by no higher motive than the above, it was not for want of having higher motives set before them with unwearied persistency.

Meanwhile, as the services at St. Michael's were attractive, the music excellent, and the preaching (when the Vicar was in the pulpit) of a thrilling character, the church speedily became fashionable, residents and winter visitors crowding its benches to the gradual exclusion of those for whose benefit they had originally been intended. This Mr. Monckton did not altogether like; but since he could not close his doors against any particular section of society, he built a chapel for the poorer folk, where they could perform their devotions without being vexed by the sight of purple and fine linen, and the offerings of the richer congregation helped to defray the cost of this extension.

The organ, which had been presented to the church by one of Mr. Monckton's wealthy admirers, was a fine instrument, full and sweet in tone, and fitted with all the latest modern improvements. Brian Segrave, who appreciated its qualities and who was a friend and ally of the Vicar's, had permission to play upon it as often as he pleased, and was accustomed, as he had told Miss Huntley, to avail himself of his privilege on most days of the week. She found him playing when, true to her promise, she entered the church at half-past four o'clock on the afternoon after Mrs. Greenwood's dance and stole noiselessly into a dark corner where she could not be seen by the performer.

It is not everyone who cares for Sebastian Bach's music; but all will allow that the

works of that composer are never heard to so great advantage as upon the organ. Perhaps it may be added that he requires a competent interpreter. Miss Huntley, who had been made to play Bach upon the piano and had always rather hated him, recognised the notes of the fugue which were just then filling the church with something of that pleased surprise which we experience when an artist makes us feel the beauty of some painting by an old master which we could not have discovered without an artist's aid. She listened eagerly, with parted lips, until the last chord died away; and if Brian had only known how immensely he had risen in her respect by the not very extraordinary display of talent and ability which he had just made he would doubtless have hastened to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs by playing classical compositions until he wearied her. For, although she was very fond of music, it can scarcely be said that she appreciated it with the educated taste of a connoisseur. As, however, he was quite unconscious that she was near, he proceeded, after an interval, to favour her with something which appealed far more powerfully to her senses. He was, in fact, only waiting her arrival to attack the grandest and most difficult piece in his repertoire, and to while away the time and calm his nerves—for it seemed likely enough that she had forgotten all about her engagement—he began playing idly snatches of melody, fragments of this or that cantata or oratorio, linked together by vague connections of sound which he made up as he went along. His performance accurately reflected his thoughts, which for the moment were of a mildly melancholy kind. It floated down the darkening aisle in pathetic adagios and lingering chords, which melted one into the other, swelling and sinking like the wind on a summer night; and to the listener in the far corner it said all kinds of things which its originator had never dreamt of putting into it.

Miss Huntley was extremely impressionable. The solemn peace of the little church, the shafts of coloured light that streamed through the west window from the sinking sun and fell upon the crucifix above the altar, the soft wailing of the organ—all these affected her with certain devotional cravings and memories of girlish enthusiasms which the noise and hurry of the world had extinguished. Her eyes slowly filled with tears; she dropped upon her knees; and it was in that unexpected posture that Brian found her when, his patience being exhausted

at last, he rose abruptly from the organ and strode down towards the door.

He started and drew back, feeling that he had been guilty of an intrusion; but she got up without embarrassment (indeed it is probable that he did not interrupt any articulate petition) and advanced to meet him, holding out her hand.

"Thank you," she said; "I am so very glad to have heard you play, and I am glad, too, that you didn't know I was listening. It would be ridiculous impertinence on my part to offer you compliments, but there is no harm in my telling you what great pleasure you have given me."

"Have I really given you pleasure?" asked Brian, his face breaking into smiles. "Then I am very fortunate."

"Yes, you are very fortunate," she agreed, with a half sigh. She had dropped her somewhat flippant manner of the night before, and spoke quite naturally, without any design to bewilder or attract her hearer. "With such a talent as yours," she went on, "one is independent of the little accidents of scene and company. I quite understand now that it is the same thing to you whether you spend your life here or in London. Life is a perplexing affair," she added presently.

"It is what we make it," said Brian.

"Yes, if we are strong enough; but most of us aren't. I suppose you are right: there is nothing better than to have a few plain duties marked out for one and to do them. Nevertheless, one seems to want something more to fill up the intervals, and we can't all play the organ. It's a great misfortune to women to be independent, if they only knew it!"

She had been advancing slowly towards the door while she was speaking, and they now stood in the little porch. Some yards away from them a broad female back, surmounting a camp-stool, stood out in bold relief against the red glow of the sky.

"Miss Joy, transferring the sunset to paper," observed Miss Huntley explanatorily. "The scene has yet to be discovered that can cause Miss Joy to strike her colours—her water-colours. For her, difficulties don't exist; she doesn't know what it is to be troubled with misgivings. To be sure, she is not independent, so she can't make a *very* great fool of herself. Women who are independent generally do make fools of themselves in one way or another, don't you think so?"

"In the majority of cases I dare say they do," answered Brian meditatively, "but there

are exceptions, and I should fancy that you were one of them."

"I can't see why you should fancy that. I only came of age six months ago; I haven't had my liberty long, and if you knew all the queer things that I have contemplated doing with it you would probably change your opinion. The old lawyer who manages my affairs for me gave me some excellent advice—I know it was excellent advice. 'Look before you leap; never take any step without consulting those older and wiser than yourself; above all, don't be guided by your impulses,' &c. If one could make up one's mind to follow a few maxims of that kind one would at least be preserved from playing the fool. Only it would be so dreadfully dull. I think I like the little Latin sentences at the beginning of the Psalms better. 'Ad te levavi oculos meos,' 'Dominus illuminatio mea,' 'Lucerna pedibus,' those would be the mottoes to live by, wouldn't they? Nobody ever dreams of doing so, though."

"Some people do," said Brian.

"Oh, I think not—at least I never met anybody who did. Of course I know lots of religious people—my sister-in-law, for instance—who bears a high character. But then she makes her religion fit in with her life; she doesn't square her life with her religion. I abhor half measures, and that is partly why we had to give up living together."

"Did you live with her long?" inquired Brian.

"All my life, except when I was at school. That is, I lived with my brother, you understand. He being my nearest relation, there was no help for it until I attained my majority; then I made a formal declaration of independence and went forth on my own account, with Miss Joy to look after me. Clementina says she can't think how it will end, and I am bound to say that, for once, I find myself in agreement with Clementina."

"Is Clementina your sister-in-law?" Brian asked.

"Yes," she answered, glancing at him with a momentary surprise, which he did not understand at the time. Afterwards he heard from Gilbert, who was better acquainted with London society than he was, that Lady Clementina Huntley was a personage whom everybody knew at least by name.

"She must be a disagreeable sort of woman," he remarked.

At this Miss Huntley burst out laughing, and startled the sketcher, who glanced over

her shoulder and nodded in a friendly way. "Come and look at my daub," she called out.

They complied with this request; and when the work of art in question was handed to Brian for inspection he did not dare to lift his eyes from it, lest he should encounter those of Miss Huntley. Miss Joy, judging by her production, belonged to the impressionist school. Her picture had no foreground at all; Kingscliff, in the middle distance, was represented by blotches of deep purple, with perpendicular strokes here and there, which a clever person might have discovered to be meant for chimneys; the purple was gradually shaded off into blue, which in its turn gave place to a sea of orange, in the midst of which was a blood-red ball, evidently the sun, as seen through the mists of evening. Brian was sorely puzzled to know what he ought to say to this. "It's—it's a bold piece of colouring," he remarked feebly at last.

"Yes, I think it is," agreed Miss Joy with much complacency. "Not exaggerated though, is it now? People are apt to call pictures of sunsets exaggerated, you know; but really the difficulty is to make one's colours vivid enough. Well, I'm glad to see that you are not laughing, at any rate. Beatrice always laughs at my sketches; she can't help it, poor dear; and I know she has gone away now because she is afraid of exploding and hurting my feelings. Oh, and she has picked up a friend, I see. Dear me! isn't it Sir Brian Segrave?"

Brian looked up and saw that Miss Huntley had indeed withdrawn to a distance of some twenty yards, and was standing by the roadside, talking with apparent animation to his father, who, mounted on the grey cob, was listening to her with that air of deferential courtesy which he was accustomed to assume in the presence of ladies. Brian strolled down and joined them presently; and the old gentleman said—

"Miss Huntley has been paying you some pretty compliments; it seems that you are nothing less than a genius. I wasn't aware of it, I confess; but perhaps you will say that no man is a prophet in his own country."

His voice had an inflection of irony which he never could keep out of it when speaking to his son upon that subject. Sir Brian's earnest desire was to be just in all his dealings, and to give every man such credit as might be his due; but he would have been glad to give his heir credit for qualities

which he feared that that musical genius did not possess.

"Mr. Segrave is quite satisfied with his own country," remarked Miss Huntley, either by a happy chance or by that instinct of hers which so often led her to say what was agreeable to her hearers. "He tells me that his ideal of existence is to spend all his days at Kingscliff, and that the daily round, the common task will furnish all he needs to ask. I can't quite make up my mind whether he is right or wrong."

"My dear young lady," cried Sir Brian, "I am delighted to hear that you find him in such a sensible frame of mind, and I do trust that you will not attempt to remove him from it. The life of a country gentleman may not be exciting, but I can assure you that it gives a man occupation enough, if he does his duty. In these days he won't have done badly if at the end of his life he can hand the land on to his successor as he received it from his forefathers."

"Or improved," said Brian, meaning to be complimentary.

"I have improved the property," returned his father a little sharply. "Doubtless you will be able to improve it still more. Selling any part of it is, of course, not improving it, and I hope you will never be tempted to do that."

To this Brian made no direct rejoinder. He knew what his father meant, but did not care to make rash promises. Presently, however, he observed, "The question is how much longer one will be allowed to hold land which is urgently required by a whole town-full of one's neighbours. At the rate public opinion is moving just now, I should say that by the beginning of the next century landed proprietors will find their rights are not worth much when they clash with the convenience of the sovereign people."

"In other words," said Sir Brian, "the sovereign people will legalise spoliation as soon as it gets the upper hand. I am sorry to hear you speak so coolly of the possible ruin of your country."

"The landlords would be compensated, I suppose," said Brian. "I should be sorry for the landlords; but at the same time I think there is something to be urged on the other side. It is admitted, you see, that public convenience justifies the running of a railway through a man's park."

"I beg to say that I differ from you utterly and absolutely," cried his father; "railways stand upon quite another footing. There is nothing—not one word—to be

urged in favour of robbery Compensation! Do you think that if a man picks my pocket he may offer me half-a-crown for its contents and cry quits? With such ideas as that you would find yourself in congenial company in Newgate."

"Or in the House of Commons," said Brian laughing. "By good conduct and strict attention to business I hope to keep out of both; but Gilbert is sure to be an M.P. one of these days, and I dare say he'll do the best he can for us."

"Gilbert is a sound Conservative," returned his father; "I wish I felt as sure of you as I do of him."

Good-natured Miss Joy, who with her paint-box and camp-stool had now been added to the group, thought the conversation was taking too personal a turn, and hastened to change it. "I really must manage to make a sketch of that dear old Manor House," said she. "If one could only get into the grounds, one ought to have a lovely view of the two bays from them."

"I will tell the woman at the lodge to let you in whenever you please," said Sir Brian. "The view is considered fine; and in former years, when there were no field-glasses in Kingscliff and nobody possessed telescopes, except the fishermen, who had too good manners to turn them inland, the garden used to be a pleasant place to sit in. Now times are changed, and there is an end of all privacy."

"I should think it a delightful house to live in, all the same," said Miss Huntley. "Does it stand empty all the year round?"

"We have no occasion to use it ourselves, and I have not cared to let the place," answered Sir Brian a little coldly. He added, after a pause, "I dare say you may have heard that the Kingscliff people—for I suppose we must call Mr. Buswell and his friends Kingscliff people now—are anxious to purchase it. If they could have their way I believe they would pull it down and build some more of their grotesque villas upon the site."

"Wretches!" exclaimed Miss Huntley. "But of course they won't have their way."

"They must assuredly will not while I live," replied Sir Brian. "At my death the Manor House will go to my son here, who seems to anticipate being compulsorily ejected from it. I only hope that nothing short of compulsion will persuade him to give up his mother's property."

It seemed impossible to keep the old gen-

tleman off that subject; and in truth Brian's prospective interest in the Manor House had always been a rather sore point with him. The place had belonged to his wife, who had bequeathed it to him, with remainder to her elder son, thinking that she was consulting her husband's wishes in so doing. She had, indeed, consulted him verbally in the matter, but had failed to discover what his wishes were. In his rigid, punctilious way he had declined to bring any pressure to bear upon her; but secretly he had thought that Gilbert, who would be so ill-provided for, ought to have the house. And now, to crown all, Brian remained obstinately silent when the possibility of its being ultimately sold was mentioned in his presence!

Poor Sir Brian was aware that he had a hasty temper, and that when it got the better of him he was apt to say things which made him feel sorry and ashamed after he went to bed at night. Feeling that his temper was on the point of getting the better of him now, he somewhat hastily wished the ladies good evening, lifted his hat, and rode away.

When he reached home he found Gilbert in the library, reading the papers, and could not resist saying to him, "That fellow Brian puzzles me altogether. He was speaking just now in a way that, upon my word, would have made anybody set him down as a rank socialist."

"Oh," said Gilbert, "he isn't a socialist. That isn't his line at all."

"Pray, what is his line? I should feel much indebted to you if you could tell me."

"Well, I doubt whether he cares much about politics, one way or the other. If you asked him he would probably tell you he was a Conservative; but he certainly hasn't conservative instincts. A Conservative, I take it, likes to keep what he has got, and that is more than poor, dear old Brian ever could or ever will do. It used to be notorious at Oxford that he would give the coat off his back to any one who asked him for it."

"You speak as if you admired that kind of disposition," snapped Sir Brian. "I do not. Such a man as you describe is not, to my mind, a generous man; he is simply a weak fool. And such a man is in no way fitted to be the owner of Beckton. In that position he can never be rich, and he will be constantly tempted to—to—in short, to do things which would make me turn in my grave."

Gilbert looked serious for a moment, and

then smiled. "I hope it will be many years before Brian is owner of Beckton," he answered.

"Oh, yes; that is the right thing to say, and I'm sure you mean it; but I am an old man. It's a thousand pities that you are not the elder son."

"Really, do you know, I don't think so," said Gilbert; "I am much better qualified to shift for myself than he is. An infant could impose upon Brian; but I have a modest conviction that it would take a rather clever rogue to get the better of me."

"That's just what I say," returned his father. "However, there's no good in talking about it."

CHAP. VI.—THE PENALTY OF GOOD-NATURE.

WHEN Brian was left with the two ladies Miss Joy wandered away to the lych-gate which gave entrance to the churchyard, and, leaning over it, became absorbed in contemplation of space. As a chaperon, Miss Joy was more accommodating than discreet. As soon as she was out of earshot Miss Huntley turned to the young man, with an odd, compassionate sort of smile, and said—

"When you were a little boy, and read the Old Testament stories out of a picture-Bible, which used you to like best, Jacob or Esau?"

"Oh, Esau, of course," answered Brian. "As far as that goes, I like him best still. I should think everybody did."

"Perhaps; but I wouldn't imitate him if I were you. Why couldn't you say a few words to reassure your father when he was begging and entreating you not to sell your birthright?"

"Because I can't tell what the future is going to be, and one has no business to make promises which one may not be able to keep. My father must know that I shouldn't like to cut up the property any more than he would."

"Oh, you foolish Esau! He doesn't know it at all, and you ought to have told him. Your brother Jacob would have told him in a moment."

Brian shook his head.

"Not he! Gilbert is twice as cautious as I am."

"Exactly so; and that is why he would take very good care to avoid rousing needless alarm. And Beckton is not entailed, Admiral Greenwood tells me."

Brian looked down for a moment, and then raised his frank grey eyes to those of his mentor.

"I can't say what my father wants me to say," he answered. "I would if I could, but I don't feel that it would be honest under the circumstances. The best plan is to avoid the subject altogether."

"As if he would let you do that! Well, you are foolish, but I like you all the better for it."

"Then," returned Brian quickly, "I am quite content to be a fool."

"It ought to create a bond of sympathy between us, no doubt. As I was telling you, I am convinced that my destiny is to make a fool of myself, only I doubt whether I shall ever do so with my eyes open. That is what constitutes my inferiority to you."

"Does it?" asked Brian laughing.

"Yes, I think so. Good night. I like your church, and I shall form one of the congregation next Sunday."

With that she left him, and he set off homewards in a state of mind so jubilant as amply to justify the character that had just been given of him. There never lived a more modest man, but he thought Miss Huntley liked him—which was true enough—and he had the dawning of a hope that her liking might deepen into a warmer feeling, which was perfectly ridiculous. Gilbert could have told him how ridiculous it was. Gilbert was versed in the ways of the world, and knew that Miss Huntley had it in her power to make a really brilliant marriage. Women who possess that power very seldom fail to take advantage of it; an heiress who is also a beauty may think herself entitled to a few years of amusement, but in the end she is pretty sure to go the way of all heiresses. So Gilbert would have said, and he would not have been wrong.

Brian, however, had two good reasons for viewing the matter from a less cynical standpoint. In the first place, he had not learnt to think meanly of human nature, and in the second, it would have been quite preposterously impossible to him to think meanly of Beatrice Huntley. She was, indeed, already in his eyes what she never afterwards (except for one brief period of time) ceased to be—the very type and embodiment of feminine perfection, the realisation of his dreams, the only woman whom he could ever love or think of loving. That she had as yet done remarkably little to earn such unqualified devotion is nothing to the point. There are people who can be in love without being in the least blind to the defects of the beloved one; but Brian, for his weal or his woe, was not one of those reasonable beings, and be-

cause he considered flirts a very objectionable and contemptible class of persons, it followed, by the plainest principles of logic, that Miss Huntley could not be a flirt. It was this conviction that caused him to be somewhat unduly sanguine. He did not, it is true, flatter himself that he could without any difficulty gain the love of the most adorable woman in the world, but he thought there was a chance of his doing so, because she had shown him such marked favour. So he spent the evening in a state of happy, smiling abstraction, which amused his brother, who guessed what was the matter with him, and irritated his father, who did not; and when he retired for the night the visions of his head upon his bed were of the most extravagant character.

That when we are especially light-hearted adversity is in the air is a phenomenon which has been so often observed as to have passed into proverbial form in times of remote antiquity. Brian, like other people, had learnt the proverb from his Latin grammar, but perhaps had hardly yet lived long enough to accept it as a warning. He came down to breakfast the next morning with a countenance free from care, and, having satisfied a healthy appetite, carried his letters away to the harness-room, where it was his habit to smoke a matutinal pipe. Even after he had opened and read the first of them, which was written in a clerkly hand, and purported to come from one Reuben Solomonson, he scarcely understood what it was all about, nor realised that he was in somewhat serious trouble. It appeared, indeed, that he owed Mr. Solomonson £1,900, odd shillings, which, if true, was startling enough, but he could not help thinking that there must be some mistake about it. So careless was he and ignorant about money matters that it required an effort of memory on his part to recall the circumstances set forth in the letter. He remembered, to be sure, that, when at Oxford, he had consented to back a bill to oblige a man named Tracy, with whom he had been upon more or less friendly terms, and, now that he was put in mind of it, he remembered also that upon two subsequent occasions something had been said about renewal, and that he had been requested to go through the formality of signing his name again, but he had been assured, and had quite believed it, that this was a mere matter of form, and he was certainly under the impression that the original sum had not been anything approaching £1,900. No doubt

there was a mistake, and Tracy would put it all right.

Mr. Solomonson, however, did not seem to think so. He wrote politely, almost affectionately; he commented in feeling terms on the bad behaviour of Mr. Tracy, and was evidently filled with grief at being compelled to make a demand which might be unwelcome. But he must have his money, he said, because he could not possibly afford to lose it; or, rather, he must have a thousand pounds. With regard to the remaining nine hundred, he was disposed to think that an arrangement might be come to, and that he might (though not without personal inconvenience) continue to be Mr. Segrave's creditor for that amount a little longer—of course at the customary moderate rate of interest.

When Brian had taken in the meaning of all this, he began to be rather uneasy, but it was not until he had perused his next letter that his eyes became fully opened. This was from an old college chum, and contained, amongst other things, the following highly disquieting piece of intelligence:

"I suppose you have heard that Tracy has gone an utter mucker. Somebody told me that he had enlisted, but I don't know whether that is true or not. Anyhow, he has disappeared from view, leaving no assets, and there is weeping and gnashing of teeth in Jewry."

Brian knocked the ashes out of his pipe, pushed his hat off his forehead, and strolled out into the stable-yard, where Gilbert and the coachman were anxiously examining the curby hocks of one of the carriage horses. Gilbert's stock of information was varied and extensive, and his opinions, being grounded upon principles of common sense, were always worth having; but Brian, after hesitating for a moment, decided that he would not apply to his brother in his present perplexity. Valuable though common sense is, it does not meet all requirements, and the worst of those who possess that attribute is that they are apt to be a little peremptory and contemptuous with those who do not. Brian, therefore, turned away without interrupting the veterinary consultation, and strode at a brisk pace across the park towards Kingscliff. When he reached St. Michael's Church he turned sharply to the right, a further walk of a few minutes bringing him to a small new house of ecclesiastical design, surrounded by a tidy little garden. The servant who appeared in answer to his ring informed him that the Vicar was at

home, but could not say whether he was disengaged or not.

"All right," said Brian, seating himself in the porch and producing his pipe from his pocket; "if he isn't I'll wait till he is. Tell him there's no hurry."

However, he was not kept waiting long. Ten minutes had hardly elapsed when the door behind him was thrown open, and the figure of a man of something under middle height, clad in a black cassock and wearing a biretta on his head, stepped quickly out into the sunlight. John Monckton was at this time about five or six-and-thirty years of age, but looked more. His short, black beard had a good deal of grey in it; there were deep lines on his forehead and on either side of his mouth; his eyes, too, were slightly sunken. The expression of his face, when in repose, was distinctly sad; no one could fail to see that it was the face of one who had taken life hard, and had probably passed through some sharp mental struggles. But the moment that he began to speak the lines softened wonderfully; a pleasant light came into the eyes, and you perceived at once that you were in the presence of a thoroughly sincere and trustworthy fellow-creature. Fellow-creatures of that stamp are less common than we are, as a rule, willing to admit; but we have to admit their rarity when we are brought into contact with one of them, and it was no doubt to this that John Monckton owed the singular ascendancy which he exercised over all classes of his parishioners. The female division of them had an immense admiration for his outer as well as for his inner man; but it must be said that this was no fault of his, and that all manifestations of it had met with such scant encouragement that they were now, for the most part, reduced to the language of the eyes. For the rest, he was strongly built, had a fine constitution, lived sparingly, and very seldom had a day's illness.

"Ah, Brian," he said, "you're just the man I want. Simpson has sent up to tell me that he has caught one of his bad colds, and doesn't think there is a chance of his being able to take the organ on Sunday. Can you help me out?"

"Of course I can," answered Brian; "I should like it of all things. And I say, Monckton, may we have Tours's *Te Deum* and *Benedictus* in F?"

"Yes, if you like; only you will have to give up a morning to practising them with the choir, you know."

"I shall be delighted. Then in the evening I should like to have Turle's *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* in D. I suppose I can't choose the hymns, can I?"

"Within certain limits you can. I'll give you a few to select from."

"Thanks. I wish I could persuade you to drop Gregorians, Monckton."

Monckton smiled and shook his head.

"Well, you may say what you like, but they're not music, and I don't care who swears that they are. I'll undertake to prove to you—But perhaps you are busy?"

"Not more than usual; I have about a quarter of an hour to spare."

"Oh, by the way, that reminds me," said Brian (for he had really forgotten it) "that I came here to ask your advice. It seems to me that I have got into a most awkward fix."

"Come in, then," answered the other, "and let us hear about it."

He led the way into his study, a small room liberally furnished with books, but with very little else, and, seating himself at his writing-table, took the letter which the young man silently held out to him.

His face grew grave as he read. "Hullo, Brian!" he exclaimed, "this is a bad job. I needn't ask whether you have £1,900 at your banker's."

Brian felt in his waistcoat pocket and produced five sovereigns and some silver. "I think I've got about ten pounds more in my desk," he said, "and then there's fifty more that I lent to a fellow who said he would pay me back last month. He hasn't done it yet, though. That's all I've got to finish the year upon."

"Who is this Tracy? Is he in any degree an honest man? And has he relations who would be likely to hold themselves responsible for his debts?"

"Well, really, to tell you the truth, I don't know much about him; but I'm pretty sure that he has no near relations. He has been his own father ever since he was a boy, and I believe he had a good bit of money to start with. But he has been going down the hill at no end of a pace lately, and now I hear that he has bolted."

"Brian, my dear boy," said Monckton, "I don't want to scold, but you had no business whatever to back that bill. Don't you see that you were practically making your father back it?"

"I didn't see it at the time," answered Brian ruefully. "Of course that's not much of an excuse; only, you know, one does not

expect a man to let one into trouble after one has been solemnly assured that one is running no risk."

Monckton drummed with his fingers upon the table meditatively and made no reply. Presently he asked, "What are you going to do about it?"

"I wish I knew! That money-lender seems civilly inclined. I suppose you wouldn't advise me to try and renew—or whatever they call it?"

"No; I certainly shouldn't advise that. The only result would be that a short time hence you would be called upon to pay three or four thousand pounds, instead of two. I am afraid you will have to make a clean breast of it to your father."

"I'd rather do anything in the world almost than that!" exclaimed Brian quickly.

"But there is nothing else in the world to be done. He will be very angry, and he will say some harsh things; but that you must bear. This will be a great provocation to him—I know I should feel it so myself in his place—and I suppose it will be rather a serious loss too."

"That's just it!" sighed Brian. "I don't the least mind his abusing me; he has done that often enough before now, and I know very well that he doesn't mean half of what he says. But I hate the idea of his being done out of two thousand pounds, poor old fellow! It's all he can do to make both ends meet as it is, and he won't put down useless servants and horses. His one notion of economy is to deny himself. I wish I could raise the money somehow! I wish I could earn it! It's rather disgraceful for a man to be without means of making his living, don't you think so?"

"Well, hardly in your case, because Sir Brian wouldn't let you enter any profession, and I dare say, as he grows older, you may be of use to him at home. As for your raising or earning this sum, of course that is out of the question. Your father will have to pay it. If that is a punishment to you—and I know it is—you must remember that you deserve some punishment. It doesn't require such a very great deal of moral courage to refuse to back a bill, does it?"

"I'll never do such a thing again in my life; I can promise you that much," answered Brian penitently. "I don't think it was want of moral courage that made me do it this time either. I supposed it would be all right."

"Then you must suffer for your folly," returned Monckton, smiling and rising from

his chair. "My time is up now, and I haven't given you much comfort, I'm afraid."

"I can't say that you have," Brian confessed; "but you have told me what to do, and that was all that I came here to ask. Good-bye, Monckton, and thanks for your advice. I'll turn up for the choir-practice on Saturday."

After he was gone Monckton stood for a moment, stroking his chin with his right hand, while he rested his elbow upon the palm of his left. "Poor boy!" he mused; "I should have liked to lend him the money, and I believe I might have managed it; but it would have been a mistake. He had to learn his lesson sooner or later, and he will get a sharp one now, I suspect. It's fortunate that he is so sweet-tempered."

CHAP. VII. SIR BRIAN PRONOUNCES JUDGMENT.

BRIAN'S ears tingled a little as he walked away from the Vicarage. He had an immense respect for John Monckton; he was extremely sensitive to any censure that might fall upon him from a quarter whence censure seldom fell upon anybody, and in the not very severe rebuke which had been addressed to him there had been one thing which he had not liked. Monckton had accused him of moral cowardice. Now he did not conceive himself to be wanting in courage of any kind, nor in truth had he backed Tracy's bill from any weak disinclination to say No, but out of sheer heedlessness and misplaced faith in another man's word. That might be, and in fact had been proved to be, foolish; but it was not cowardice. In truth, Brian, though sincerely regretting his folly, imputed rather less blame to himself in this matter than perhaps he ought to have done. However, it did not take him long to pardon John Monckton, while, as for the tremendous wiggling which he would doubtless receive from his father, he had no difficulty at all about pardoning that in advance. His feelings were entirely different from those which nine young men out of ten would have experienced in his place. Nine young men out of ten are aware that results count for a great deal more than motives in this world, and that the heinousness of owing two thousand pounds is little, if at all, extenuated by the circumstance that somebody else has spent the money. What distressed Brian was, as he had said, rather that misfortune had come upon his father than that he had been the cause thereof.

That his father would abuse him like a pickpocket was a matter of course: his father

always did abuse somebody when misfortunes happened, and was sorry for it immediately afterwards. Poor, choleric Sir Brian would fly out at his coachman, his butler, or his gamekeeper; would use language to them which, proceeding from any other master, would have brought about a prompt resignation on the part of the aggrieved servant; and then, a few hours later, he would seek them out, with a penitent, hang-dog countenance, and say, "I beg your pardon, So-and-so, I forgot myself just now. I ought never to have spoken as I did." To which these worthy folks would reply, "Oh, never mind, Sir Brian! don't you worry yourself about that." "Not but what you richly deserved it, you know," Sir Brian would often rejoin, if he chanced to remember what had made him angry; and so the whole affair would blow over, with a laugh on both sides.

It was with this easy toleration that Brian was in the habit of accepting the old gentleman's tirades. He understood the hasty temperament which was so unlike his own; he loved his father (who in truth was a lovable man), and, owing to that dissimilarity of temperament, his affection was in many ways more paternal than filial. Brian the younger was always making allowances—a thing which Brian the elder had never done in all his life.

Thus our young friend went his way, with far too little of the Prodigal's spirit upon him, and gave his mind to the consideration of how £2,000 might be most easily raised. Being singularly devoid of information bearing upon such subjects, he soon allowed his thoughts to drift away to Turle's *Magnificent* in D, and thence, by a natural transition, to the pleasing fact that Miss Huntley meant to be in church on Sunday. Would she come in the morning or in the evening? he wondered. Probably in the morning, because of late dinner, which was a pity, the evening music being always the more beautiful. However, he would do his best, and perhaps, if she was very much pleased with the first service, she might return for the second. Then perhaps—Here Brian's reflections became less precise, but a beatific vision of walking home with Miss Huntley in the moonlight presented itself to his imagination.

On reaching home he found that Sir Brian was away on magisterial duty, and would not be back before dinner-time, while Gilbert, who had gone off with his gun to shoot the partridges of a neighbour, was not likely to return home so long as the daylight lasted. Brian was not ill-pleased with a reprieve

which compelled him to postpone his avowal to the hour which might be considered the most favourable of the twenty-four for making it. His father, like many another good man, was commonly in a genial mood after dinner, and if there was a moment at which it could be tolerable to him to hear that his son and heir had committed an act of egregious folly, it would probably be when he had drawn his chair round to the fireside and was sipping his second glass of claret.

However, when the dinner hour arrived, it appeared that the fates were not as propitious that day as could have been wished. Sir Brian had sat upon the bench for a considerable number of years; yet he had never been quite able on these occasions to divest himself of the impression that he was presiding at a court-martial. The consequence was that he sometimes exceeded his powers and had to be set right; whence unpleasantness was too apt to ensue. It is probable that some such *contretemps* had occurred in the course of the afternoon, for Sir Brian had returned home in what Gilbert called a "gunpowdery temper." He had not been seated at table for five minutes before he had managed to fall foul of everybody within reach, as well as of sundry others, who, happily for themselves, were out of reach. He began by stating, without giving grounds for the assertion, that Admiral Greenwood was a wooden-headed, opinionated old ignoramus, who knew just about as much of the laws of his country as he did of the ordinary courtesies of society; and when Gilbert, with something less than his accustomed tact, took up the cudgels on behalf of the offending admiral, he was incontinently commanded to hold his tongue.

Then the butler caught it. "Porter," called out Sir Brian furiously, "how many times am I to speak to you about your boots? Creaking I can put up with—I am obliged to put up with it, because I know that no earthly consideration would induce you to spare me that annoyance—but I cannot, and I will not tolerate boots which literally yell. Go and take them off this minute."

After this the footman was ordered to leave the room for dropping a fork; and when the cook had been informed by message that she would disgrace a village pot-house it seemed as though justice had been dealt out impartially to everybody except Brian, who had bowed his head before the storm and was eating his dinner in silence. However, his turn was coming, and perhaps the old gentleman may have had an intuition of that. Soon after

the dessert had been put upon the table Gilbert made a grimace at his brother, shrugged his shoulders slightly, and slipped away. Sir Brian, who was moving towards the fire at the moment, did not at first notice the absence of his second son, but when he did he made a grievance of it.

"Gilbert is not very ceremonious, I must say," he remarked. "In my young days it used not to be considered good manners to march away from the dinner-table without a word of apology, but I suppose it would be too much to expect civility from the present generation. Pray don't let me detain you if you want to go and play the piano or the hurdy-gurdy or anything of that kind."

"I don't want to play anything just now," answered Brian good-humouredly, "and I'm glad Gilbert has gone, because I have something to tell you. Something unpleasant, I'm sorry to say."

"Oh, that's of course," grumbled the old gentleman; "it isn't often that you have pleasant things to tell me. Well, go on; you have let one of the horses down, I suppose. Just like you."

"I wish that were all; though I don't think it would have been particularly like me to do it. No; I have done much worse; I've got into a horrid money difficulty."

"Then you had better get out of it the best way you can. I haven't a spare shilling, and I am tired of paying your bills. You are not a child any longer; you know what you have to spend, and you must make it do. When I was your age I received a smaller allowance, and had to pay my mess expenses out of it."

"I know I have been extravagant," Brian acknowledged; "but I mean to turn over a new leaf now and spend nothing on extras. In fact, I was going to ask you to give me a hundred a year less in future."

"Give you a hundred a year less!" repeated his father incredulously. "May I inquire why?"

"Because I am afraid you will have to pay down a rather large sum for me. I am very sorry about it; but it hasn't been altogether my fault. When I was at Oxford I backed a bill for a man who has since come to grief and disappeared, and now the money-lender writes to me to demand payment."

Sir Brian's features hardened. Hitherto he had been only playing at anger, by way of getting rid of pent-up irritation; but he was really angry now, and this sobered him.

"You have backed a bill," said he with

awful calmness. "For how much, may I ask?"

"I can't tell you; I have forgotten what it was originally. But it's close upon two thousand pounds now."

"Have you the money-lender's letter?" inquired Sir Brian. "The chances are that you have been swindled."

Brian produced the letter and handed it to his father, who read it through deliberately.

"And where," asked the latter presently, "do you suppose that I am going to find two thousand pounds?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," replied Brian.

"You don't know! I can well believe that; and you might add with equal truth that you don't care. What if I decline to satisfy this extortionate demand? What would happen, do you think, in that case? Oh, don't trouble yourself to answer: you don't know, and you don't care. Now, be so good as to listen to me for a few minutes. When I succeeded to this property I found it heavily embarrassed. With some difficulty, and by exercising the greatest care, I have now very nearly freed it, and if I were to die to-morrow my successor would be able—just able—to live in a style becoming his position. He would have to look after the pounds, though, and not despise even the shillings. As I have never seen any reason to expect that my successor would be as economical as I have been, it has been my wish to lay by a trifle every year, so that he might find himself with a certain sum of ready money in hand to start with. You would probably be much amused if I told you how small have been the annual amounts that I have contrived to devote to this fund: two thousand pounds, I may say, will make a very large hole in it. And now I have to ask myself—not for the first time—whether you are one to whom I can safely entrust the keeping up of our estate and our name."

Brian was somewhat impressed by this harangue, which was not at all in the style that he had anticipated; but he did not understand that his father was threatening to disinherit him.

"My only excuse," said he, "is that it never occurred to me to think that Tracy would leave me in the lurch. Indeed, I don't think now that he meant to do such a thing."

"Upon my honour," exclaimed Sir Brian, "your excuse seems to me to be your condemnation. If you were a spendthrift, as

young fellows often are, there would be a chance of your sowing your wild oats; but you are a great deal worse than that; you are hopelessly incapable and indifferent. You will always be at the mercy of a swindler; you will always be in difficulties, and you will always think that it doesn't much matter. I believe you think that the loss of this two thousand pounds doesn't much matter to me."

Brian sighed.

"No; I don't think that, I know it will worry you terribly, and I wish with all my heart that it didn't." He added, after a pause: "I wonder whether you would allow me to make a suggestion."

"Make your suggestion by all means," answered his father, with a short laugh, "it is sure to be sensible and practical."

"Well, really I think so," said the young man. "It won't be what you like, perhaps; but I believe it is sensible and practical. Why should you not make this money by letting Buswell have a few acres of land to build villas upon? Would the loss of those few acres spoil the symmetry of the property in any degree? Would it cause you the smallest personal inconvenience? I understand your objecting to sacrifice the Manor House; but really——"

Sir Brian literally bounded off his chair.

"That will do, sir!" he thundered; "that will do. It is very evident now what would happen if you stepped into my shoes after my death. My wishes would be cast to the winds, all the toil and sacrifice of my life would be thrown away."

He stopped short and seemed to have some difficulty in getting rid of an obstruction in his throat. Then he resumed speaking with forced deliberation, but with a slight quiver in his voice.

"You have been good enough to let me see your intentions; I shall be equally candid with you. You will never inherit this property. I consider that you have forfeited your claim to it, and I shall put your brother in your place. This is not a mere personal question between you and me. I hold myself responsible to those who have gone before as well as to those who will follow after me, and I have not the right to leave Beckton in unworthy hands."

"Beckton is yours, sir, to do what you like with," answered Brian quietly.

This cool acquiescence did not half please the old man, who perceived that his son did not take him seriously.

"When it is too late," said he, "you will perhaps be sorry for having defied me."

"My dear father, I am not defying you."

"Not defying me!" shouted Sir Brian, working himself up into a passion. "How can you have the face to say that! You disregard my most solemn injunctions; you tell me in so many words that you are only waiting for my death to cut the whole place up into building lots, and then you assert that you are not defying me! Upon my word, I stand astounded at your impudence!"

Before Brian could make any reply to this somewhat exaggerated accusation, the door opened and Gilbert entered. Sir Brian instantly burst out into an impetuous explanation.

"Gilbert, you will consider yourself henceforth as my heir. I can trust you to carry on the work that I have begun; I can't trust your brother. He has made a proposition to me which—which I shall find it difficult to pardon; although his conduct has brought its own punishment with it. To-morrow I shall alter my will."

And, without waiting for a rejoinder from either of the young men, Sir Brian hastily left the room.

"My dear fellow," exclaimed Gilbert compassionately, "what have you been doing?"

Brian briefly related the story of Tracy's misadventures, and of his own participation therein.

"The governor has run away with an utterly absurd notion," he added in conclusion. "I only put it to him whether it would not be worth while to part with a small strip of land, and he instantly assumed that I wanted to sell the whole property. He has a mania upon that subject, you know."

Gilbert shook his head.

"People who have manias ought to be humoured," he remarked. "I'm afraid you have made a very great mistake, old man. Heaven knows I have never dreamt of cutting you out; but if the thing is to be, you may be sure, at any rate, that I shan't let you starve."

Brian looked a little surprised.

"Oh, thanks," he answered, "but I don't think there is much fear. The governor threatens all manner of dire things when he's in a rage; but he doesn't act hastily. To-morrow morning he will see the utter injustice of what he calls his intentions."

It must be admitted that Brian was rather exasperating to sensible, matter-of-fact folks. Gilbert was not sure that the injustice of

putting him in the place of an inept elder brother would be so very glaring, nor did he quite like the cavalier fashion in which his prospective generosity had been acknowledged.

"Well," said he, "time will show. For my own part, I shall be sincerely sorry if my father sticks to his word."

"I am sure of that," replied Brian, with a nod and a smile. "Everybody says you

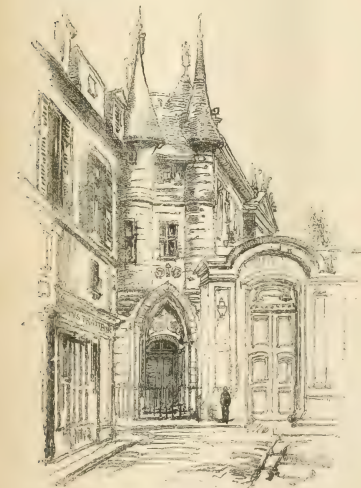
ought to have been the elder brother, and in one sense I believe everybody is right; though I fancy you would have been rather thrown away as a country squire. However, you are not the elder brother, and you can't be made so by the stroke of a pen. The governor will see that when he comes to think things over. Are you going to plunge into law-books now, or shall we have a game of billiards?"

WALKS IN OLD PARIS.

By AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE.

SECOND PAPER.

THE Rue de Braque leads to an ancient and picturesque gateway, which is the only



Hôtel de Clisson.

remaining remnant of the Hôtel de Clisson, built by the famous Constable, friend and companion in arms of Duguesclin, in 1371. In the sixteenth century it occupied, with the Hôtels Roche-Guyon and Laval, a vast quadrangular space, bounded by the Hôtel de Rohan, the Rue de Quatre, Rue Chaume, and Rue de Paradis. The Ducs de Guise became the proprietors of these hotels in 1550, and François de Lorraine, the Duc de Guise murdered by a Protestant fanatic near Or-

leans, pulled them down and built the vast Hôtel de Guise on their site. This famous mansion became the cradle of the Ligue, and from hence the order was issued for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. It was also from one of the windows of this palace that Henri de Guise—"le Balafre"—hurled the handsome Comte de St. Mesgrin, whom he discovered in the chamber of his wife, Catherine de Clèves, and whom he caused to be assassinated, a few days after, in the Rue St. Honoré, as he was leaving the Louvre. Hither Henri III. sent to implore the Duc de Guise to still a revolution, and hence he issued an order which was productive of instant calm, after which the people cried so constantly, "Vive Guise; vive Guise!" that at length their idol thought it needful to say, "C'est assez, messieurs; c'est trop; criez un peu, 'Vive le roi!'" This triumph was too great for a subject. In the words of Voltaire—

"Guise en ces grands desseins dès ce jour affirmi,
Vit qu'il n'était plus temps d'offenser à demi,
Et qu'élevé si haut, mais sur un précipice,
S'il ne montait au trône, il montait au supplice."

and he had reached the verge of a rebellion against his sovereign, which would probably have been successful, when he was assassinated by the king's order at Blois.

In 1700 the hotel once more changed its name, being bought by Madame de Soubise, "que le roi aida fort à payer," says Saint-Simon: for at that time she was the favourite of the moment with Louis XIV. The king made her husband a prince, a favour which he appreciated at its proper value when he answered congratulations with, "Hélas, cela me vient par ma femme; je n'en dois pas recevoir de compliment." M. de Soubise, however, devoted himself to the

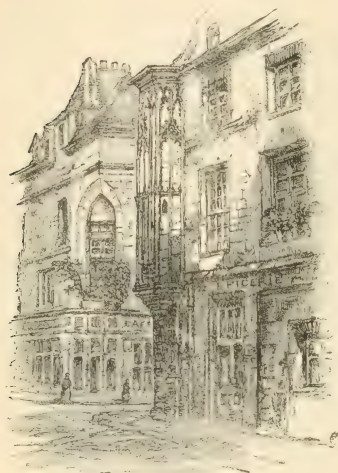
embellishment of his hotel, and built a grand court of honour, surrounded by arcades in the form of a horseshoe. This court still exists, with an entrance of which the tympanum is adorned by an allegorical figure of History, from a design of Eugène Delacroix. The next Prince de Soubise rendered the hotel famous by the magnificence of his *fêtes*; his social qualities made him exceptionally popular; and his misfortunes as a general failed to alienate the goodwill of Louis XV., a leniency which he repaid by being the one faithful friend who accompanied the king's corpse to St. Denis.

The Hôtel de Soubise is now occupied by the public archives. It retains its beautiful

to revisit the scene of her sorrows, and we may cross into the Rue Vieille du Temple. This is full of interesting old houses. No. 47 is the Hôtel de Hollande, which takes its name from having been the residence of the ambassador of Holland under Louis XVI. It was built in the seventeenth century by Pierre Cottard, and at one time was the residence of Beaumarchais. Its court is very rich in sculpture, and at the back of the entrance portal is a great relief by Regnaudin of Romulus and Remus suckled by the wolf, and found by the shepherd Faustulus. The rooms were adorned with bas-reliefs and paintings by Sarazin, Poerson, Vouet, Dorigny, and Corneille.

The gateway at No. 87 leads into the courtyard of the stately Palais Cardinal, begun, in 1712, upon part of the site previously occupied by the Hôtel de Soubise. The court of this palace and its surroundings are magnificent of their kind, and were famous as the residence of the handsome and dissolute Cardinal de Rohan, who, utterly duped by the intrigues of a woman calling herself Comtesse Lamotte Valois, was arrested for the "affaire du collier," and imprisoned in the Bastille. It was his trial (followed by an acquittal) which rendered Marie Antoinette unpopular with the clergy and a great part of the aristocracy, besides causing an exposure of court scandals and extravagance fatally injurious to her with the people. The hotel is now used for the Imprimerie Nationale.

At the corner of the Rue des Francs Bourgeois is a picturesque and beautiful old house, with an overhanging tourelle, ornamented with niches and pinnacles. It takes its name of Hôtel Barbette from Etienne Barbette, Master of the Mint, and confidential friend of Philippe le Bel, who built a house here in 1298. At that time the house stood in large gardens which occupied the whole space between the Cultures Sainte Catherine, du Temple, and St. Gervais, and which had belonged to the canons of Sainte Opportune. Three more of these vast garden spaces, then called *Courtilles*, existed in this neighbourhood, those of the Temple, St. Martin, and Boucelais. It is recorded that when the king offended the people in 1306, by altering the value of the coinage, they avenged themselves by tearing up the trees in the Courtille Barbette, as well as by sacking the hotel of the minister. Afterwards the Hôtel Barbette became the property of Jean de Montagu, then sovereign-master of France and vidame de Laonois; and, in

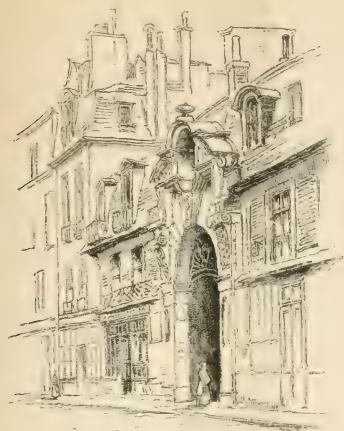


Hôtel Barbette.

chapel, painted by Niccolo del Abbate, and the gallery in which the Duc de Guise was walking and meditating upon the possible death of Henri III., when he said, looking at the frescoes on the walls, "Je regarde toujours avec plaisir Duguesclin; il eut la gloire de détrôner un tyran." "Oui certes," the gentleman to whom he spoke had the courage to answer, "mais ce tyran n'était pas son roi; c'était l'ennemi de son pays."

We pass rapidly by the site of the Temple, with its terrible associations, for nothing is left to mark the prison of Louis XVI. except a weeping-willow, which the one survivor of the family—the Duchesse d'Angoulême—planted when she came, after the Restoration,

1403, it was bought by the wicked Queen Isabeau de Bavière, wife of Charles VI.,



Hôtel in the Rue des Francs Bourgeois.

and became her favourite residence, known as "le petit séjour de la reine."

In 1521 the Hôtel Barbette was inhabited by the old Comte de Brezé, described by Victor Hugo :

"Affreux, mal bâti, mal tourné,
Marqué d'une verrue au beau milieu du né,
Borgne, disent les uns, velu, chétif et blême;"

and it is said that his beautiful wife, Diane de Saint Vallier, was leaning against one of the windows of the hotel, when she attracted the attention of Francis I., riding through the street beneath, and first received from that king a passing adoration which laid the foundation of her fortunes as queen of beauty under his successor, Henri II. After the death of Diane in 1566, her daughters, the Duchesses Aumale and Bourbon, sold the Hôtel Barbette, which was pulled down, except the fragment which we still see, and which has lately been restored.

The Rue des Francs Bourgeois is full of fine old houses, with stately Renaissance doorways, of which we give a specimen taken from No. 30.

The house known as the Hôtel de Jeanne d'Albret is of the time of Louis XV. At the angle of the Rue Pavée, on the right, is the Hôtel de Lamoignon, a magnificent historic mansion, begun by Diane de France, legitimatised daughter of Henri II., and

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finished by Charles de Valois, Duc d'Angoulême, a natural son of Charles IX. In 1684 it was bought by the President de Lamoignon, who gave it his name. The first library of the town of Paris was installed here in 1763. Two wings of noble proportions flank the principal building, decorated with Corinthian pilasters. Here, in allusion to Diane de France (as, in other buildings, to Diane de Poitiers) are shields with stags' heads—the horns held by angels; dogs' heads, crescents, &c. In the north wing is a beautiful balcony, and, at the corner of the street, an overhanging square tourelle.

The Rue Pavée once contained the Hôtels de la Houge, de Gaucher, de Châtillon, d'Herbouville, and de Savoisi. Here also, in the centre of an old aristocratic quarter, stood the hôtel of the Duc de la Force, which afterwards became the terrible prison of La Force. It was intended for those in a state of suspicion, and contained five courts, capable of holding twelve hundred captives. During the Great Revolution, these included numbers of the inmates of the neighbouring hotels. The prison was only destroyed in 1851. Of all the tragedies connected with it, that which made most impression was the death of the Princesse de Lamballe, the most faithful of the friends of Marie Antoinette, who, having made good her escape at the time of the flight of the royal family to Vincennes, insisted upon



Hôtel de Lamoignon.

returning to share the misfortunes of her royal mistress. The prisoners in La Force were tried by a self-instituted tribunal, composed from the dregs of Paris. When Madame de Lamballe was dragged before them, surrounded by men whose faces, hands, clothes, and weapons were covered with blood, and heard the cries of the unfortunates who were being murdered in the street, she fainted away. After she was restored by the care of her maid, who had followed her, the so-called judges demanded if she was cognisant of the plots of the tenth of August. "I do not even know if there were any plots," she replied. "Swear liberty, equality, hatred of the king, the queen, and royalty." "I can easily swear the two first," she answered. "I cannot swear the last; it is not in my heart." "Swear, or you are lost!" whispered one of the assistants. The Princess did not answer, lifted her hands, covered her face, and made a step towards the entrance. The formula, "Madame is at liberty," which meant certain death, was pronounced; two men seized her by the arms and dragged her forward. She

had scarcely passed the threshold before she received a blow from a sabre at the back of her head. The monsters who held her then tried to force her to walk in the blood and over the corpses of others, to the spot marked out for her own fate, but, happily, her bodily powers again failed, and she sank unconscious. She was immediately despatched by blows from pikes, her clothes were torn off, and her body was exposed for more than two hours to the horrible insults of the people. Then her heart was torn out and her head cut off, an unhappy hairdresser was compelled to curl and powder its long hair, and finally head and heart, preceded by fifes and drums, were carried at the end of pikes, first to the Abbaye, to be exhibited to the intimate friend of the Princess, Madame de

Beauveau, then to the Temple to be shown to the Queen!

At the corner of the Rue des Francs Bourgeois and the Rue de Sevigné, formerly Rue Culture St. Catherine, stands the famous Hôtel Carnavalet, built 1544, for the President de Ligneris, from designs of Pierre Lescot and De Bullant, and sold in 1578 to Françoise de la Baume, dame de Carnavalet, who has left her name to it. It was continued by Ducerceau, and was finished by François Mansart in the seventeenth century, though he refused to alter what he considered an architectural masterpiece. The main building is flanked by two pavilions. The lions, which adorn its façade, are from the hand of Jean Goujon, as well as the tympanums and the winged figure on the

keystone of the gateway. In the court, the building facing the entrance is decorated by statues of the Four Seasons from the school of Jean Goujon; the central group of Fame and her messengers is by the great artist himself. The wings, due to Mansart, are enriched by mythological bas-reliefs.

The celebrity of the hotel is due to its having been the residence of the famous Marquise de Sevigné from 1677 to 1698. Under Madame de Sevigné and her daughter, Madame de Grignan, the society of the Hôtel Carnavalet became typical of all that was most refined and intellectual in France. It was hence, too, that many of the famous letters were written by the adoring mother to the absent daughter, mingled with complaints that she could not let her unoccupied room—"ce logis qui m'a fait tant songer à vous; ce logis que tout le monde vient voir, que tout le monde admire; et que personne ne veut louer." Internally, the house is much altered in its arrangements, though the chamber of Madame de Sevigné is preserved intact. The Hôtel Carnavalet is now occupied by an interesting museum of memorials of the Great Revolution.



Hôtel Carnavalet.

ARISTOCRACY OF THE FUTURE.

An Unpublished Lecture.*

BY THE LATE CHARLES KINGSLEY.

I MAY say at starting, honestly and earnestly, that to lecture here is a great pleasure to me; and that I have looked forward to it for a full year, ever since I was first honoured by an invitation hither. And for this reason: that I take for granted that you here are picked men; picked for powers of body and mind. I believe those two generally go together. Health, strength, and ability of body make usually health, strength, and ability of brain; and if I were told to pick out the cleverest men in any crowd, I should pick out at once not the tallest, but the strongest and best-made men in it, and say, "There—I may have made a few mistakes; I may have left out a weakly genius or two; and I may have taken in a huge fool or two. But on the whole, there are the men whose wits I will warrant to do the best work."

At all events, I take for granted that you are an audience to whom I may speak freely and hopefully; because, whether you know much or little, and whatever your opinions may be, you are likely to be neither silly nor stupid: and therefore the only people with whom one cannot get on: with the stupid people, who cannot understand, and with the silly people, who do not wish to understand.

Now you may ask why I, a parson, choose to lecture on Natural Science. I may say, because I am a parson and a minister of God; and as such, it is my duty and calling to make men better and wiser whenever and however I can do so.

But if any of you answer—So then he is lecturing on Natural Science on false pretences: he is going to give us a sermon in disguise—you may set your minds at rest. In the first place, I never preach sermons about Nature and Science. I have faith enough in God's works, to believe that they will preach much better sermons about themselves, than I can preach about them. And next it is my duty, I hold, as a parson, and also as a man who knows the blessings of education, to help every one who is willing to educate himself.

But by education, I mean what the word really means: not merely art-practice, like

drawing; nor study, mathematical, classical, or of modern languages; nor book-learning of any kind. They are good, but they are instruction, not education. By education, I mean the educating, that is the bringing out, of the whole of a man's manhood, of all his faculties and capabilities, all that is or can be in him; helping a man, in short, to hatch his own character and intellect, instead of leaving it, as too many do, in the egg, or at least running about unfledged with the shell on its head to his dying day. Now I do not doubt that, working here, you get many elements of a good education. I should say that you ought to get some of the best. The steady hard work of brain, and the intense attention to which some of you are compelled, ought to give you something of

"The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;"

and without these a man is not a man, but only a piece of man's flesh. What says the proverb? "Every man in this world must be either hammer or anvil;" and if he has not the qualities which I just mentioned, he will be nothing but anvil for those who have them, and who are the hammers to thump away on him through life, and make their profit out of him, while he gets monkey's allowance, all the kicks and none of the coppers.

But I think also, that some of you younger men at least may need more education than your profession will give you. You may be tempted to think—not too much about it—that you cannot do; but too exclusively about it—to think of nothing else. Now, my dear friend Mr. Carlyle's rule is—"Do the duty which lies nearest you;" and a good rule it is, as I know well. The duty which lies nearest you, is to master railway matters, each in his own line. Still a man cannot always be doing one thing, however necessary and profitable. He must have amusement, relaxation. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy: and what is more, all work and no play will often make Jack a dead boy, and kill him; as I have known over-study kill too many young Scotsmen—often, poor fellows, living on insufficient food—who are, for persevering hard work, and for noble and self-restraining am-

* Given at the Railway Works, Crewe, July 11, 1871.

bition, the finest fellows, some of them, whom I have ever met.

Well: all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. But that is no reason why a fair share of work and a fair share of play should make Jack a blackguard. That it does so now and then, we all know. What Jack wants is, after his fair share of work, play which shall make him a wiser man, not a more foolish; a better man, and not a worse. He wants play which shall educate him out of work hours; that is, bring out in him, pleasantly of course and easily, more than his mere work brings out. And I say that he can find that in studying Natural Science.

Some of you perhaps may wonder why I should urge on you, of all men, the pursuit of Natural Science. For are you not too absorbed in one branch of it already? Have you not too much Natural Science already? Would it not have been better to have talked to you on poetry, philosophy, politics?

By all means learn about them; refresh and amuse your minds, and expand and refine your minds also, in every way you can: but still let me plead a little to-night for my pet subject of Natural Science; for natural history, commonly so-called, or the study of animals; for botany, for geology, for astronomy, for chemistry, for meteorology—the science of the weather; for all studies, in a word, which bear upon the facts of this wondrous world in which we live. I say this wondrous world; and I want you to study Natural Science just because you will be tempted to forget that it is a wondrous world. We are all tempted continually to take a sordid, mechanical view of the world and of life, and forget that there is anything in it beautiful, or wonderful, or ennobling; to say, Let me alone to earn my money and spend it, for that is the whole duty of man. We are all tempted to go through life like Peter Bell in Wordsworth's poem, each man beating his donkey and selling his pots, while—

"A primrose on the river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

And when we are really hard-worked, day after day, whether in body or in mind, we are tempted to make our very amusements unintellectual and sordid. I do not approve, of course, of the old-fashioned collier, whose one thought as soon as he came up out of the dull and dingy pit, was whether his dog could fight his neighbour's dog. I do not approve, but I excuse him. What he wanted was excitement after his dull drudgery: and

he found it so, poor lad. I know, as another case, that the heads of a great firm wished to give their men amusement in the winter evenings, and got distinguished scientific men to come and give them scientific evening lectures, such as rich folk would have gladly paid a high price to hear. Now these men, as their business required, were picked men; men of intellect above the average; and yet, to their employers' astonishment, they did not care for the lectures. And the reason why came out. Their minds were so overstrained by continual attention, and continual confinement at their dull work, that they did not want any more wisdom, poor lads. They preferred a little wholesome folly instead; and confessed privately that a comic entertainment, or Christy's Minstrels, or anything, in short, which would give them a good laugh, suited their stomachs much better; and perhaps they were right, as far as they went. But still we shall all agree a man's brains and heart would be a good deal wasted if the workshop all day and Christy's Minstrels in the evening were all he had to care for or think of.

But that is the direction—to be what I call sordid—in which we all are tempted in these hard-working, go-ahead days, in which, from the excess of competition, a man must work terribly hard, unnaturally hard, if he intends to succeed at all. Daily life is such a hard schoolroom that out of school-hours we want to play just like children; and when some wise man comes and tells us, with a solemn face, that life is not all beer and skittles, some are tempted to answer with a sigh—"So much the worse for life. What a fine thing it would be if life were all beer and skittles; provided, of course, we always won at the skittles, and the other man paid for the beer."

Now what is wanted for such hard-worked men is a pursuit for their leisure hours which will at once interest and amuse them by turning their minds entirely away from their work, and so refreshing them; and will also keep their minds in a wholesome tone whether for work or play; which will expand their intellects and hearts, and prevent their becoming contracted, and brooding only over selfish gain and selfish pleasure; which will call out those nobler faculties which lie in the heart and head of every true man—imagination, wonder, reverence, the sense of beauty, the sense of the infinite grandeur and complexity of the world in which they live; and the sense too of their own ignorance—important, most important is that

last; to discover how much there is to be known, and how little of it we know; and so to gain the true wisdom which springs from modesty.

And such a pursuit I have found—and you will find—in the study of Natural Science. I have a right to speak on this head with the weight of long experience, for Natural Science has been to me, for more than forty years, at once a safeguard and a delight. And I tell you it will be to you, if you take it up, a safeguard and a delight likewise; a safeguard from many a temptation, and from many a superstition also, religious, political, and social; and a delight which will continually increase as you discover daily about your very feet new wonders and new beauties. You will care little for the shows which man can exhibit, while you have the whole universe, from the grass beneath your feet to the stars above your head, to look at, without being charged one penny for the show. You will care little for minstrels, Christy or other, when you have learned in the song of the birds, ay, in the very whisper of the breeze, to hear delicate melodies and harmonies. You will care little for artificial beauty, while you can find in the moss on any bough, in the ooze of any stagnant pool, ay, in the waterbutt in the backyard, forms more fantastic and more exquisite than man's clumsy hand can draw. You will be like blind men who have suddenly received sight; like Thomas the Rhymers in the old Scotch legend, who fell asleep in this plain work-day world, and woke in fairyland.

You may think such words exaggerated; I know that they are not. A friend of mine, an ex-sergeant-major in the line, is now a good working botanist. He had been, before he took up botany, on foreign stations, where he might have seen a great deal, but did not; and he always talks of those days with regret, as "the times before I found my eyes." Now I want all of you, like the good sergeant, to find your eyes. Believe an old naturalist, that in finding them you will find a great deal beside. You need never be alone, for you have the whole universe for company; you will always find something to interest, something to amuse. Folks say to me, "How dull going a long railway journey; how dull waiting at a station." I answer, "My dear friends, it is you that are dull, not the station. On the journey you may geologize and botanize, as I do, at every railway cutting you pass—indeed, along the whole line. At the station are there not the

stones in the wall and the ballast on the line to look at, and to get geological lessons out of, not to mention the weeds; and if you have a pocket magnifier, the mosses, the lichens, and the very weather-stains on the stone? And failing them, has not a man the blue sky to look at, and the clouds, and the light? Is not the great vault of heaven overhead there, common to all, presenting problem on problem of science all day long, which neither a Fitzroy nor a Tyndall has solved; which the simplest working man may help to solve if he will turn his mind to it? Thus everywhere you will find something worth knowing, something which can be known, something which you do not know; as hundreds have found already, as I doubt not some here have found.

I have known working men in great cities who have kept their minds and hearts and bodies healthy for years by escaping into the country for an hour or two when they could, to collect objects of natural history. I have known those who, unable to buy a good microscope, have made one piece by piece for themselves, and turned it to good account upon the commonest and minutest objects round them. And if any of you say, "I have no time;" I answer, "Have you not your Sunday? That day, at least, is free to most of you, by the laws of God and man. And while I, as a minister of God, desire that you should on that day worship God, each according to his creed, I still say, as a minister of God—If that day be God's day, what fitter occupation for it, over and above worship, than to study, on it, the works of God?"

Let me urge again on you the moral effect of the study of Natural Science. It has been a passion with me for years past to interest in it young men of all ranks, and wherever I have succeeded, those young men have seemed to me to become happier and better men. I have now at Chester a class* of some seventy or eighty young fellows mostly employed in business, with whom, and for whom, it is a pleasure to work; and I have seen how the study, last year of botany, this year of geology, is calling out in them not merely acuteness of observation, and soundness of reasoning, good as they are, but a general desire for knowledge, a genial interest in the every-day objects around them, which must make them more cheerful, which must keep them from many temptations, because it keeps them wholesomely occupied.

* This class grew into an important Natural Science Society, numbering 600 or 700 members.

I grounded them, as well as I could, in botany last year, and some of them are already likely to turn out good working botanists. This year I am doing what I can to ground them in geology,* by explaining to them simple every-day things—such as the soil in the fields, the pebbles in the street, the stones in the wall, the coal on the fire, the lime in the mortar, the slates on the roof; and I was surprised myself to find how much there was to be said even about them, and into what deep and grand speculations we were led by them; and yet I have told them nothing which you, if you like, may not find out for yourselves, with the help of a few cheap but good books, and by the use of your own eyes and your own common-sense. After all, as my friend Professor Huxley well says, scientific thought is only common-sense well regulated. Do you use your eyes and your common-sense earnestly, patiently, accurately; and you too can become scientific men.

But more: let me urge you to study Natural Science on grounds which may be to you new and unexpected—on social, I had almost said on political, grounds.

We all know, and I trust we all love, the names of Freedom, Equality, and Brotherhood. We feel, I trust, that those words are too beautiful not to represent true and just ideas; and that therefore they will come true, and be fulfilled, somewhere, somehow: it may be in a shape very different from that which you, or I, or any man expects: but still they will be fulfilled.

But if they are to come true, it is we, the individual men, who must help them to come true for the whole world by practising them ourselves, when and where we can. And I tell you—that in becoming scientific men, in studying science and acquiring the scientific habit of mind, you will find yourselves enjoying a freedom, an equality, a brotherhood, such as you will not find elsewhere just now.

Freedom: what do we want freedom for? For this, at least: that we may be each and all able to think what we choose; and say what we choose also, provided we do not say it rudely or violently, so as to provoke a breach of the peace. That last was Mr. Buckle's definition of freedom of speech. That was the only limit to it which he would allow; and I think that that is Mr. John Stuart Mill's limit also. At all events, it is

mine. And really I think we have that kind of freedom in these islands as perfect as any men are like to have it on this earth.

But what I complain of is, that when men have got the freedom, three out of four of them will not use it. "What?" some one will answer. "Do you suppose that I will not say what I choose; and that I dare not speak my own mind to any man?" Doubtless. But are you sure first, that you think what you choose, or only what someone else chooses for you? Are you sure that you make up your own mind before you speak, or let some one else make it up for you? Your speech may be free enough, my good friend; and Heaven forbid that it should be anything else: but are your thoughts free likewise? Are you sure that, though you may hate bigotry in others, you are not somewhat of a bigot yourself? That you do not look at only one side of a question, and that the one which pleases you? That you do not take up your opinions at second-hand, from some work, or set of books, or some newspaper, which after all only reflect your own feelings, your own opinions? You should ask yourselves that question, seriously and often—"Are my thoughts really free?" No one values more highly than I do the advantage of a free press. But you must remember always that a newspaper editor, however honest or able, is no more infallible than the Pope; that he may, just as you may, only see one side of a question, while any question is sure to have two sides, or perhaps three or four. And if you only see the side which suits you, day after day, month after month, you must needs become bigoted to it; your thoughts must needs run in one groove. They cannot (as Mr. Matthew Arnold would say) "play freely round" a question, and look it all over, boldly, patiently, rationally, charitably.

Now I tell you that if you, or I, or any man, want to let our thoughts play freely round questions, and so escape from the tendency to become bigoted and narrow-minded, which there is in every human being, then we must acquire something of that inductive habit of mind which the study of Natural Science gives. The art of seeing; the art of knowing what you see; the art of comparing, of perceiving true likenesses and true differences, and so of classifying and arranging what you see; the art of connecting facts together in your own mind in chains of cause and effect, and that accurately, patiently, calmly, without prejudice, vanity, or temper—that is what is wanted for true freedom of

* Vide "Town Geology," "Scientific Essays and Lectures," Macmillan.

mind. Then I know no study so able to give that inductive habit of mind as the study of Natural Science.

Equality, too : whatever equality may or may not be just or possible, this, at least, is just, and I hope possible—That every man, every child, of every rank, should have an equal chance of education ; an equal chance of developing all that is in him or her by nature ; an equal chance of acquiring a fair knowledge of those facts of the universe which specially concern him, and of having his reason trained to judge of them. Let every boy, every girl, have an equally sound education. Let all begin alike, say I. They will be handicapped heavily enough as they go on in life, without our handicapping them in their first race. Whatever stable they come out of, whatever promise they show, let them all train alike, and start fair ; and let the best colt win.

Well : but there is a branch of education in which, even now, the poor man can compete fairly against the rich ; and that is Natural Science. Natural Science is a subject which a man cannot have by paying for teachers. He must teach it himself, by patient observation, by patient common-sense. And if the poor man is not the rich man's equal in those qualities, it must be his own fault, not his purse's. Many shops have I seen about the world, in which fools could buy articles more or less helpful to them ; but never saw I yet an observation-shop, nor a common-sense shop either. And if any man says, "We must buy books ;" I answer, a poor man now can obtain better scientific books than a duke or a prince could sixty years ago, simply because then the books did not exist. When I was a boy I would have given much, or rather my father would have given much for me, if I could have got hold of such books as are to be found now in any first-class elementary school. And if more expensive books are needed ; if a microscope or apparatus is needed ; can you not get them by the co-operative method, which has worked so well in other matters ? Can you not form yourselves into a Natural Science club for buying such things and lending them round among your members ; and for discussion also, for the reading of scientific papers of your own writing, the comparing of your observations, general mutual help and mutual instruction ? In science, as in most matters, "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

And Brotherhood : well, if you want that ;

if you want to mix with men, and men eminently worth mixing with, on the simple ground that "a man's a man for a' that ;" if you want to become the acquaintances, and, if you prove worthy, the friends of men who will be glad to teach you all they know, and equally glad to learn from you anything you can teach them, asking no questions about you, save, first—Is he an honest student of Nature for her own sake ?—and next—Is he a man who will not quarrel, or otherwise behave in an unbrotherly fashion to his fellow-students ? If you want a ground of brotherhood with men, not merely in these islands, but in America, on the Continent—in a word, all over the world, such as rank, wealth, fashion, or other artificial arrangements of the world cannot give and cannot take away ; if you want to feel yourself as good as any man in theory, because you are as good as any man in practice, except those who are better than you in the same line which is open to any and every man ; if you wish to have the inspiring and ennobling feeling of being a brother in a great freemasonry which owns no difference of rank, of creed, or of nationality—the only freemasonry, the only International League which is likely to make mankind (as we all hope they will be some day) one :—then become men of science. Join the freemasonry in which Hugh Miller, the poor Cromarty stonemason, in which Michael Faraday, the poor bookbinder's boy, became the companions and friends of the noblest and most learned on earth, looked up to by them not as equals merely, but as teachers and guides, because philosophers and discoverers.

Do you wish to be great ? Then be great with a true greatness, which is knowing the facts of Nature, and being able to use them. Do you wish to be strong ? Then be strong with a true strength, which is knowing the facts of Nature, and being able to use them. Do you wish to be wise ? Then be wise with a true wisdom, which is knowing the facts of Nature, and being able to use them. Do you wish to be free ? Then be free with a true freedom, which is again knowing the facts of Nature, and being able to use them.

I dare say, some of you, especially the younger ones, will demur to that last speech of mine. Well : I hope they will not be angry with me for saying it. I, at least, shall certainly not be angry with them. For when I was young I was very much of, what I suspect is, their opinion. I used to think one could get perfect freedom, and social reform, and all that I wanted, by altering

the arrangements of society and legislation; by Constitutions and Acts of Parliament; by putting society into some sort of freedom-mill, and grinding it all down, and regenerating it so. And that something can be done by improved arrangements, something can be done by Acts of Parliament, I hold still, as every rational man must hold.

But as I grew older, I began to see that, if things were to be got right, the freedom-mill would do very little towards getting them right, however well and cunningly it was made. I began to see that what sort of flour came out at one end of the mill, depended mainly on what sort of grain had been put in at the other: I began to see that the problem was to get good grain; and then good flour would be turned out, even by a very clumsy, old-fashioned sort of mill. And what do I mean by good grain? Good men; honest men, accurate men, thoughtful men, patient men, self-restraining men, fair men, modest men; men who are aware of their own vast ignorance compared with the vast amount that there is to be learned in such a universe as this; men who are accustomed to look at both sides of a question, and instead of making up their minds in haste, like bigots and fanatics, wait, like wise men, for more facts, and more thought about the facts; in one word, men who have acquired just the habit of mind which the study of Natural Science can develop, and must have; for without it there is no use studying Natural Science; and the man who has not got that habit of mind, if he meddles with science, will merely become a quack and a charlatan, only fit to get his bread as a spirit-rapper or an inventor of infallible pills.

And when I saw that, I said to myself—I will try to train myself, by Natural Science, to this truly rational, and therefore truly able and useful, habit of mind; and more, I will—for it is my duty as an Englishman—try to train every Englishman over whom I can get influence in the same scientific habit of mind, that I may, if possible, make him a rational and an able man.

Therefore, knowing that most of you—probably all of you, as you ought and must if you are Britons—think much of social and political questions, therefore, I say, I entreat you to cultivate the scientific spirit by which alone you can judge justly of those questions. I ask you to learn how to “conquer nature by obeying her,” as the great Lord Bacon said two hundred and fifty years ago. For

so only will you in your theories and your movements, draw “bills which Nature will honour,” to use Mr. Carlyle’s famous parable, because they are according to her unchanging laws; and not have them returned on your hands, as too many theorists’ are, with “no effects” written across their backs.

Take my advice for yourselves, and for your children after you; for, believe me, I am showing you the way to true and useful, and therefore to just and deserved power. I am showing you the way to become members of what I trust will be—what I am certain ought to be—the aristocracy of the future. I say it deliberately, as a student of society and of history. Power will pass more and more, if all goes healthily and well, into the hands of scientific men; into the hands of those who have made due use of that great heirloom which the philosophers of the seventeenth century left for the use of future generations, and especially of the Teutonic race.

For the rest, events seem but too likely to repeat themselves again and again all over the world, in the same hopeless circle. Aristocracies of mere birth decay and die, and give place to aristocracies of mere wealth; and they again to aristocracies of mere genius, which are really aristocracies of the noisiest of scribblers and spouters, such as France is writhing under at this moment. And when these last have blown off their steam, with mighty roar, but without moving the engine a single yard, then they are but too likely to give place to the worst of all aristocracies, the aristocracy of mere “order,” which means organized brute force and military despotism. And after that, what can come, save anarchy and decay, and social death?

What else?—unless there be left in the nation, in the society, as the salt of the land, to keep it all from rotting, a sufficient number of wise men to form a true working aristocracy, an aristocracy of sound and rational science? If they be strong enough (and they are growing stronger day by day over the civilised world) on them will the future of that world mainly depend. They will rule, and they will act—cautiously, we may hope, and modestly and charitably, because in learning true knowledge they will have learnt also their own ignorance and the vastness, the complexity, the mystery of Nature. But they will be able to rule, they will be able to act; because they have taken the trouble to learn the facts and the laws of Nature. They will rule; and their rule, if they are true to themselves, will be one of

health and wealth, of prudence and of peace. For they alone will be able to wield for the benefit of man the brute forces of Nature; because they alone will have stooped to conquer her by obeying her.

So runs my dream. I ask you to-night to help towards making that dream a fact, by becoming (as many of you as feel the justice of my words) honest and earnest students of Natural Science.

HEAVEN AND HEREAFTER.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR FEBRUARY.

By THE BISHOP OF RIPON.

I.—HEAVEN IS LOVE.

Read St. Luke xxiv. 13—27.

THE cradle at Bethlehem links the celestial with earth, and brings heaven here. The ascension of Christ seems to link us with the hereafter: and yet it has often struck me that the thoughts of men seem to linger with greater fondness around Bethlehem than around Olivet. But the cycle is incomplete without the Ascension! for if in the Incarnation we witness the descending love of God to earth, in the Ascension we behold the restoration of that love to heaven; if in Bethlehem we see that heaven can stoop to earth, in the Ascension we learn that earth can climb to heaven; if, on the one side, we have the condescension of God to man, on the other we have the great prospect that man can reach up to heaven. Therefore we notice how Christ himself claims a fitness in His Ascension.

Those to whom He spake, found His words strange. Why was it, they asked, that this blow had fallen on their cause? why was it that He, whom they regarded as their King and Messiah, had been put to death by the hand of man? With sadness they made their way to Emmaus, little thinking that close beside them was the One who should make all things plain; who should show them that triumph must come through suffering, and that the hinge of the world's history is to be found in suffering love. Ought not He, who came to be the Emmanuel and the King, be King in this as in everything else?—King in Suffering? Should not He, who was King in Power, pre-eminent in marvels—He, who would be King also in triumph over the opinions of men in coming ages, be King in this also, that no suffering should be like to His suffering? And further, if it was fit that the Christ should suffer, it was fit also that he should return to His Glory.

We may notice that there is a fitness as regards Christ himself. There is another fitness which we can speak of later. We feel

that dawn must come after dark. We do not think that toil is to last for ever, "sorrow may endure for a night," but we look for "joy in the morning." We expect that conflict shall emerge in victory. If then in our daily toil, the sense of rest is an assistance; if what enables us to endure sorrow is the sense of consolation, and if the one thing that nerves us to conflict is the hope of victory, then, when we transfer such a line of thought to our Master's life, we see how fit it was that He should enter into His Glory; for His was a life of toil, of sorrow, and of conflict—and if toil is to eventuate in rest, and sorrow to end in joy, and conflict to be crowned with victory, surely no life so deserved its rest, no sorrow so won its title to joy, or no conflict so merited its victory!

And remember. He faced this life of toil and conflict in the consciousness of all that lay before Him; and as you turn over the records of His life, and see the toil He crowded into those three short years, you see it is toil, "as ceaseless," as He Himself said, "as His Father's." "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." From city to city, from sick-bed to sick-bed, from place of ministry to place of ministry. The record of His life is, "*He went about doing good.*" If toil is to end in rest, surely as His life draws to eventide rest is fitting. There is a time when the mid-day is passed, and the prolonged afternoon is lapsed away, and eventide is come, and though the day has been never so long, we feel it is fitting that it should ring at last to even-song. So after the hours of mid-day heat and hours of prolonged toil, it was indeed fitting that Christ should enter into His Glory, when Glory meant Rest. But not for toil only; it was fitting also for suffering. It is easy for men to toil, if they have not to carry a heart of suffering with them, when their labour is sustained by hope, and every morning brings fresh energy; but it is otherwise when sorrow succeeds anxiety, and the night's rest is broken in upon by grief; and

how much the more if that sorrow be the earnest sorrow which cares for the needs of others. Behold ! was any sorrow like unto His sorrow, Whose Face was marred more than any man's ? and that because He bore the hearts of men on His Heart ; because He carried their griefs and was made acquainted with their sorrows ; we feel that life so marked by sorrow was entitled to the glorious joy—to be found when no more sorrow should spring from the misapprehensions of men, or the contradiction of sinners against Himself ? It is fit also that the life of conflict should end in triumph. He who wins in the conflict is always crowned. When released from toil and care after the long strain of the campaign, the general returns to the centre of his country's heart, to the warm welcome which belongs to his arms, we do not grudge him his triumph ; but let it be that harder conflict which never seems a victory, which from the beginning to the end always seems a defeat, then is it not far more fitting that conflict should emerge in victory ? As we watch Him in His last bitter hour of conflict, when the world says He is defeated, is it not fitting that He, whom His enemies deemed was consigned to earth, should be raised up by the power of God, and ascend in glory and triumph ? Is it not fitting that while the earth threw Him forth, the heavens should be ready to welcome Him, and that triumph should be the result of suffering and conflict ?

And may I not add the other fitness too often forgotten, perhaps because the tendency is to turn our attention to the human rather than to the divine side of the Master's character, because, by a strange mistake, we look to the *human* nature of Christ for His tenderness, and to the *divine* for His strength ? This is wrong ; man's tenderness, in its most exquisite force and strength, is but the reflection of the tenderness of God. The Divine love is stronger because it is divine than any human love can be ; so that another reason why Christ should return to God is because He came from God. He seemed to say, "Once I put the brightness of the Father's home behind Me, and stepped into the darkness and chilliness of earth ; but now I pass from the gloom and chill and go back to the Father. If ye loved Me, ye would catch something of the joy that is even now stirring my heart, even although the darkest valley is not passed, because I said I go unto the Father." Is there to be no craving on the Son's part to go back to the Father's

home ? If it is fitting that victory should crown conflict, that sorrow should end in joy, and that rest should be the consummation of toil, surely it is fitting that love should go back to love, the Son return to the Father, and Christ enter His glory.

II.—LOVE IS HEAVEN.

Read St. Luke xxiv. 13—27 ; Rev. iii. 20, 21.

We can never sunder the life of Christ from the life of man. His words and deeds are intertwined with all human life ; nothing which He did affected Himself alone. If He toiled and suffered and died, it was for man. If He went up where He was before, it was for man. The ascension of Christ was fitting, as far as Christ is concerned ; it is fitting, also, so far as we are concerned. This is perhaps what Christ would impress upon us ; it is perfectly true that He must be the centre of our thoughts ; but the object of religion is to touch mankind. It is not a mere manifestation of Divine strength ; but it is such a manifestation of Divine love and strength as will touch the heart, as will assist the life of man. Religion is nothing if it is not for men, and the Ascension is nothing unless it is that which will enable us to "ascend in heart and mind, and with Him continually dwell."

Let us look at two phases of religion. There is a temperament, quiet, retiring, sensitive, which feels the heart of man to be so delicate an organisation, that to preserve its purity it must be separated as far as possible from the influences of the world. To such an one the heart is like a balance, that must be kept under glass, because the least speck of dust would injure its working. This man, therefore, will quote every text that reminds us that in order that the heart may grow it must be isolated. "Commune in your chamber and be still." "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is to keep himself unspotted from the world." Such a man will take for his favourite characters Mary and Enoch. But there is another aspect of religion. There are others who tell you that life is too serious a thing to be spent in isolation ; that our duty is to be up and doing. "Are there not twelve hours in the day ? The night cometh when no man can work ;" and these quote also from St. James, that "true religion is to visit the fatherless and widow." These take for their examples Martha, busy in the home, Gideon, hewing down the altar of idolatry, or Paul, in labours abundant, preaching the Gospel from city to city. These are the characters which excite

their admiration. Religion appeared in this double aspect; but Christianity will not divorce the aspect of contemplation from that of action; it is in the combination of the two that the perfection of religion is found. The hand must be always full of activities, but it must also be a hand raised up in prayer to God.

The Ascension reconciles the two aspects; for here the contemplatist beholds the object of his devotion. Here is something that will draw his heart away from earth up into the presence of the Father. What object can so enlist his love as the Friend of Sinners? Where can the devotion of Christendom find its loftiest aspirations save at the foot of the Cross? The ascended Lord seems to say, "I pass onward and upward to the Father's throne, that evermore when you kneel in prayer your hopes and devotions may rise after Me; that you may feel every moment where your treasure is there is also your heart; and that amidst the temptations of earth you may remember there is something the heaven holds far dearer than anything left on earth."

But the Ascension has also the effect of quickening our activities. Listen! It is the hour when He is about to ascend into the heavens, and He gathers round Him the little band of His disciples to hearken to His last words! Are they merely words of contemplation and love? No! it is go teach; preach. The reproach gently whispered by angel lips is this—"Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" Look not up as though you could bring back the Lord again. He will return in like manner as He went up; and just because He will return, for you lie the untilled fields in which to labour, the sorrowing and broken hearts of men to bind, and souls under the thralldom of sin to emancipate by the power of His grace. They who have learnt from Him to pray—they whose prayers go up to Him away from earth's distraction—will also learn to watch and work. Thus, the Ascension teaches us to reconcile what we would divorce. None can think of His parting without thinking of His return; and none think of Him at the right hand of God, but must think of Him as coming in the clouds of heaven. Therefore, as a man feels that love is drawing him nearer to the Master, he finds also that faith and love, and loyalty and expectation, are prompting him to labour and be ready, hastening the coming of the Lord.

We talk of foretastes of heaven. They only come to the heart that can love. When

we can love heaven is with us. The saint whose spirit is aglow with love of God feels that he catches glimpses of the ineffable glory, and the saint who, prompted by love, goes forth to toil among the needy and forlorn, the simple and the sorrowful, finds even more truly the peace and the presence of heaven as he moves about amid scenes that are crowded with the darkest things of earth. But these saints are not wrong. Heaven is near to all, and heaven might be felt to be near by all. To realise the love which embraces all, and to give forth a love ready to succour all, is to know something of what that heaven is, which, whatever else it may be, is most certainly—love.

So we take our simple lesson. There is something for the heart in this, and there is something for the hand too. For the heart, the thought of our Lord in heaven, where He furnishes the "many mansions" with all that is fitting and needed; for the hand, the vineyard He has given us to cultivate, the work He has given us to do.

III.—HEREAFTER.

Read St. Matt. xxii. 29—33.

A strange and blessed widening of our thoughts has taken place within late years. The religious hope has widened, because the love of God is beginning to be better understood. Once, whatever we might be in our homes, in church we were each for ourselves. The supreme hope was that we should escape condemnation. This is changed; our supreme hope is now that we may be with God; every desire of the heart finds fruition in His presence; the life earthward is but the shadow life; the life heavenward is the true; in Him we meet with the true life (personal, domestic, social) for all (those still in this shadow world and those who have passed within the veil) live unto Him. In God (if we can but rightly understand Him) is therefore our exceeding joy. The full realisation of this is in the hereafter; and yet this hereafter has been to some a matter of dread and dislike. Misconception must have caused this. God did not paint upon our minds and hearts the vision and desire of the hereafter that it should be a dread to us, but a delight, a constant well-spring of aspiration and hope, rivers of pure gladness springing up to everlasting life.

Our dread springs mainly, I think, from the idea of isolation which we associate with the hereafter. Religion, we say, is personal; it is for each alone, as responsibility is for each alone. All the most solemn things in

life have the touch of solitude upon them. We are born alone, we die alone, and in the years which spread between birth and death, we pass through the bitterest agony alone; in our misgivings, in the worst paroxysms of grief, in the most poignant realisations of bereavement we are alone; the heart knoweth its own bitterness; there is the isolation which attends our most solemn and suffering hours. Not the less in our religious feelings and aspirations we are alone; and heaven, or the hereafter, seems to us so filled up with God, that again over the thought of the hereafter there steals the feeling of isolation; in the hereafter we think we shall be alone, perhaps alone with God; but this seems like isolation. Are we right in allowing this thought? Is not the other thought the true one, that society not solitude is our portion there where God is, for loneliness is not where God is. Christian poets have dreamed of God as "wrapped in the solitary amplitudes of boundless space;" but there has always seemed to me to be a touch of paganism in such thoughts. It is not from the New Testament that such ideas came. Everywhere the idea of companionship and happy intercourse, stripped of all that awkwardness and shyness which spring from earthly surroundings, is suggested in the New Testament. The hereafter is the loving reunion of friends, who will sit down together with those who have been to them what Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were to Jewish minds. We come to the innumerable multitude of those who have been as angels to our lives, and the companionship of those who have been the just and the noble. We are joined to them, who need our companionship, as we long for theirs; since they without us are not made perfect. Sweet ministries, loving companionship, gentle, and joyous welcomes, are in the hereafter.

"There entertain us all the hosts above,
In solemn troops and sweet societies
That sing, and singing in their glory move
And wipe the tears for ever from our eyes."

Milton sang aright when he sang of those sweet societies, for it is just in the fit and interlocking sympathy and affection that the sense of solitude departs. It is in such picturing that the hereafter is given to us in New Testament writers, and later we shall see that its features are made strong in the thought of God Himself.

IV.—HEREAFTER.

Read St. John xiv. 1-4.

The thought of God gives strength to our best and noblest thoughts, and the highest

pictures of the hereafter find confirmation in the realisation of what God indeed is and what are the laws of His working.

First love and then life is God's primal law, His creative law. Life followed by love is His providential law; life lost and found in love is His final or spiritual law. First love, then life. God is love, and therefore in creation He surrounded Himself by life, by those that could live and love. Society, not solitude, is dear to God. "Life followed by love is His second law; creation lives. He opens His hand and feeds them, filling their hearts with gladness, and in His bounty He teaches them love—life lost and found in love. It is the spiritual law, God lived in Christ, loved in Christ; the life was given; the life for love's sake was lost; the love was found in the life laid down; the heart of the world awoke to love Him. We love because He loves. In this law society becomes spiritual." The three laws are lived over in our lives. First love, then life, attachments, the home, the prattling life of childhood about our knees. Society in its germ in the family becomes a necessity and a joy to us. We care for the young life; we nurture it into responsive love. Thus the law of life followed by love rules in our life, and prepares for the third law, in which our dearest and fondest hopes are merged in the life and well-being of others; and we find it the highest joy, not to be loved, but to give up all in the love that we bear to others. These laws become the framework of society; they make the idea of a world in which we are the solitary dwellers an impossibility; our world, so to speak, we have filled with love—our loves—as God our Father filled His great universe with love. This little world of ours, with its affections and sorrows and joys, has grown up around us, and incorporated, as it were, our very life with it. In it we live, and move, and have our being. Its society is dear to us; for it, we have suffered and shed tears, and for it, have been ready to die. Two things thus become plain. (1) Society, *i.e.* beings living together, is the purpose of God, and is dear to Him. (2) Our life and education in life has made society dear also to us. Does it not follow that God is educating us for an immortality, not merely personal, but social? The powers which have been called into exercise, the affections which every birth awakens and every death intensifies, the interlacing of sympathies and kindnesses, which make even this poor life worth living for the joy they

bring to others—all these are tokens that it is for a world in which thought, love, sympathy, kindness are yet possible that He is fitting us.

And has He not given us a guarantee? I think so. Of what nature should this guarantee be? It should triumph over the divisions and separations which trouble our affections. It should draw into unison the elements which look as if they could not harmonize together. In other words, we want a centralizing force which will bring together the divided and which will reconcile the discordant. This centralizing force can only be in God. He is *love*, and the author of every true and glad some love which shone upon our life. All true loves move in their orbits round about that central love which is God. Just as the sun is the bond between every moving planet, so is God the bond between the loves which sever through death and have drifted asunder. The two planets have walked their paths side by side; their pathways sunder for a while; but they are of the same system still; they look into the face of the sun and they know it; and they know too that the same law which sundered can reunite them again; and that no power can thrust them asunder farther when the mighty force of that central sun holds them together in one system. The guarantee of that law is in Christ. His manifestation is the witness that love, immortal and imperishable, binds Heaven to Earth. His death proclaims this love stronger than death which seems to separate from love. His rising again is the pledge of the reuniting of all that death seems to sunder.

The guarantee finds its witness in the language of Christ. He too yearned for

the reunion; for the immortal society. "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." He felt sure that this was no vain prayer. "I know that Thou hearest me always." No wonder then that every weary and saddened eye should turn to Him, as to the centralizing force of the world, who could draw to Himself all that was true and noble, and could infuse the energy of hope into the despondent, and could baptize with His Spirit of true love the natures that through selfishness or pride caused discord or division. He is the centre of life and death, for He lived and died, and is evermore alive. He is the centre, drawing all discordant elements into unison by breathing into all His Spirit of love and holiness.

He is centre, and He is the guarantee. In His life here He knew the loneliness—"Ye shall be scattered, and leave me alone"—He knew the loneliness in His life here, who knew that He could never know it in the life hereafter, when the society which He loved and died for would be reunited in undying love and relationship—"Lo! I and the children which Thou hast given Me." From Him come the loving and assuring words, which declare that no foe can vanquish God's mighty and imperishable love—"My Father that gave them Me is mightier than I; and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." Rest then in His love. Oh! wearied and troubled hearts! God, who holds the oceans in the hollow of His hand, holds thy lost and thy loved ones in His eternal embrace! Rest in His love; for the nearer thou art to Him the nearer thou art to them. He is thy life; and they too, "though passed within the veil, live unto Him."

HER TWO MILLIONS.

By WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—BAR CRONIES.

THE Hardys had gone, and the Cock's regular company of gossips and toppers were dropping in and settling down to their usual drinking bout in the bar.

In an arm-chair by the fireside sat Humphrey Hutton, one of Calder's most remarkable citizens, a big, stout, florid man, with great red whiskers and a ruddy countenance. Every evening of his life Humphrey (who was a miller by trade and looked well after

his business), when he had taken his tea and washed and dressed himself, walked up to the Cock, took his accustomed place near the hearth, and stayed there until he had drunk his "allowance." And as he seemed none the worse for his libations, and looked the very picture of health, people thought his potations did him more good than harm; and as he died at last by falling into his own mill-dam when he was perfectly sober, nobody could say that whisky had shortened his days, or that, if he had not swallowed

more water than agreed with him, he might not have lived as long as anybody else.

Another faithful frequenter of the Cock's bar was Bob Rogers, plasterer and house-painter. His jovial face beamed with good-humour; he sang a good song, told a good story, and, though he liked a glass, never got drunk, which was more than could be said of his wife. Once upon a time, after she had been indulging overmuch, she ran away, fearing her husband's wrath. When she returned, Bob took a stick to her. "I am not licking thee for running away," he exclaimed between each thwack; "I am licking thee for coming back ageean."

"Why, here's Mr. Balmaine and Mr. Warton," exclaimed Rogers. "Good-day to you. Willn't you sit down and have summat?"

"Thank you," said Balmaine; "I have work to do. I cannot stay. Good-night, Warton."

"Young Balmaine seems busy just now," observed Flip, the auctioneer, a little old fellow with a cracked voice and an inflamed face, who once in his life, and once only, had put on a pair of trousers, but not being able to abide "them things dangling about his legs," he speedily doffed them and resumed the breeches of his forefathers. Flip, it need hardly be said, was as conservative in the domain of politics as in the matter of costume, and never went to the Cock without expressing his opinion that the country was going to "rack and ruin along o' these 'ere Radicals."

"Yes," said Warton, "he finds plenty to do, for when he is not editing the *Mercury*, he is writing for other papers—not always in them though, I am afraid."

"A terrible downcoming for that family!" put in Ward, the vet.—an observation which he had probably made five hundred times before in the very same place.

"It is that," said Bob Rogers sympathetically, "and I feel right sorry for 'em. How nobody suspected owt o' th' sort, afore old Mr. Balmaine died, caps me. We could all see it plain enough after."

"Ay, after-wit is a complaint as most Englishmen is troubled with at times. And how well them lads faced it!"

"They did that, and a most terrible knockdown blow it was, too. So did Miss Balmaine."

"Ay, she's a rare fine lass, and gradely good to th' owd woman, they tell me. Has owt been heard of Bradley yet?"

"No; and he'll tak' good care as there isn't. He was not called Billy Godeeper for nowt. What a scoundrel that chap turned out to be sure! Mony's th' time as he has sat i' that theer cheer fratching (boasting) how well he was doing, and what good investments he was making for Mr. Balmaine and a twothy more on 'em; and all th' time he was robbing him right and left. Ay, a terrible scoundrel was Bill Bradley. Have another glass, Mr. Warton?"

While the company at the Cock were discussing his family and their affairs, Balmaine was walking rapidly down a steep street towards the office of the *Mercury*. "Calder," as a local rhymester wrote, "crowns a rocky height," and, in truth, there is not a level street in it. The town, which clusters round the lofty ruins of a mediæval castle, though it figured in the Wars of the Roses and the Great Rebellion—has a history which dates back to the times of Alfred and Cnut, and has returned great statesmen to Parliament, is looked upon by its more enterprising neighbours as effete and played out. It has no coal-fields, is a long way from seaports and markets, and albeit there are three or four cotton factories and bobbin mills, turned by water power, which seem to do pretty well, the new men don't take to Calder, and the population, which was never great, rather diminishes than increases. But it lies on the borders of two counties, in the midst of a rich agricultural district; its corn and cattle and hay markets are important and largely frequented, and its weekly newspaper, though the circulation was not very extensive, had sufficient advertisements to make it a profitable enterprise.

The editorial offices were in a side street off the main thoroughfare, and to reach them Balmaine had to go up a dark entry and mount a flight of wooden stairs. The room into which he entered, and where he did most of his work, was as gaunt and bare as an anchorite's cave or a monk's cell. The walls were unpapered, and the floor was black with the ink-slings of a century of editors—for the *Mercury* had lived a hundred years. A big, square table, littered with copy and proofs, a few chairs and a book-case, made up the furniture. The table was lighted, but not the room, by a couple of gas-burners under green shades, and on one of the chairs sat a small boy with an extremely dirty face and wide-open mouth, fast asleep.

"Hallo, Jeremiah!" shouted Balmaine, at the same time throwing a folded paper with aim so accurate that it dropped into the lad's

mouth like a ball into a socket, making him look as if he were developing news from his inner consciousness.

"Yes, sir," said Jeremiah, opening his eyes and spitting out the newspaper.

"Is anything wanted?"

"Yes; they want them proofs; and Methuselah has been here—he waited ever so long, and said as if you wanted him, he'd be round at the Lord Nelson."

"Go to the Lord Nelson and ask him to come here, and then run down to the post-office for the letters."

Then he sat down to his proofs. A few minutes afterwards the door opened.

"Is that you, Methuselah?"

"I believe it is."

He was not a very old man, not more than fifty probably, but when he came to Calder, a dozen years previously, as reporter for the *Mercury*, he persistently refused to disclose his age—a point as to which the Calderites were very curious. To punish his obstinacy they called him Methuselah—a name which in the end so completely superseded his own that he was hardly known by any other.

"Have you extended your notes of last night's ratepayers' meeting?" asked Balmaine.

"Certainly. Here are the proofs," said the reporter, who had brought into the room a powerful odour of tobacco. He was a tall, angular man, with lantern jaws, a purple nose, and a snuffy voice. "Would you like to cast your eye over them?"

"Do they contain anything libellous? Speakers at ratepayers' meetings don't always use the most measured language."

"Well, nothing exactly libellous was said, but something not very pleasant was."

"About whom?"

"About us."

"What was it?"

"Somebody quoted the *Mercury* and mentioned Mr. Grindleton and you, and Horseball—the Radical toffee-dealer, you know—and said if there was a bigger fool in Calder than the editor of the *Mercury* it was the proprietor."

"Not complimentary, certainly, but hardly actionable," said Balmaine laughing. "Have you got it in your report?"

"Yes; but I will strike it out if you like."

"No; let it stand. Editors should not be thin-skinned; we must give and take, you know. Ah! here come the letters."

There was quite a bundle of them. Some were thrown into the waste-paper basket as fast as they were read, others were placed

under a weight on the table, and one, the perusal of which seemed to give Balmaine considerable satisfaction, and contained a slip of printed matter, found its way into his pocket.

Then followed two hours' hard work and a visit to the printing-office, and shortly before eleven o'clock the editor wended his way homeward.

CHAPTER VII.—CORA.

THE night was fine; a bright moon shone in a clear sky, and a brisk wind of twenty minutes, on a limestone road shaded by trees, brought Balmaine to a bridge that spanned a broad and babbling brook. Here he turned down a lane running between tall hedgerows until he came to a little white gate. This he opened, and the next moment was at the door of an ivy-mantled cottage with a wooden porch, over which grew a climbing rose-tree. There was an odour of southernwood and mignonette, a scent of new-mown hay; the pebbled music of the brook, as it coursed through the meadows below, was borne faintly on the dying breeze; and, bathed in the golden moonlight, the cottage, with its fruit-trees and roses and cascades of ivy falling over quaint dormer windows, looked like a little paradise whose inmates must needs be free from sordid wants and corroding care—the abode of peace, contentment, and love.

Before Balmaine set his foot on the threshold the door opened.

"I knew your step," said a low, sweet voice.

"I have been expecting you nearly an hour. Are you not rather later than usual on a Friday night?"

"Yes; I went to the Hardy meeting, and had a long talk with Warton, and I had more proofs to read than I expected."

"You must be hungry, then. Come in and have your supper."

The room into which Balmaine entered, though small, low ceiled, and simply furnished, bore evidence in all its arrangements of refined tastes and gentle culture. The white window curtains were gracefully disposed, colours harmonized; in the middle of the table, which was laid for supper, stood a vase of flowers, and opposite to it were a little jardinière and an open cottage pianoforte, whereon lay a book of Mendelssohn's music. There was also a small bookcase, and the walls were adorned with several water-colour sketches, of no great merit, perhaps, but pleasant to look upon for all that.

Between the young girl and him whom she so graciously welcomed there was so much

likeness as to leave little doubt that they were nearly akin. Cora Balmaine, though of attractive appearance, had a head and face rather too small for her height; yet the head was shapely and the face comely—the hair dark brown; long lashes shaded eyes of bright hazel, which, together with her slightly aquiline nose, square jaws, full red lips, and broad white brow, suggested a character at once tender and strong, and a sweet and womanly temper. Her kinsman, albeit his features bore a general and unmistakable resemblance to hers, was far from being cast in precisely the same mould. Being much larger, there was not the same disproportion between the frame and the head; the nose was, perhaps, more aquiline; the jaws, though their contour was somewhat disguised by a short curly beard, seemed squarer; the hair was slightly darker, and while her complexion was high his was almost colourless; but the eyes were of the same shade, and the face of one, as well as of the other, wore an expression of gravity, almost of sadness, that hardly befitted their years, for neither could be much more than twenty-three or four.

"How has mother been?" was the young man's first question.

"As usual, very low, and sometimes suffering; but she seems a little better this afternoon, and Dr. Foster thought he could see a slight gleam of improvement."

"Poor mother! I wish she could be herself again. What a relief it would be for us all—for you especially, Cora! It is very hard on you, and even yet I do not feel quite satisfied that I have acted rightly in taking this situation. It looks like deserting one's post."

"But you have written to accept it, Alfred?"

"Yes, as we agreed yesterday. I was bound to write to-day, but I wrote very reluctantly."

"The reluctance is natural, and I shall be very sorry to lose you, but I have not a doubt that you are right. You may never have such another chance, and it would be one of those blunders that are worse than a crime to let it slip. Here at Calder you are simply wasting your time, and I want you, Alfred—I want you to be somebody, as I am sure you will if you have a fair chance. We have a stimulus others do not possess; they are merely struggling to rise, we are struggling to rise again—to retrieve a lost position."

"What pluck you have, Cora!" was

Alfred's admiring comment on the lady's little speech.

"So have you. I would not give a fig for a spiritless man."

"Well, whatever other faults I may have, I do not think I am without pluck. But you and George beat me in that respect, though."

"Dear George! Yes, he is a dear, good, noble boy. I wrote to him to-day such a long letter."

"Talking of letters, here is something that will please you, I think."

"What is it about?"

"That story I sent for you to the *Piccadilly Magazine*."

"And have they—have they accepted it?" demanded Cora eagerly.

"They have. See, here is the proof."

"My first proof!" exclaimed the girl, unfolding the slip with trembling fingers. "My first proof! Yes, here it is—'The Broken Tryst,' by Cora Balmaine. I never saw my name in print before, never. Oh, Freddy, I am so glad!" And Cora, who a moment before had looked so grave, broke into a ringing laugh, and clapped her hands, as she had used to do in her girlhood when anybody gave her a new toy. "But," putting, "here are some dreadful mistakes. I am sure I never wrote this—nor this. And, if I know myself, I can, at least, spell."

"The printer's devil has perhaps been putting something in on his own account."

"The printer's devil! Is there really such a creature, Freddy?"

"Of course. How else could there be misprints? I must show you how to correct them."

"And dear me, how short it is! Surely my twenty pages of manuscript cannot be compressed into these six pages of print!"

"Very easily, I should say. It is astonishing to what an extent you can boil down copy by putting it into type. Few of those who 'glance over' an article or a story think that what they devour in five minutes, and forget in three, has taken somebody as many hours to write."

"I hope nobody will devour my story in five minutes, and forget it in three; that would be too bad," said Cora warmly. "Why, I spent days on it, and wrote it out at least three times."

"That's always the case with young writers," replied Alfred sententially. "They give themselves an infinity of trouble, often to little purpose. But you will become wiser with experience; '*pas trop de zèle*,' it does not pay."

"How you talk! You might be an author of experience, yet you have never written anything but newspaper articles and reviews of second-class books."

"At any rate newspaper articles deal with facts; and as for second-class books—well, that is a matter of opinion. But don't you see, you foolish girl, that I was only teasing you? You do well to take pains; but I am afraid that it will hardly pay—from a pecuniary point of view—to write a story for—shall I say a second-class magazine?—three times over."

"I was not thinking of that; and do you know, Freddy, I could not help doing my best, even if I were to get nothing for it. But, perhaps, as I acquire more skill I may be able to write more rapidly. How much do you think they will give me for this?"

"Three guineas, perhaps. I do not think the *Piccadilly* is precisely the most liberal of magazines."

"Three guineas! But that would really be very nice, you know. If I could only earn that much every month! We should be positively rich, Alfred; I could do all sorts of things. We might keep a little pony carriage to drive your mother about in, or go to the seaside, or engage another maid, and then I should have more time for writing and that; and, yes, I would have a new carpet for the drawing-room, and a new coal-scuttle."

"Castles in the air, Cora—castles in the air," said Alfred mock-seriously. "Don't indulge in extravagant dreams about fresh carpets and new coal-scuttles. You will only be disappointed; and all moralists agree that it is a very pernicious habit."

"I don't care one bit for the moralists. I must and shall build castles in the air. It is one of the few pleasures I have; and I am quite sure of this, that nobody can write stories who does not build castles in the air. And that reminds me. You have not told me anything about the meeting. Is the Hardy fortune a castle in the air or a fact?"

"A fact."

"The Hardys will get it, then?"

"Some Hardys may; but I am not sure that these Hardys will."

And then Alfred told Cora all that had passed at the meeting, and been imparted to him by the lawyer's clerk.

"It is a strange story," said Cora musingly; "but truth is often stranger than fiction, and many things happen in real life which, if they were put into novels, people would say

were too extravagant to be true. You will do as Warton suggests, won't you, and try to find this girl?"

"I certainly mean to do so, as far as my limited opportunities will allow. When Warton first mooted the idea to me it seemed as if nothing could be more absurd; but the more I think of it the more it takes hold of me. Yes, I should like to ascertain Philip Hardy's fate, and find out whether the child is dead or alive."

"Poor girl! Supposing her father is in an Austrian dungeon, where can she be? Could not somebody apply to the Austrian government for information?"

"I have thought of that already; but the difficulty is that he went under several names—in order to deceive the police, I suppose—and even if the Austrians said they had no such prisoner as Philip Hardy, it would not follow that he was not in one of their dungeons. What I mean to do is this. Warton will give me a written account of all the circumstances so far as he knows them, and as I pass through London I shall call at Artful and Higginbottom's office and make a few inquiries on my own account. Then, when I get to Geneva I shall take the advice of somebody experienced in such matters as to how I ought to proceed."

"The police?"

"No; that would cost money, and I have none to spare. Some non-official person, I mean—when I can find such an one. But that will necessarily be after I have been there a while and got to know a few people."

"How soon do you think you shall go?"

"That I cannot tell, until I receive my answer."

"Have you said anything to Mr. Grindleton?"

"Not yet. I must not give up one situation before I am sure of the other."

"Cautious Alfred! You are learning wisdom in the school of experience. Does Lizzie know that you contemplate leaving Calder?"

This was said not unkindly, but there was a pointedness in Cora's manner, a slight touch of sarcasm in her voice, that called the colour to the young man's cheeks, and he answered rather abruptly, "Not yet; I suppose I must, though." He had evidently been hit in a weak place.

"Yes; I think she has a right to expect that attention from you. But I hope she will not find it difficult to console herself—after you are gone."

The words were hardly out of Cora's

mouth when she regretted having uttered them, for this time Alfred looked really annoyed, and she felt that the fact of his having acted unwisely conferred on her no right to give him pain, was rather a reason indeed why she should not give him pain.

"Forgive me, Alfred," she said, speaking soft and low, as she put her arm round his neck and looked her most bewitching look, "for being so unkind. I am so sorry; but——"

"I am sorry, too, and vexed—with myself, not you. Yes, I have been a goose, and you are quite justified in telling me so."

"I did not tell you so."

"You meant it, and you think it. But never mind; let us say no more about it. Go to bed; it is quite time, and" (smiling) "dream about your new story. I suppose you will put that proof under your pillow?"

"Of course I shall. And in the morning you shall give me a lesson in proof-reading."

CHAPTER VIII.—THE BALMAINES.

ALTHOUGH they bore the same surname and were so intimate, Alfred and Cora Balmaine were not brother and sister. His father, her uncle, had been Rector of Calder. The living was one of the best in the county, and as Mr. Balmaine had private means and his wife a small fortune, they were in easy circumstances, spent freely, and kept up the style of a county family of the lesser sort. Their two sons, George and Alfred, between whom there was hardly a year's difference in age, were sent to a public school much affected by the aristocracy, and had each a pony, which, when they grew older, were exchanged for a couple of hunters. George was destined for the army, Alfred for the bar, and in due time the one went to Sandhurst, the other to Oxford. A few years before this came to pass their uncle Hugh, an officer in the army, died, leaving his little motherless girl alone in the world, and the Rector his sole executor. Mr. Balmaine, who had loved his brother dearly, took Cora to his own house, with the full concurrence of his wife. She was treated in every respect as their own child, and found these foster-parents as fond and devoted as her own had been. As the young people grew older it came to be understood that in the fulness of time George and Cora should make a match of it, and, contrary to the general rule in such cases, the parties chiefly concerned cordially fell in with the wishes of their elders. Childish affection ripened into ardent love and while still in their teens they

were formally engaged. There were none of the usual motives for delay. When his son should come of age and get his lieutenant's commission, the Rector proposed to assign him an allowance, which, together with the income arising from Cora's fortune, would make them a good income. The arrangement pleased everybody, and the Balmaines were one of the happiest, and, to all seeming, one of the most prosperous families in the country-side. They had only one trouble, and that was fast passing away. Alfred had not been many weeks at Oxford when he was badly hurt in a scrimmage at football. The doctors feared at first that his back was permanently injured, and that he would be a cripple for life. But with careful nursing and long resting—for more than a twelve-month he could not rise from his couch—he grew gradually better, and by the time George had got his lieutenant's commission Alfred was almost as strong as ever. In one respect his illness, which lasted several years, had been to his advantage. He read and studied more than he would have done at the university, and learnt several modern languages which were afterwards of great use to him. He also sent several contributions, both in prose and verse, to the *Calder Mercury*, and his effusions were always welcomed by the editor and admired by his readers. It thus came to pass that Alfred Balmaine, though possessing more book-learning than most young men of his years, was also more unsophisticated. His life had been passed nearly altogether at home and at school, and his experience of the world was confined to Calder and the neighbourhood. His father, who was easy-tempered and good-natured to a fault, had treated him, in consideration of his illness, with unusual indulgence; yet in some things the Rector was as firm as a rock. He would on no account tolerate falsehood or meanness; his ideals were high almost to Quixotism; he always impressed on his sons that a clear conscience was far above either wealth or position; that it was better to endure calamity than suffer dishonour, and that a true gentleman should be "sans peur et sans tache," principles to which he himself so steadfastly adhered, and gave so wide an application, that some people considered him a nincompoop. It was a common saying in Calder that, though unexceptionable as a parson, Balmaine was a fool in business, and often allowed himself to be egregiously taken in, for he always treated a man as honest until he was shown to be a rogue—an interpretation of the golden rule that did not

always turn to his advantage, nor, as the result proved, to that of his family.

The day had been fixed for George and Cora's marriage, and preparations for the happy event were in active progress, when one evening the Rector came home from visiting a sick patient, looking ill and flushed, and complaining of headache. The next morning he was worse, and the doctor pronounced it to be a case of typhoid fever. When typhoid fever attacks elderly people it often proves fatal, and a week later Mr. Balmaine slept his last sleep under a cypress-tree in his own churchyard.

Before the bereaved family had time to realise the full extent of their loss another blow, hardly less crushing, fell upon them.

CHAPTER IX.—MORE TROUBLES.

IF sympathy is often expressed without being felt, curiosity, on the other hand, is often felt without being expressed. The friend who condoles with you on the death of a near kinsman of reputed wealth may or may not be sincere in his assurance of sympathy; but of a surety he is burning to know how much the deceased has left, and for how much you figure in his last will and testament. And so at Calder, after people who met casually in the street or elsewhere, had told each other what a bad job the Rector's death was, and how greatly he had been respected, one would observe in a tone of indifference:

"You have not heard how much, I suppose?"

"Not exactly. About fifty, I fancy. Some folks say as he had a deal of money out at interest; but Bradley is very close."

When the Rector had been laid in the ground there was less reticence, and on the evening after the funeral the question of what he had died worth was keenly discussed in the Cock bar. The estimates varied from forty to sixty thousand, and when Horseball, the Radical toffee-dealer, who had no great love for "church parsons," suggested thirty, he was laughed to scorn.

"Where's Bradley?" asked Bob Rogers, "he'd know to a penny. He knows how much everybody's worth i' this town."

But Bradley was not there—never, in fact, entered the Cock again. The next day it began to be rumoured that he had not been seen for three days, and was nowhere to be found, and that the Rector's executors could make neither head nor tail of his affairs. Bradley, the land agent, had been his man of business, looked after his glebe, kept his

accounts, and invested his money. Then the people who were always wiser than anybody else—after the event—hinted that they had suspected all along that the land agent was no good, and that they should not be surprised if he had run away. And so he had; and when the fact became generally known great was the consternation in Calder, for many of the townsfolk had intrusted him with money, and all who had trusted him were betrayed. Some were ruined outright. Among these was the Rector, albeit he had died in the full assurance that his family were amply provided for. His trust in the defaulting land agent had been boundless. He held him to be not only an honest man, but a financial genius of the first order. And financial genius of a certain sort Bradley had indeed shown. He had deceived shrewder and less trustful men than Mr. Balmaine, and so contrived matters that until the latter's death and his own flight nobody suspected that he had been paying interest out of his clients' capital, and that the local companies in which he had persuaded the Rector to take so many shares were bogus concerns of his own creation. When the promoter disappeared the companies collapsed, and the liabilities arising out of them swallowed up all the assets which Bradley had not previously reduced to possession. Cora's fortune, which the Rector had allowed Bradley to invest for him, was engulfed in the general ruin, and she, like her cousins, was left literally penniless. It was only by the forbearance of the creditors that Mrs. Balmaine was allowed to receive the value of a life assurance on her husband's life; and a few of his parishioners bought for her, out of her own furniture, enough to furnish a small cottage in the outskirts of the town. George sold his commission, which had been paid for only a few weeks before his father's death, and the proceeds of the sale, added to the value of the policy, made about £2,000, which was sunk in an annuity for his mother's benefit. Then the young fellow, who would neither abandon the career of arms, nor be beholden to friends, took counsel with his sweetheart, and with her full concurrence enlisted in a regiment under orders for India. Cora, indeed, showed rare courage and resource; but Mrs. Balmaine, whose married life had been almost free from care, who had never known what it was to want money or have a reasonable wish ungratified, was utterly crushed. Her health suffered, her temper became querulous and exacting, and she thought herself the most unfortunate

woman in the world. Cora, although her own sorrow was heavy and hard to bear, tended her aunt with untiring care and devotion, and did much to keep up the courage of the brothers.

"It is very bad," she would say. "There is no question about that. But I have read somewhere that the best way to meet trouble is to look it in the face; and there is really no cause for despair. We three are young and strong, and if we help ourselves God will help us. We can at least earn our own living, and though poor mother cannot have all the luxuries she has been used to, she can live decently and without troubling anybody. And think how much worse it might have been. Suppose this had happened when we were all children, or there had not been enough to pay your father's debts!"

Yet the parting with George tried her courage to the uttermost. Nobody—not even he—knew how much she suffered. He was going to a dangerous climate, where war was always possible, and she knew that before they could meet again she must endure long years of apprehension and suspense. But heaven had blessed her with a brave heart and a sanguine temperament; she had been bred in the belief that an Infinite wisdom orders everything for the best, and though her heart was torn her spirit never faltered.

"You are going far away," she said, smiling through her tears, "and it may be long before we meet again. But we are both young and can wait and hope. And you will get your commission, I know you will, and come back a captain at least, and it will be ever so much more creditable to rise by merit than be promoted by purchase."

The evening before he left to join his regiment at Portsmouth, though a sore trial, was not without a certain melancholy satisfaction. The brothers seemed to be more drawn to each other than they had ever been before, to see further into each other's hearts than they had ever yet seen, and to love one another with a deeper love than they had yet known.

Before they separated for the night Cora opened the piano and played, and they all sang, the brothers with an arm round each other's neck, "Lord, abide with me." Their voices were half-choked with tears, and the same thought was in the minds of all, "When and where shall we three meet again?" But the beautiful hymned prayer, so full of trust and devout feeling, brought comfort to their souls, and they did not sorrow as those

without hope. In the years to come, though they brought new trials and vicissitudes, the memory of that last evening at Heathbeck Cottage never faded from the minds of the brothers and their cousin. It marked a turning point in their destinies.

CHAPTER X.—SAINTLY SAM.

ALFRED had of course abandoned all hope of returning to Oxford, and if it had not been for his mother and Cora, he would have followed George's example and accompanied him to India. He had not acquired a profession, and knew that he had no aptitude for business. But it was necessary for him to do something, and he gladly accepted the editorship of the *Calden Mercury*, for which he was indebted to Warton, who had been concerned in the winding up of his father's affairs, and was on friendly terms with Grindleton, the proprietor of the paper. The post was not a very lucrative one, the pay being only three pounds a week, but the duties were neither heavy nor uncongenial, and three pounds a week, added to his mother's income, made £290 a year.

Cora declared that they were positively rich, and as the emoluments of a private soldier are not exactly princely, it was resolved to spare George £20 a year. But this George positively refused; he would take only a pound a month so long as the regiment was in England; his pay and allowances in India, he said, would amply suffice for all his wants.

For a while all went smoothly, and though the trials they had undergone made them look older and graver than quite becomed their years, the young people were not unhappy. True, Mrs. Balmaine's health was always a source of anxiety, but the anxiety was not of that acute or agonising sort that renders life almost or altogether a burden. Then their income, though small, was sufficient, and George was able to give a good account of himself. Before leaving Portsmouth he had become a corporal, and a few months after the regiment landed in India, he got the much-coveted stripes.

"If we could only have a war," he wrote home, "I should get a commission in no time."

Cora was naturally greatly delighted, and Alfred's mind began to be much exercised as to how he, too, might better himself. Grindleton was not likely to raise his salary, and even if he were, he could not remain editor of the *Calden Mercury* to the end of his days. He had offered several contributions to the

London papers, and some had been accepted, but on the whole he had not been very fortunate, for Calder, as may be supposed, was fertile neither in incidents nor topics. The idea of trying to obtain a situation in London had occurred to him, but the *Mercury's* London correspondent, whom he consulted on the subject, told him that competition for employment was so keen among pressmen on the spot that his chances of success would be extremely remote. One paper alone that he mentioned had the names of more than a thousand applicants on its books. It was from the same correspondent that he heard of the situation in Switzerland. The pay offered was poor—no more than he was getting in Calder—but there was a possibility of advancement, and a certainty of enlarging his experience, both of journalism and of life. On these grounds his friends advised him to accept the appointment, and on this advice, as we have seen, Balmaine resolved to act.

A few months before this came to pass he had enlarged his experience in a way which was now causing him an infinity of embarrassment, and his cousin no little annoyance. The original, if indirect, cause of the trouble was a change of creed on the part of the gentleman whom Warton had irreverently denominated Saintly Sam, and stigmatised as a rogue. Mr. Hardy was the owner of the biggest factory in the borough of Calder, part proprietor of a print works, and principal partner in a brewery. He liked to boast that he was a self-made man, and was fond of pointing a moral with the tale of his own rise in life, which he ascribed to perseverance and integrity, and, above all, to a strict observance of the Sabbath. Some of his neighbours thought otherwise. They said he owed his prosperity chiefly to cunning and cupidity. Be that as it may, he was a shining light in a small sect of Separatists; and ran a Sunday-school in connection with his cotton factory. It was attended by the children of his workpeople, and taught by his overlookers, a good deal against the will of most of them. The functions of superintendent were undertaken by Mr. Hardy in person, and when he was present all went well, but when he was absent, and that happened pretty often, the school became a veritable pandemonium. The scholars mutinied, and the teachers lost their tempers. Forcing his people to attend his own conventicle, and paying them a minimum of wage for a maximum of work, did not tend to make Mr. Hardy either respected or beloved, and as he wended his way

homeward on a winter's night, he was often greeted (generally from behind a hedge) with a cry of "Sunday saint, work-day devil." This it was that led to his being called "Saintly Sam," and the nickname stuck.

Another good work which he undertook, or rather promoted, was the building of a new chapel. He subscribed, and persuaded others to subscribe, and as a further help, offered the stone (at a reduced price) from his own quarry, and engaged to buy the timber at Liverpool, where he bought his own, and so saved a dealer's profit. But a jealous and disappointed contractor, who had a good head for figures, and a shrewd knowledge of prices, protested, one night in the Cock bar, and offered to prove, that Sam had put the dealer's profit into his own pocket, and had made a good thing out of the stone. The saint, when he heard of it, denied the imputation, but a good many people did not believe him, and there was a terrible rumpus among the chapel folks, ending in a serious split. After an angry war of words, out of which Mr. Hardy did not come with flying colours, he went over, bag and baggage, to the enemy, or as they put it in Calder, he "turned Church."

The event caused as much excitement in the town as a contested election, and Mr. Balmaine, on the principle of rejoicing more over one repentant sinner than over ninety-and-nine just men, received Saintly Sam with open arms and made much of him in every way.

With the proverbial zeal of a new convert, Mr. Hardy became as strenuous a supporter of the Church as he had previously been of dissent; and to "make things look fuller," as Bob Rogers said, or out of pure spite, as his former co-religionists averred, he followed up his change of creed with a change of politics. His secession played havoc with the Liberal party. At the preceding election they had returned their man by a majority of ten votes; at the next the Tories won by a majority of fifty, for Saintly Sam had many electors in his employ, and their suffrages, as well as those of his tenants, were of course always at his disposal.

The Rector could not, of course, do otherwise than offer hospitality to his new convert (whose change of politics, as he flattered himself, was due to his influence). He invited him to dinner, and Sam asked Mr. and Mrs. Balmaine to tea. In this way a certain friendship was established between the two families, but their ideas and ideals were too divergent for them ever to become intimate. Sam could talk about little else

but business; and his wife, who was not a lady, had hardly a thought beyond her house and her children.

The loss of fortune and position did not deprive the Balmaines of any friends they cared to keep; and as for the Hardys, they showed so much sympathy that Cora, though she could not "cotton" to them, thought better of the Sainly Sams than she had ever thought before. To give Sam his due, he rather liked to be magnanimous when it cost him nothing, and he gave Alfred much fatherly advice, and asked him often to his house. In other days the young fellow would probably have accepted neither Mr. Hardy's patronage nor his invitations. Seeing, however, that Mr. Hardy was one of Calder's biggest men, and the most influential members of the party of which the *Mercury* was the organ, Balmaine found it expedient to accept both, and to treat his host with a great deal more respect than the latter deserved.

CHAPTER XI.—LIZZIE HARDY.

Now it so happened that Mr. Hardy possessed a daughter, who, a few months before the meeting at the Cock, had rounded off her education at a flashy finishing school in the neighbourhood of London. Lizzie was about nineteen. She had a shapely figure and a pretty face, large brown eyes and pink cheeks, well-cut lips, and a *nez retroussé*; a shallow nature, and a head full of romantic notions. She read three novels a week (not always of the right sort), besides sundry serial stories, and was quite ready to fall in love with any suitable hero whom destiny might throw in her way. Destiny threw in her way Alfred Balmaine, and he seemed to be endowed with every qualification she could desire or that a model lover ought to possess. He was poor (she hated the sordid rich), handsome (she could not bear ugly people), of gentle birth (the Balmaines were one of the oldest families in the county), and a writer (she adored literary men). So she decided to fall in love with Alfred, and without much effort succeeded in conceiving for him a strong fancy, if not a really warm affection. But she had studied her favourite romances too closely not to know how a heroine should behave, and she tried, not unsuccessfully, to let her preference be felt rather than seen. Alfred thought her a very nice girl, and as he had a great liking for music and she was a clever performer on the piano, he began to call at Waterfall House (as Mr. Hardy called his place) rather oftener than he need have done. Cora

judged Lizzie less favourably; thought her designing and insincere, and said so; but Alfred ascribed the remark to prejudice and want of knowledge, and its effect was to make him think more about Miss Hardy than before. As time went on, it more than once occurred to him that the pleasure which she seemed to take in his company might be due to something more than mere liking; but the idea, though flattering to his self-esteem, did not take root in his mind. Miss Hardy was not of a sort to fall in love with a poor man; and even if the way were made smooth for him, he did not feel that he should like to become Sainly Sam's son-in-law. All this time Lizzie was studying him like a book, and though he was much slower in succumbing than she expected, she was quite confident of bringing him eventually to her feet and playing a leading part in one of those scenes which she had so often in imagination rehearsed.

At length her opportunity came. She and Alfred were asked to a picnic. Cora had also been invited, but she did not like picnics, and sent an excuse. Had she gone she might have saved her cousin some embarrassment and no little anxiety.

The scene of the picnic was in a romantic valley, through which ran a swift river, bounded on one side by wooded heights, on the other by green meadows. There were the usual *al fresco* banquet, the usual dancing and champagne drinking, and a good deal of fun and laughter. Lizzie looked remarkably well, and was more than ordinarily affable. Once, when she and Alfred were whirling round in a galop, he (quite involuntarily, as he thought) squeezed both her hand and her waist more than was absolutely necessary. The pressure of his hand was returned, and when he looked down at her face, her eyes drooped, and a bright tell-tale blush mantled her cheeks. How pretty she looked! For the first time he felt himself in danger of falling in love; and if circumstances had been different—if that scoundrel Bradley had not robbed his father, and Sainly Sam had not been hers, he might have yielded to the impulse. But prudence and conscience bade him beware, and he was careful not to squeeze his partner's hand a second time.

After the dance a walk through the wood was proposed. When they were half way through, drops of rain began to fall, the trees swayed ominously to and fro, and a loud peal of thunder roused the echoes and startled the ladies. Then followed a general stampede for the nearest shelter, as to the exact

locality of which nobody seemed quite sure. Some ran one way, some another, and by the merest chance Balmaine and Miss Hardy found themselves running in the same direction.

"Where shall we go, Mr. Balmaine; where shall we go?" cried Lizzie.

"I think we had better get back to the Rowsley Arms, and unless I am mistaken, it is nearer this way than by the footpath."

"Oh, but I shall be quite wet through, and I am so much afraid of the thunder. Can we not shelter somewhere? Oh, did you see that flash?"

"Perhaps we shall come across a farmhouse or a labourer's cottage. Let us run as fast as we can. Take my arm."

"I am afraid I could not run as fast then. Would you mind giving me your hand?"

Alfred gave her his hand.

"It is good fun after all," she exclaimed merrily; "don't you think so?"

"Do you like it?"

"Yes; don't you?"

"Certainly;" and he did rather, though he was not without misgiving as to what might come of it all.

"Is not that a cottage?"

"It looks like one."

"It is one; don't you see the walls?"

It was a ruined keeper's cottage, picturesquely situated in a glade of the wood; and though the walls were bare and the roof had fallen in, there was a dry corner where one, and possibly two, could comfortably shelter. But it was a very little corner, and when Alfred had arranged a seat for Lizzie he moved a little on one side.

The rain came down more heavily.

"Oh, Mr. Balmaine," exclaimed Lizzie, looking up, "you are getting wet; won't you sit down?"

"There is no room, and if I do get a little wet it does not matter."

"It matters a great deal, and there is room; look here;" and she drew aside her skirts and shrank into a smaller compass.

"I should be sorry for you to get wet."

Alfred, feeling that it would be ungracious to refuse so kind an invitation, sat down on the log, but it was so tight a squeeze that he had to put his right arm behind her, and her head almost touched his shoulder.

A decidedly dangerous position for an unsophisticated young fellow with a soft heart and a weakness for a pretty face! And Lizzie looked particularly piquant just then. Her cheeks were flushed with exercise, her eyes bright with excitement, and a stray

lock which had escaped from its fastening floated across Alfred's shirt-front, and even brushed against his beard.

"Suppose some of the others should come here and surprise us!" was his thought.

"He must pop now. I wonder how he will do it?" was hers.

Then followed a rather long silence, which was broken by Lizzie asking Alfred if he had enjoyed himself.

"Awfully," was his reply.

"I am so glad," she murmured; "I have enjoyed it too. I do not think I ever enjoyed a picnic so much. That run through the wood was so exciting, and this old cottage is so romantic."

Alfred said something, but his answer was drowned in a terrific peal of thunder and a frightened scream.

"Oh, Mr. Balmaine!" and if his arm had not promptly encircled her waist Lizzie must have fallen backward on the grass. Her eyes closed, and with a deep-drawn sigh her head dropped on his shoulder. Her cheeks were blanched, for though the faint was a feint the fear was real.

Alfred never exactly knew what he said or how it came about, but the next moment Lizzie was clinging round his neck, whispering how happy he had made her and how much she loved him. His heart was touched and his *amour propre* flattered, and he felt that he could do nothing less than return her embrace and press his lips to hers.

"Dear Alfred," she murmured, "you love me. What happiness! But—but we'll keep it a secret; we won't tell anybody yet."

"Not even your father and mother?"

"Oh no. I am afraid that papa might be disagreeable. And it will be ever so much nicer and more romantic, don't you think, to keep our engagement a secret?"—"and deceive them all," she was going to add, but an instinctive feeling that the suggestion might not commend itself to her lover arrested the words on her lips.

This was a relief to Alfred, for although he did not like concealments, he shrank from asking Saintly Sam for permission to court his daughter. Though poor he could not forget he was a Balmaine; to sue for the hand of a vulgar manufacturer's daughter would not be pleasant; to be refused would be bitter humiliation.

"As you like," he said. "I shall not mention it to your father until you are willing that I should."

"Nor to anybody else."

"Nor to anybody else; and it is only fair

that I should tell you now that I am not in a position to marry, nor, for a long time to come, likely to be. My salary is very small, and I have to share it with my mother and aunt."

"How noble of you! But that is nothing; we can wait; and if you leave it to me to manage papa, I am sure he will do something for us."

In her heart she did not believe he would do anything of the sort, and Alfred thought that almost any alternative would be preferable to living on Mr. Hardy's bounty; but not wanting to hurt Lizzie's feelings, he kept this thought to himself, and returned an irrelevant answer.

By this time the storm had begun to abate, and shortly afterwards the rain ceased, and shouts were heard in the near distance.

"We must not let them find us together," cried Lizzie, starting up. "I will go to them, and you can join us in a few minutes."

No sooner said than done. She went one way, he another; and nobody either suspected that they had been together or asked awkward questions.

As Alfred wandered through the wood alone, thinking over the events of the day, he felt anything but satisfied with himself, and subsequent reflection served only to deepen his discontent. It was not merely that long engagements were proverbially objectionable, and for all that appeared to the contrary, years might elapse before he could afford to keep a wife; his first duty was to his mother and to Cora, whose fortune had gone down in the general wreck. Circumstanced as they were, it seemed selfish and almost cruel for him, the stay and support of the family, even to think of marrying. The very fact that he was engaged, when it became known, would, he felt sure, be a new source of anxiety both to his cousin and his mother. Even if there were no other objection—if his income were multiplied by ten—they could neither approve of his choice nor of the Hardy connection. If he had a real love for Lizzie, such love as he had heard and read of, this objection might not amount to much; they would waive it for his sake. But he could neither deny to them nor hide from himself that his fancy was far from being an absorbing passion. He had yielded to a momentary impulse, and he had an unpleasant sense—which, however, he soon dismissed as an ungenerous suspicion—that Lizzie had twisted a few hasty words into an avowal which deliberately and in cool blood he would never have made.

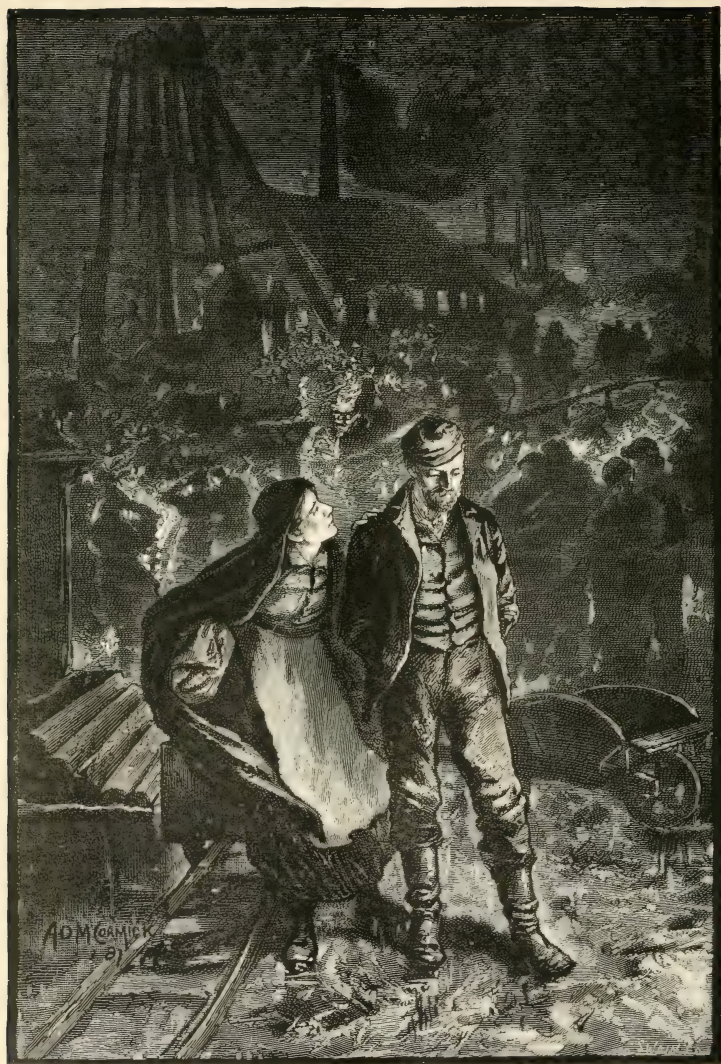
Of a surety he had not done wisely. Some may use a stronger word and say he acted like a fool. If he had been older or less impulsive he would probably have told Lizzie that she had made a mistake. If he had been less scrupulous he would have got out of the difficulty by ignoring the incident—said nothing more about it either to Lizzie or to anybody else. But Balmaine, though he was a young man, had old-fashioned ideas. He held that a promise once given, even by implication—above all, to a woman—should be faithfully observed, and this method of extrication never so much as occurred to him. Lizzie loved him; and he had led her, or allowed her to believe, that he loved her. That was enough. To say now that he did not love her would be both cruel and unmanly.

All this came to pass only about a month before Alfred heard of the situation in Switzerland, and though in the interval he received a good many letters from Lizzie, and answered some of them, and they had several times met, they had not yet been able to contrive a second *tête-à-tête*. Although his frequent visits to Waterfall House had begun to excite some remark, nobody suspected that they were secretly engaged, but a mistake of Lizzie's revealed their secret to Cora. She inadvertently put a letter intended for him into an envelope addressed to her.

So Alfred had to make a clean breast of it.

Cora was terribly annoyed; but after the first outburst she said very little, showing only by an occasional remark, either sarcastic or sorrowful, how deeply she was vexed and grieved. If the *fiancée* had been worthy of her cousin, some sweet girl whom she could have taken to her heart and cherished as a sister, she would not have cared—would have been rather pleased, in fact—for, like all true-hearted women, she took a warm interest in lovers' troubles and thought none the worse of a man for cherishing an imprudent passion. But Lizzie Hardy! She could not have believed that Alfred could be such a simpleton. Her only consolation was a strong conviction that sooner or later Lizzie would jilt him.

Not all this did she say to her cousin, but he guessed her thoughts, and in one way and another was far from happy. So the chance of going to Switzerland came most opportunely; for though he did not say so, there was nothing he so much wanted as to get away from Calder.



"I've brought you a change o' clothes and some victuals, Master Edward."

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE proprietors of the Old Blazer had no right to call upon the services of Ned Blane; but in such a case no man who was competent to discharge the duties of superintending the work of rescue could hesitate to obey the summons. Blane was doubly competent. His business duties as mine-surveyor had made him familiar with the workings, and in similar cases he had more than once given proof of courage and resource. He threw himself heart and soul into the work, and even forgot for an hour or two at a time that his sweetheart had that day married his rival, and that her marriage was likely to endanger her happiness. Now and then, in the very middle of his labours, the one thought or the other, or both together, would assail him with a sick pang; but there was no time to brood, and the pain had to be stifled and the intruding thought dismissed.

It was night time, and the roaring wind had fallen, to be followed by a thick drizzle. Great cages of fire burned here and there, and smeared the thick atmosphere with a murky light. The scattered crowd looked listless enough on the surface. The engines panted with a noise of fear and hurry, and echoes from the waste of darkness beyond the circle of the flaring cressets answered drearily. Faces shone like hot metal in the near light of the fires, or took a ghostly pallor as they stood against the borders of the darkness. Knots of shawled women waited motionless round the hovels by the pit's mouth; the rest of the lingerers moved purposelessly hither and thither, sliding and staggering about the slippery and uneven ground.

All was being done that could be done, and for the moment there was no more need of the man who felt most need of labour. He stood disconsolate near the mouth of the mine with his hands folded behind him and his eyes upon the ground. The drizzle was growing thicker, and the crowd, knowing that there was no hope of rescue, or even of early tidings, had begun to fall away, when he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and, turning, found Hepzibah by his side.

"I've brought you a change o' clothes and some victuals, Master Edward," she said, as

he turned upon her. "You should ha' sent a message to the missis. Dinner was kept waitin' for a hour and more. We've only just found out as you was here, though anybody but a set o' thick-heads might ha' guessed it."

He took the things from her half-mechanically, and having bestowed them in one of the hovels, came back into the rain and stood there looking gloomily about him. He had time to think now, and his thoughts were growing poignant. He felt like a man awaking to the consciousness of pain after some numbing and terrible disaster. Periods of enforced absence from the memory of trouble serve only to dam the tide of bitter thought, which flows all the more rapid, relentless, and overwhelming for having been obstructed. It is thus that the awakening from sleep is the most terrible event of the day to men who have to endure any profound sorrow of the heart. For a little while the bitterness has been forgotten, and then comes the payment for forgetfulness.

Hepzibah, who could guess something of her young master's troubles, though she was scarcely competent to calculate their forces, laid hands upon him and insisted on his return to the hovel, where she opened her basket and forced him to eat. He obeyed, but with a sick reluctance, being quite disgusted with himself for attending to mere bodily needs at all at such a moment, and inclined vaguely to be angry with himself even for having a body to attend to.

But, after all, if it were not for the pressing and imperative needs which sorrow finds so disgusting, grief would be almost, if not altogether, incurable; and the reluctant meal, the sleep that weary nature imposes on the sufferer, and the countless distasteful little duties the body lays upon us, are the ministers that woo us back to contentment and to peace of mind. No man is able to philosophise in this manner at the time when philosophy would be of greatest service to him; and, indeed, to all but the greatest and the wisest philosophy is a slippery and untrustworthy comrade, deserting us when we are most in need of his companionship, and pressing his advice upon us with great insistence and completeness of wisdom when our troubles are over and we have no special need of him. The function of philosophy in this regard may fairly be said to be invari-

ably to lock the stable door when the mare is stolen. A physician who will not prescribe in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred until the disease is cured, and who then appears with all the resources of the pharmacopœia at his back! A pilot who brings you a chart pedantically accurate in detail *after* you are shipwrecked! The police constable of popular satire, who is always in stately evidence too soon and too late!

Whilst Blane forced himself to eat, Hepzibah sat and watched him in silence; but when he pushed the food away and arose from the stool on which he had been seated, she broke into complaint and reproach. He paid no heed to her until she laid both hands upon his arm, and in her earnestness gave him just such an imperative little shake of command as she had been wont to use for the emphasis of reproof when he was a child. He laughed rather forlornly at this and turned upon her.

"Well, Hepzibah, what is it?"

"Why, it's just this," responded Hepzibah. "You've got your mother and the little uns to think of. There's nobody else in the whole wide world for them to look to but you, Master Edward, and—you understand me—it's no part of your business here to be doing anything rash and throwing your life away. I know—because Shadrach told me at the time—you went down the Old Tump when nobody else would go. And there wasn't a creetur there as saw you go as ever expected to see you back again. Don't you go playing any of them tricks here. And look here, Master Edward, you take heart; pluck up a bit of a sperrit and bethink yourself. There's as good fish in the sea as ever come out of it. Now don't you go jumpin' at me as if I'd stuck a pair of scissors into you. I shan't say no more; least said soonest mended; but a nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse. And now I'm going away, but not before I've got your promise to get into your dry clothes. If you say you'll do it, I know you'll do it; but I shan't go until you've promised."

He gave the promise and she went away, leaving him in the hovel alone. He opened the door, and, accosting one of the loungers, said—

"If anybody asks for me you can say I'm here. I'm going to get a change."

The man nodded in response; and when Ned had exchanged his saturated garments for the dry ones Hepzibah had brought him he sat down and surrendered himself to his own comfortless reflections.

After the space of some half-hour or thereabouts a knock came to the door, and the man who had accosted him outside entered.

"Here's Mr. Hackett asking for you, sir," he said.

"Mr. Hackett!" cried Blane, rising in surprise and fear. He could think of nothing but some sudden misfortune which could have brought his rival there at such a time, and he went out to meet him with the feelings a man may have who walks to the gallows.

"Hillo, Ned!" cried Hackett's voice as Blane emerged from the hovel, and turning round in the direction of the voice the surveyor saw his rival swaggering, with his feet planted wide apart and a bottle in his hand.

"They told me you were in charge here," said Will, "and I snatched a minute or two to run up and see how things were going on. I've brought a drop of comfort for the fellows who're at work here. Pass it round, boys."

He handed the bottle to the man standing nearest him, and the fellow took a pull at it, and after politely wiping it on the sleeve of his coaly flannel jacket, passed it to the next.

Hackett, glistening from heel to shoulder in a long india-rubber waterproof coat, and with a felt hat stuck rakishly at the back of his head, had his face turned away from the glare of the cresset, so that his old companion could but dimly discern his features.

Blane's unformed fears of half a minute earlier were gone, but a terror as great and more tangible was in its stead. He advanced without a word, and seizing Hackett by the sleeve, turned him round gently but firmly and brought his face into the light. He knew then what he had only guessed before. The bridegroom had been drinking.

"You have no business here at such a time as this," he said roughly. "Go home."

"No business here!" said Hackett. "Why have I got no business here?"

"You know as well as I do," Blane responded with a choking and rapid voice, "why you have no business here to-night. Come with me."

He had kept his hold upon Hackett's arm during this brief exchange of words, and now, gripping him harder than he knew, he was leading him away. Hackett twisted his arm from the other's hold and laughed.

"Don't you fret about me, Ned Blane," he said with a laugh. "I'm perfectly right where I am, and I know what I'm doing."

Did you ever read the life of that great and good man, Doctor Johnson, Ned?"

"Never you mind that great and good man, Doctor Johnson, just at present," said Blane, who by this time, between wrath and anguish, was as white as a sheet. "You go home."

"I'm taking a leaf out of his book, my boy," said Hackett. "There's nothing like having the reins in your own hands at starting."

Such a tempest of anger raged through Blane's mind that it was a matter of wonder to him afterwards that he did not then and there knock Will Hackett down. But he restrained himself and, turning abruptly, walked back to the squalid shelter he had so recently quitted, and closed the door behind him. He sat down, but the passion in his mind brought him to his feet again in a second, and he prowled to and fro in the limited space at his command, torn with wrath and pity and almost maddened by the sense of his own helplessness. He must stand by and look as if it were nothing to him that the girl he loved with all his heart should have thrown her life away. The confinement in which he stood seemed to stifle him, but he dared not venture into the outer air, passionately as he seemed to crave for space and room, for fear of again encountering Hackett and being tortured into some act of violence and despair, which would only proclaim his own misery and could serve no good end in the world.

He was alone wrestling with himself for a full hour, and at the end of that time he was called out to some small duty. He got through it doggedly, compelling himself to listen and understand with as strenuous an urgency and compulsion as would have been needed to hold a struggling man physically, and then betook himself to a waste field hard by, and there walked up and down in the darkness and the rain.

He did not know how long he had been thus occupied when a voice hailed him excitedly, and he ran, shouting in answer, towards the engine-house. The little remnant of the day's crowd was gathered closely about it as he entered, and he had to push his way through with some force until he was recognised and room was made for him to pass. Three or four of the more intelligent and instructed of the workmen were gathered in the engine-room, and with them was a mine-surveyor—one Atkinson—who had a little while before arrived on the scene prepared to tender his services in case of need.

"Here's a strange thing, Blane," said the new arrival, shaking hands with him. "The water in the shaft has gone down thirty feet within the last ten minutes. It can't have gone down in the shaft without having gone down in the workings, and a draught like that can't mean anything but this: the weight of water has broken into some lower workings that I don't know of, and the Blazer is more than two-thirds drained already."

In the excitement of this news Blane forgot his personal griefs, and instantly became master of himself and the situation. He called for the plan of the mine, studied it for a moment, and then turned quietly upon his fellow volunteer.

"We can get at them now," he said. "The fall in the water has left bare this old air-way, which is bricked up in the shaft. We must break through at once. Shadrach, rig things up in the down cast. Meshach"—this was Shadrach's brother—"get lamps and picks. See that the lamp casings are watertight."

The two men were gone about their several affairs as briskly as the orders were conveyed.

"I'll make one," said the new volunteer. "But it's likely to be a wet job and I'll borrow a suit of flannels from one of you chaps. And you'd better do the same, Blane. It'll be well to have dry things to come up to."

The little crowd outside was excited but intensely quiet. The shawled women stood like grouped statues in the red glare of the cressets and the murk of the night. Preparations were made rapidly, without noise or bustle, and in a few minutes the rescue-party was ready to descend. It consisted of Blane, his momentary colleague, Shadrach, and two others—all tried and experienced men who knew that they might be venturing upon a desperate enterprise, but had faced the like so often that scarcely a nerve fluttered among them.

They entered the skip which hung over the black cavern of the pit's mouth. The word was given and they swung downward with a last look at the smoky flare of the fires in the iron cages and the Rembrandtesque faces of the anxious watchers gathered round. Few words were spoken as they descended, and the few, short, sharp, and to the purpose. The gleaming walls of the shaft reflected the light of the lamps and seemed to shoot upwards in streaks of fire and blackness whilst the travellers stood still. In a minute the floor of the skip began to heave beneath their feet like the deck of a boat at sea—answering to the regulation of the engine on the

bank—and a second or two later they came gently to a standstill.

"Here," said Blane, striking the bricked-wall resoundingly with the point of a pick.

Shadrach lay on the floor of the skip at full length, face downwards. The two other miners steadied him as he hung chest and shoulders over the black space. He worked the point of the pick into a crevice of the wall, and after a tug or two out came a brick and fell with a splash into the water, which, from a couple of fathoms lower down, reflected the light of the safety-lamps with a sulky and oily gleam. He and his companions peering into the hole thus made saw nothing but what looked like a solid darkness.

"Go on," said Blane. "That's the place. You'll be through directly."

Shadrach worked industriously, and the bricks fell fast until there was a hollow made big enough easily to admit of the passage of a man. Shadrach bridged the chasm between the skip and the wall with his body and wormed himself carefully through the orifice he had made; then turning, thrust out a hand for his lamp.

"It's deadly wet," said Shadrach. "I'm up to mid-thigh in it."

Nobody spoke in answer to this statement, but, man by man, bridged the chasm and entered upon the air-way. When all were landed they set out upon a difficult and broken road, which in places was so low that they were compelled to go snakewise, and even then came into occasional contact with the sharp ridges of the roof. By-and-by the road dipped suddenly. The passage was higher at this point than it had been hitherto and the men could stand in a crouching posture whilst they paused to take breath. Blane went down upon his hands and knees, and thrusting his lamp before him surveyed the depression in front.

"Lads," he said, turning and looking upwards at his companions, "there's water here. I fancy we shall have to dive for it."

"That'll be queer work," said his fellow-surveyor gravely. "It'll be a bad business for anybody who gets stuck down there. And who's to know whether the road rises again and gets free of water? And if it does, who's to say what the distance is?"

"I'll try it feet foremost," said Ned Blane. "I shall come out of it easiest that way if I find the road too narrow or too long. If you get a tap from the other side you'll know it's pretty easy to follow."

He blew out the light of the lamp, and encased the lamp itself in a waterproof tin

box which was suspended about his shoulder. Then kneeling down again he slipped feet foremost into the black water and slowly disappeared from sight, his companions following every motion with eager glances until the water closed over his head, and a bubble or two rose upon its inky surface. The little pool lapped its boundaries idly and noiselessly, and the watchers, crouching immobile and silent, kept their eyes upon it. Suddenly it ebbed by three or four inches, and a second or two later was heard a muffled and inward tap, tap, tap, from beyond it.

"Who goes next?" asked the volunteer. "Be careful about your lamps and matches, lads."

The Bard put out his lamp, encased it as his predecessor had done, and slipped backwards into the water. Then his companions followed. The volunteer, having put out his light, fumbled in the dark awhile to fix it in its case, and then went after the others. When he had emerged upon the farther side, he found a lamp or two already relighted, and in a while the journey was begun again. The road still presented the same characteristics. At times they could walk stooping, at times they could make their way upon their hands and knees, and again at times they were compelled to crawl.

On a sudden, when they were in the straitest pass they had yet come to, the leader's light went out. The lamp of the man behind him followed suit.

"Get back, for your lives," shouted Blane; "the choke damp's on us!"

In the narrow way there was no room to turn, but they shuffled backward with breathless haste, tearing their thick clothes against the jagged roof, and wounding hands and knees upon the broken way below. Another lamp went out, and then another. But by this time they had reached a less difficult portion of the air-way, and were making more rapid progress.

"We shall be all right on the other side of the water," said Blane. "The gas can't get past that."

They hurried on by the light of the foremost lamp, which by good hap was still burning, until they reached the water. And here, by some disaster, the lamp went out. One after the other they struggled through this gap of safety. The volunteer, having been the last to enter, was first to leave. Arriving on the safety-side he took a match from its waterproof case and struck it. His comrades came up one by one, dripping and breathless: one—two—three.

"All here?" asked Blane, as he emerged, shaking himself like a dog, and wringing the foul water from his hair and face.

"No," said one of the men. "Where's Shade?"

Shadrach was absent. They waited for a little time, and the volunteer surveyor ignited one match at another whilst they watched and listened.

"This is getting serious," said Blane. "I must go back for him."

"It's mere madness to go back," answered the volunteer gravely.

"Madness or no," said Blane, "I'm going;" and this was the last word spoken. His comrades offered no opposition to his design, and once more he slid backwards into the pool and disappeared. Half-way through his foot touched something which instinct rather than memory told him had not been there upon his first or second passage. It was difficult working his way past it, but

when he had got far enough to touch it with his hand his fingers grasped the hair of the missing man. He forced himself a little farther, and took hold of the rough collar of a flannel coat, slimy and saturated. Then began a terrible and almost hopeless struggle. The pent breath in his body seemed fit to burst him. His temples throbbed horribly, and he could hear a ding-dong as of some monstrous bell. The watery blackness turned blood-red, and with every tug he gave at the dragging body of the man he risked his life, for he felt as though he must draw breath or die. Fortunately for the two lives this awful struggle was of brief duration. Blane came gasping and spouting out of the water into the black darkness of the air-way, and having drawn but a single rejoicing and mighty inspiration, set both hands to the soaked collar still below the water, and with one great heave dragged the half-drowned and insensible man to safety.

(To be continued.)

THE SUN'S HEAT.

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FIRST PAPER.

FROM human history we know that for several thousand years the sun has been giving heat and light to the earth as at present, possibly with some considerable fluctuations, and possibly with some not very small progressive variation. The records of agriculture, and the natural history of plants and animals within the time of human history, abound with evidence that there has been no exceedingly great change in the intensity of the sun's heat and light within the last three thousand years; but for all that, there may have been variations of quite as much as 5 or 10 per cent., as we may judge by considering that the intensity of the solar radiation to the earth is $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. greater in January than in July; and neither at the equator nor in the northern or southern hemispheres has this difference been discovered by experience or general observation of any kind. But as for the mere age of the sun, irrespective of the question of uniformity, we have proof of something vastly more than three thousand years in geological history, with its irrefragable evidence of continuity of life on the earth in

time past for tens of thousands, and probably for millions of years.

Here, then, we have a splendid subject for contemplation and research in natural philosophy or physics, the science of dead matter. The sun, a mere piece of matter of the moderate dimensions which we know it to have, bounded all round by cold ether,* has been doing work at the rate of four hundred and seventy-six thousand million million million horse-power for three thousand years, and possibly more, certainly not much less, for a few million years. How is this to be explained? Natural philosophy cannot evade the question, and no physicist who is not engaged in trying to answer it can have any

* The sun warms and lights the earth by wave motion, excited in virtue of his white-hot temperature, and transmitted through a material commonly called the luminiferous ether, which fills all space as far as the remotest star, and has the property of transmitting radiant heat (or light) without itself becoming heated. I feel that I have a right to drop the adjective luminiferous, because the medium, far above the earth's surface, through which we receive sun-heat (or light), and through which the planets move, was called ether 2,000 years before chemists usurped the name for "sulphuric ether," "muriatic ether," and other compounds, fancifully supposed to be peculiarly ethereal; and I trust that chemists of the present day will not be angry with me if I use the word ether, pure and simple, to denote the medium whose undulatory motions constitute radiant heat (or light).

other justification than that his whole working time is occupied with work on some other subject or subjects of his province by which he has more hope of being able to advance science.

It may be taken as an established result of scientific inquiry that the sun is *not* a burning fire, and *is* merely a white-hot fluid mass cooling, with some little accession of fresh energy by meteors occasionally falling in, of very small account in comparison with the whole energy of heat which he gives out from year to year. Helmholtz's form of the meteoric theory of the origin of the sun's heat, may be accepted as having the highest degree of scientific probability that can be assigned to any assumption regarding actions of prehistoric times. The essential principle of the explanation is this: at some period of time, long past, the sun's initial heat was generated by the collision of pieces of matter gravitationally attracted together from distant space to build up his present mass; and shrinkage due to cooling gives, through the work done by the mutual gravitation of all parts of the shrinking mass, the vast heat-storage capacity in virtue of which the cooling has been, and continues to be, so slow.

In some otherwise excellent books it is "paradoxically" stated that the sun is becoming hotter because of the condensation. Paradoxes have no place in science. Their removal is the substitution of true for false statements and thoughts, not always so easily effected as in the present case. The truth is, that it is because the sun is becoming less hot that his mass is allowed to yield gradually under the condensing tendency of gravity: and thus from age to age cooling and condensation go on together.

An essential detail of Helmholtz's theory of solar heat is that the sun must be fluid, because even though given at any moment hot enough from the surface to any depth, however great, inwards, to be brilliantly incandescent, the conduction of heat from within through solid matter of even the highest conducting quality known to us, would not suffice to maintain the incandescence of the surface for more than a few hours, after which all would be darkness. Observation confirms this conclusion so far as the outward appearance of the sun is concerned, but does not suffice to disprove the idea which was so eloquently set forth by Sir John Herschel, and which prevailed till thirty or forty years ago, that the sun is a solid nucleus inclosed in a sheet of violently agitated flame. In reality, the matter of the

outer shell of the sun, from which the heat is radiated outwards, must in cooling become denser, and so becoming unstable in its high position, must fall down, and hotter fluid from within must rush up to take its place. The tremendous currents thus continually produced in this great mass of flaming fluid constitute the province of the newly developed science of solar physics, which, with its marvellous instrument of research—the spectroscope—is yearly and daily giving us more and more knowledge of the actual motions of the different ingredients, and of the splendid and all-important resulting phenomena.

To form some idea of the amount of the heat which is being continually carried up to the sun's surface and radiated out into space, and of the dynamical relations between it and the solar gravitation, let us first divide that prodigious number (476×10^{21}) of horse-power by the number (6.1×10^{18}) of square metres* in the sun's surface, and we find 78,000 horse-power as the mechanical value of the radiation per square metre. Imagine, then, the engines of eight ironclads applied, by ideal mechanism of countless shafts, pulleys, and belts, to do all their available work of, say 10,000 horse-power each, in perpetuity driving one small paddle in a fluid contained in a square metre vat. The same heat will be given out from the square metre* surface of the fluid as is given out from every square metre of the sun's surface.

But now to pass from a practically impossible combination of engines and a physically impossible paddle and fluid and containing vessel, towards a more practical combination of matter for producing the same effect: still keep the ideal vat and paddle and fluid, but place the vat on the surface of a cool, solid, homogeneous globe of the same size (697,000 kilometres radius) as the sun, and of density (1.4) equal to the sun's

* A square metre is about $10\frac{1}{2}$ (more nearly $10\frac{3}{4}$) square feet, or a square yard and a fifth (more nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ square yards). The metre is a little less than 40 inches ($39\frac{3}{4}$ inches = 3.281 feet = 1.094 yards). The kilometre, which we shall have to use presently, being a thousand metres, is a short mile as it were ($\frac{1}{2}$ of the British statute mile). Thus in round numbers 62 statute miles is equal to 100 kilometres, and 161 kilometres is equal to 100 statute miles. The awful and unnecessary toil and waste of brain power involved in the use of the British system of inches, feet, yards, perches, or rods, or poles, "chains," furlongs, British statute miles, nautical miles, square rod (30 $\frac{1}{2}$ square yards) ! rood (1,210 square yards) ! acre (4 roods), may be my apology but it is only a part of my reason, for not reckoning the sun's area in acres, his activity in horse-power per square inch or per square foot, and his awful and the earth's distance from him in British statute miles, and for using exclusively the one-denominational system introduced by the French ninety years ago, and now in common use in every civilised country of the world, except England and the United States of North America. The British ton is 1.016 times the French ton, or weight of a cubic metre of cold water, or 1,016 kilogrammes. The French ton, of 1,000 kilogrammes, is $\frac{1}{2542}$ of the British ton. Thus for many practical reckonings, such as those of the present paper, the difference between the British and the French ton may be neglected.

density. Instead of using steam-power, let the paddle be driven by a weight descending in a pit excavated below the vat. As the simplest possible mechanism, take a long vertical shaft, with the paddle mounted on the top of it so as to turn horizontally. Let the weight be a nut working on a screw-thread on the vertical shaft, with guides to prevent the nut from turning—the screw and the guides being all absolutely frictionless. Let the pit be a metre square at its upper end, and let it be excavated quite down to the sun's centre, everywhere of square horizontal section, and tapering uniformly to a point in the centre. Let the weight be simply the excavated matter of the sun's mass, with merely a little clearance space between it and the four sides of the pit, and a kilometre or so cut off the lower pointed end to allow space for its descent. The mass of this weight is 326 million tons. Its heaviness, three-quarters of the heaviness of an equal mass at the sun's surface, is 244 million tons solar surface-heaviness. Now a horse-power is, per hour, 270 metre-tons, terrestrial surface-heaviness; or 10 metre-tons, solar surface-heaviness, because a ton of matter is twenty-seven times as heavy at the sun's surface as at the earth's. To do 78,000 horse-power, or 780,000 metre-tons solar surface-heaviness per hour, our weight must therefore descend at the rate of 1 metre in 313 hours, or about 28 metres per year.

To advance another step, still through impracticable mechanism, towards the practical method by which the sun's heat is produced, let the thread of the screw be of uniformly decreasing steepness from the surface downwards, so that the velocity of the weight, as it is allowed to descend by the turning of the screw, shall be in simple proportion to distance from the sun's centre. This will involve a uniform condensation of the material of the weight; but a condensation so exceedingly small in the course even of tens of thousands of years, that, whatever be the supposed character, metal or stone, of the weight, the elastic resistance against the condensation will be utterly imperceptible in comparison with the gravitational forces with which we are concerned. The work done per metre of descent of the top end of the weight will be just four-fifths of what it was when the thread of the screw was uniform. Thus, to do the 78,000 horse-power of work, the top end of the weight must descend at the rate of 35 metres per year, or 70 kilometres per 2,000 years.

Now let the whole surface of our cool

solid sun be divided into squares, for example as nearly as may be of one square metre area each, and let the whole mass of the sun be divided into long inverted pyramids or pointed rods, each 697,000 kilometres long, with their points meeting at the centre. Let each be mounted on a screw, as already described for the long tapering weight which we first considered; and let the paddle at the top end of each screw-shaft revolve in a fluid, not now confined to a vat, but covering the whole surface of the sun to a depth of a few metres or kilometres. Arrange the viscosity of the fluid and the size of each paddle so as to let the paddle turn just so fast as to allow the top end of each pointed rod to descend at the rate of 35 metres per year. The whole fluid will, by the work which the paddles do in it, be made incandescent, and it will give out heat and light to just about the same amount as is actually done by the sun. If the fluid be a few thousand kilometres deep over the paddles, it would be impossible, by any of the appliances of solar physics, to see the difference between our model mechanical sun and the true sun.

To do away with the last vestige of impracticable mechanism, in which the heavinesses of all parts of each long rod are supported on the thread of an ideal screw cut on a vertical shaft of ideal matter, absolutely hard and absolutely frictionless: first, go back a step to our supposition of just one such rod and screw working in a single pit excavated down to the centre of the sun, and let us suppose all the rest of the sun's mass to be rigid and absolutely impervious to heat. Warm up the matter of the pyramidal rod to such a temperature that its material melts and experiences as much of Sir Humphrey Davy's "repulsive motion" as suffices to keep it balanced as a fluid, without either sinking or rising from the position in which it was held by the thread of the screw. When the matter is thus held up without the screw, take away the screw or let it melt in its place. We should thus have a pit from the sun's surface to his centre, of a square metre area at the surface, full of incandescent fluid, which we may suppose to be of the actual ingredients of the solar substance. This fluid, having at the first instant the temperature with which the paddle left it, would at the first instant continue radiating heat just as it did when the paddle was kept moving; but it would quickly become much cooler at its surface, and to a distance of a few metres down. Currents of less hot fluid tumbling down,

and hotter fluid coming up from below, in irregular whirls, would carry the cooled fluid down from the surface, and bring up hotter fluid from below, but this mixing could not go on through a depth of very many metres to a sufficient degree to keep up anything approaching to the high temperature maintained by the paddle; and after a few hours or days, solidification would commence at the surface. If the solidified matter floats on the fluid, at the same temperature, below it, the crust would simply thicken as ice on a lake thickens in frosty weather; but if, as is more probable, solid matter, of such ingredients as the sun is composed of, sinks in the liquid when both are at the melting temperature of the substance, thin films of the upper crust would fall in, and continue falling in, until, for several metres downwards, the whole mass of mixed solid and fluid becomes stiff enough (like the stiffness of paste or of mortar) to prevent the frozen film from falling down from the surface. The surface film would then quickly thicken, and in the course of a few hours or days become less than red-hot on its upper surface, the whole pit full of fluid would go on cooling with extreme slowness until, after possibly about a million million million years or so, it would be all at the same temperature as the space to which its upper end radiates.

Let precisely what we have been considering be done for every one of our pyramidal rods, with, however, in the first place, thin partitions of matter impervious to heat separating every pit from its four surrounding neighbours. Precisely the same series of events as we have been considering will take place in every one of the pits.

Suppose the whole complex mass to be rotating at the rate of once round in twenty-five days, which is, about as exactly as we know it, the time of the sun's rotation about his axis.

Now at the instant when the paddle stops let all the partitions be annulled, so that there shall be perfect freedom for currents to flow unresisted in any direction, except so far as resisted by the viscosity of the fluid, and leave the piece of matter, which we may now call the Sun, to himself. He will immediately begin showing all the phenomena known in solar physics. Of course the observer might have to wait a few years for sunspots, and a few quarter-centuries to discover periods of sunspots, but they would, I think I may say probably, all be there just as they are, because I think we may feel that it is most probable that all

these actions are due to the sun's own mass, and not to external influences of any kind. It is, however, quite possible, and indeed many who know most of the subject think it probable, that some of the chief phenomena due to sunspots arise from influxes of meteoric matter circling round the sun.

The energy of chemical combination is as nothing compared with the gravitational energy of shrinkage, to which the sun's activity is almost wholly due. A body falling forty-six kilometres to the sun's surface *or through the sun's atmosphere*, has as much work done on it by gravity, as corresponds to a high estimate of chemical energy in the burning of combustible materials. But chemical combinations and dissociations may, as urged by Lockyer, in his book on the "Chemistry of the Sun," just now published, be thoroughly potent determining influences on some of the features of non-uniformity of the brightness in the grand phenomena of sunspots, hydrogen flames, and corona, which make the province of solar physics. But these are questions belonging to a very splendid branch of solar science to which only allusion can be made in the present article.

What concerns us as to the explanation of sun-light and sun-heat may be summarised in two propositions:—

(1) Gigantic currents throughout the sun's liquid mass are continually maintained by fluid, slightly cooled by radiation, falling down from the surface, and hotter fluid rushing up to take its place.

(2) The work done in any time by the mutual gravitation of all the parts of the fluid, as it shrinks in virtue of the lowering of its temperature, is but little less than (so little less than, that we may regard it as practically equal to) the dynamical equivalent of the heat that is radiated from the sun in the same time.

The rate of shrinkage corresponding to the present rate of solar radiation has been proved to us, by the consideration of our dynamical model, to be 35 metres on the radius per year, or one ten-thousandth of its own length on the radius per two thousand years. Hence, if the solar radiation has been about the same as at present for two hundred thousand years, his radius must have been greater by one per cent. two hundred thousand years ago than at present. If we wish to carry our calculations much farther back or forward than two hundred thousand years, we must reckon by differences of the reciprocal of the sun's radius, and not by differences simply of the radius, to take into

account the change of density (which, for example, would be three per cent. for one per cent. change of the radius). Thus the rule, easily worked out according to the principles illustrated by our mechanical model, is this :—

— Equal differences of the reciprocal of the radius correspond to equal quantities of heat radiated away from million of years to million of years.

Take two examples —

(1) If in past time there has been as much as fifteen million times the heat radiated from the sun as is at present radiated out in one year, the solar radius must have been four times as great as at present.

(2) If the sun's effective thermal capacity can be maintained by shrinkage till twenty million times the present year's amount of heat is radiated away, the sun's radius must be half what it is now. But it is to be remarked that the density which this would imply, being 11·2 times the density of water, or just about the density of lead, is probably too great to allow the free shrinkage as of a cooling gas to be still continued without obstruction through overcrowding of the molecules. It seems, therefore, most probable that we cannot for the future reckon on more of solar radiation than, if so much as, twenty million times the amount at present radiated out in a year. It is also to be remarked that the greatly diminished radiating surface, at a much lower temperature, would give out annually much less heat than the sun in his present condition gives. The same considerations led Newcomb to the conclusion "that it is hardly likely that the sun can continue to give sufficient heat to support life on the earth (such life as we now are acquainted with, at least) for ten million years from the present time."

In all our calculations hitherto we have for simplicity taken the density as uniform throughout, and equal to the true mean density of the sun, being about 1·4 times the density of water, or about a quarter of the earth's mean density. In reality the density in the upper parts of the sun's mass must be something less than this, and something considerably more than this in the central parts,

because of the pressure in the interior increasing to something enormously great at the centre. If we knew the distribution of interior density we could easily modify our calculations accordingly; but it does not seem probable that the correction could, with any probable assumption as to the greatness of the density throughout a considerable proportion of the sun's interior, add more than a few million years to the past of solar heat, and what could be added to the past must be taken from the future.

In our calculations we have taken Pouillet's number for the total activity of solar radiation, which practically agrees with Herschel's. Forbes ("Edin. New Phil. Journal," xxxvi. 1844) showed the necessity for correcting the mode of allowing for atmospheric absorption used by his two predecessors in estimating the total amount of solar radiation, and he was thus led to a number 1·6 times theirs. Forty years later Langley, in an excellently worked out consideration of the whole question of absorption by our atmosphere, of radiant heat of all wave-lengths ("American Journal of Science," vol. xxv. March, 1883), accepts and confirms Forbes's reasoning, and by fresh observations in very favourable circumstances on Mount Whitney, 15,000 feet above the sea-level, finds a number a little greater still than Forbes (1·7, instead of Forbes's 1·6, times Pouillet's number). Thus Langley's measurement of solar radiation corresponds to 133,000 horse-power per square metre, instead of the 78,000 horse-power which we have taken, and diminishes each of our times in the ratio of 1 to 1·7. Thus, instead of Helmholtz's twenty million years, which was founded on Pouillet's estimate, we have only twelve millions, and similarly with all our other time reckonings based on Pouillet's results. In the circumstances, and taking fully into account all possibilities of greater density in the sun's interior, and of greater or less activity of radiation in past ages, it would, I think, be exceedingly rash to assume as probable anything more than twenty million years of the sun's light in the past history of the earth, or to reckon on more than five or six million years of sunlight for time to come.

(To be concluded next month.)

LONGFELLOW.

By FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

WHEN Longfellow came to Harvard College, in Cambridge, Mass., as professor (1836), a great change had been taking place with regard to the literature of the United States in its relations to the religious sentiment and to the life of the nation. The change was vital and far reaching, but only some of its results can be mentioned in the limits of this article. Literature virtually had a new birth: it was the New England *Renaissance*. The arid and unproductive period had passed. Song and story, history and essay were appearing, fresh in themselves, and in a new atmosphere, charged with the newly-awakened sentiment of nationality. Such changes are not to be assigned precise dates, but so much is clear, that while the colonial period in New England was barren and dreary, and while the provincial period was occupied with political problems, there was in fact no growth of pure literature until after the group of states was becoming strong and self-reliant as a nation—a period that began in the first quarter of the present century.

Of the eminent American writers, omitting Franklin, Jefferson, and Jonathan Edwards, only Irving, Cooper, and Bryant preceded Longfellow; and the bulk of all that does honour to the nation has been written since he settled in Cambridge.

His connection with the college lasted eighteen years, and his services were practical and valuable. He superintended the instruction in modern languages, and gave extempore discourses. In the time of Professor Lowell, his successor, the college was gradually becoming a university, and that eminent scholar gave lectures upon the literatures, including the English classics, as upon Dante, Cervantes, Goethe, Chaucer and Shakespeare. But nothing of this kind was expected in Longfellow's time, and the poet could give all his leisure and power to his verses.

The college faculty, a pretty large body, and the people of taste and leisure, attracted to Cambridge as a place of residence, formed the high society, and gave the town its character. These, though simple in dress and living, were courteously remote from the shop-keeping and artisan class. The tone of society was ideally beautiful; the distinction was wholly in intellect and manners. Frequent informal visits prevailed;

people "dropped in" upon each other as students do. Men whose heads were occupied with great ideas did not require sumptuous suppers, but talked over simple repasts, with pipes and cigars for dessert.

It was a time of transition. The ancient, spectacled professor, with clean-shaven face and pointed standing collar, whose learning ran in grooves, and whose tone was so comically pedantic, was receding like the aborigines, and new men with modern ideas and broader scholarship were coming on. A few of the veterans still lingered, like those whose portraits may be seen in Lowell's "Cambridge, Thirty Years Ago."

Longfellow was known in all these circles, and he was the one man who was unreservedly loved, for he had both the goodness and the tact to say the pleasant word at the proper time, and to avoid the dilemmas in which hasty and unreflective men sometimes find themselves. Still, he was a comparatively rare visitor, even with those who knew him well; not from reserve, nor from a false sense of dignity, or from the isolation of pride, but from fixed domestic habits, and love of quiet. His intimacies were few, beyond the associates known as the "Five of Clubs." These were Sumner, afterwards the distinguished Senator; Hillard, author of "Six Months in Italy," a man of brilliant parts, of whom much was expected, and who just missed renown; Felton, the great-hearted and jovial professor of Greek, and Charles Amory, of Boston. Later, he had other and even nearer friends—this was in 1854 and afterward, the period in which I came to know him. Most of all he visited the Nortons, the family of the late Professor Andrews Norton, at Shady Hill, one of the most attractive places in the neighbourhood. It was a charming and accomplished family, of whom I will only mention the son, now professor of Art, and well known as the editor of the Emerson-Carlyle letters. Another intimate friend was Agassiz, the naturalist, a man of the utmost simplicity and bonhomie, enthusiastic, breezy, and inspiring. Very few days passed without their meeting: their natures differed but harmonized, and they became necessary to each other. They were not only neighbours at Cambridge, but at Nahant, the rocky peninsula, where they spent their summers. Mention should also be made of

Parsons, the poet, who made a translation of Dante in the difficult triple rhyme, and of Monti, an Italian, devoted to the great poets of his country, both of whom are referred to in the "Tales of a Wayside Inn." Monti is the "Sicilian," whose vivid portrait all readers must remember, especially his moustaches, that

"Shot sideways, like a swallow's wings."

When the *Atlantic Monthly* was started, the first gathering of the contributors was at a dinner, and this grew into a monthly meeting, which lasted as long as the original publishers lived. Longfellow wrote some of his most admired poems for that magazine, and he was seldom absent from the dinners. The leading men were then in their prime, and the conversation at the tables was brilliant, almost beyond parallel. I think Longfellow at those dinners met more of the writers of the country than in any other period of his life. He had become rather grave, and some thought him sad, but he had a touch of sympathy with young blood, and his presence was anything but a restraint upon festivity.

Readers may wish to know how Cambridge looks. The central square is three miles from Boston; the college buildings adjacent are placed in ample spaces, and embosomed in fine trees. The region is flat, and the Charles River, a slow and tortuous stream, creeps through miles of salt marshes, struggling with the tides. The grassy marshes, far-gleaming and changeable as watered silk, turn to purple and brown in autumn, and later to yellow and grey; and with the willows that here and there fringe the river, with the white sails of occasional schooners, and with the distant villas and wooded slopes beyond, form the background of scenes that Cambridge poets love.

The tourist, after leaving the college grounds, skirts the common, at one corner of which once stood the Holmes house, passes by the Washington elm, under which the Virginian general took command of the patriot army at the beginning of the revolution, and soon comes to Brattle Street, on which stands Longfellow's house, half a mile from the college. This is a spacious and stately mansion in the style of the last century, built of wood, painted cream-colour, substantial and well preserved. The grounds have magnificent elms, a native species whose wide-spreading tops—in form like Etruscan vases—have a beauty unknown in this country. The house, as is well known, was the headquarters of Washington while the

army invested Boston. The open field across the street was bought by the poet to secure an unobstructed view from his front study windows across the marsh lands to the river and the low hills beyond. There is no difficulty in gaining admission to the house; and the visitor will find everything as the poet left it. There in the hall is the old clock on the stairs, still ticking its unending *Never, Forever, Forever, Never*. The library on the right is naturally the first place visited. There on the table are the letter files, the inkstand of Coleridge and Crabbe, and underneath is the waste-paper basket of Moore. There are his orderly shelves of books, his precious bound MSS., and the translations of his poems in all languages. There, on stands and mantels, are gifts and tokens from admirers all over the world. The standing desk is at the shaded east window, and around the room are portraits and busts of friends.

It was with a feeling akin to awe that I entered the house shortly after the poet's death. The gracious spirit seemed to be still there, and the silence almost stopped my heart-beats. It was in that seat I had seen him so recently, as he pointed wearily to the great heap of unanswered letters. His rich and low-toned voice was still in my ears. It seemed that I should presently see the inner door open, or that by looking out I should see him wrapped in his loose cloak, thoughtfully walking under the elms.

It is a matter for rejoicing that the house is likely to be kept sacred to the poet's memory as long as time spares it, and that a fitting monument is to be erected in the adjacent field. Still there is little need of bronze or marble to keep him in the minds of men; for his works are in the homes and hearts of all English-speaking people.

The story of his life has been fully told. His recollections of his birth-place are in his verse; his books of travels contain the record of his experience as well as observation; his children, his intimate friends, and his bereavements are remembered by touching allusions; and only upon one great sorrow, the terrible death of his wife, has he wisely been silent. The reader who has the key can read his history as illustrated in his works.

Little that is new can now be related; every anecdote has been gathered in the biographies: and any fresh account of him, no matter how skilfully put together, will be in effect a mosaic, a repetition of familiar incidents. Few men of celebrity have gone through life with so little deflection from the

lines of custom. Excepting a few visits to Europe, he was rooted in Cambridge like a tree. He seldom visited even New York, the nearest large city ; never saw the prairies, or the Mississippi, still less the Rocky Mountains. He never met Irving but once, and that was in Spain ; never talked with Bryant but twice, and never saw Cooper or Poe.

But he did not need to travel to rouse his imagination or to seek materials for poetry ; the well-spring of poetry was in himself ; its flow began with his early years, and ceased only with his life. His wide reading and intuitive perception suggested continually new themes, but the evolution of thought and image in measure and melody were from within. The stately and musical sweep of his "Evangeline," the light tripping measure of "Hiawatha," the solemn monotone of the "Psalm of Life," the eager movement of the "Skeleton in Armour," and the grand roll of sonorous terminations in the "Arsenal at Springfield," all are spontaneous manifestations of his finely organized nature.

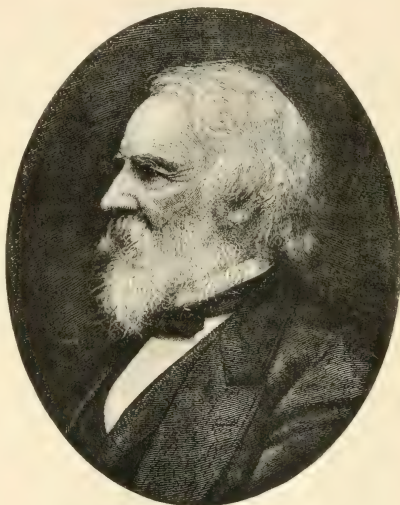
My recollections and impression of him will be given without much regard to order.

His work was done in morning hours. Doubtless, he had his bright and his dull days, but he never gave way to idleness or ennui. When the inspiration came he covered a large space with verses ; but he had the power to go back, and to forge anew or retouch before the fire had cooled. His methods were careful to the last degree ; poems were kept and considered a long time, line by line ; and he had them set up in type for better scrutiny. They were examined so for

months, and when they appeared it was after rigorous criticism had been exhausted. He was the most painstaking author I ever knew, excepting Prescott, who, with the aid of a secretary, thought himself fortunate when he had finished two pages in a day. While he was translating the eighteen thousand lines of Dante, his apparatus was always ready upon the desk near the window, and there he stood daily until he had completed the allotted number of lines. While meditating a poem he walked often in his grounds, or along the solitary Mt.

Auburn road. This solitary road, however, was sometimes frequented by labourers, and Longfellow, who smoked light cigars, and very sparingly, told me that he liked to walk on a cool morning at a fair distance behind an Irishman smoking a clay pipe, to watch the thin blue smoke, and to catch an occasional whiff of the perfume.

After a rather early dinner he gave his time to his family and friends. "The Children's Hour" shows what a fond father he was. There is no more beautiful domestic picture



*Yours very truly
Henry W. Longfellow*

than the glimpse of family joys in that poem. His wife, I may add, was a woman of queenly beauty and graceful manners, the ideal of a poet's wife, and mistress of a poet's household.

He was not without business knowledge and tact, but he spent his income generously, and much of it in secret charity. I knew of an instance when an author, in no way intimate with him, was ill and destitute, and was about to sell his library ; and greatly to his surprise, he received one day Longfellow's cheque for \$500. He was continually doing such acts of kindness.

His shrewdness and humour sometimes took the same road. When "Hiawatha" appeared, it was sharply attacked in certain newspapers, and Fields, his publisher, after reading something particularly savage, went out in a state of excitement to see Longfellow. The poet heard the account, but did not read the abuse; it was something he never did and never would read, and then in a casual way said, "By the way, Mr. Fields, how is the book selling?" "Enormously; we are running presses night and day to fill the orders." "Very well," said Longfellow quietly, "then don't you think we had better let these editors go on advertising it?"

At a social gathering a poem recently published was picked to pieces amid shouts of laughter, in which it was observed Longfellow did not join. A few minutes later, taking up the despised poem and selecting here and there a good line or phrase, like one looking for flowers rather than nettles, he said, "After all, young gentlemen, the man who has thought these beautiful things cannot be wholly ridiculous!"

On festive occasions he was only shyly, delicately humorous, and rarely attempted an epigrammatic sally, still less, to take part in a passage at arms; but his enjoyment of the gay skirmishes between others was evident. His voice, countenance, and manner, conveyed one harmonious impression. His grey-blue eyes were tender rather than sad, and they were sometimes lighted by sweet smiles. His dignified bearing made him appear tall, though he was not above the medium height. A Frenchman who had visited him described him as being six feet. His simple and beautiful courtesy made every caller think himself a friend. In no ignoble sense there was something caressing in his address.

He was faithful to his convictions, and printed anti-slavery poems when the conservatives, including all the fashion and influence of the time, were determined to suppress discussion. He welcomed Sumner when society "boycotted" him for espousing the cause of the slave. And before that, when Sumner delivered his oration on the "True Grandeur of Nations" (a vigorous protest again war), Longfellow wrote "The Arsenal at Springfield," one of his most noble and fortunate poems.

He had both admiration and affection for Lowell. His poem, "The Two Angels," was founded upon the coincidence of the birth of his youngest daughter and the death of the wife of Lowell on the same day.

"Two angels, one of Life and one of Death,
Passed o'er our village as the morning broke;
The dawn was on their faces, and beneath,
The sombre houses, hearsed with plumes of smoke.

"I saw them pause on their celestial way;
Then said I, with deep fear and doubt oppressed,
'Be not so loud my heart, lest thou betray
The place where thy beloved are at rest!'

"'Twas at thy door, O friend! and not at mine,
The angel with the amaranthine wreath,
Pausing, descended, and with voice divine,
Whispered a word that had a sound like death.

"Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on those features fair and thin;
And softly, from that hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in."

"The Herons of Elmwood" is a beautiful tribute to a brother poet, remarkable for its freshness as well as its sentiment. Elmwood is Lowell's estate, not far beyond Longfellow's; and in its tall trees the herons are wont to rest on their way from Fresh Pond. This happens late in the season, after the migration of the thrushes and other summer birds.

"Call to him, herons, as slowly you pass
To your roosts in the haunts of the exiled thrushes;
Sing him the song of the green morass,
And the tides that water the reeds and rushes.

"Sing of the air, and the wild delight
Of wings that uplift and winds that uphold you,
The joy of freedom, the rapture of flight
Through the drift of the floating mists that infold you.

"Sing to him, say to him, here at his gate,
Where the boughs of the stately elms are meeting,
Some one hath lingered to meditate,
And send him unseen this friendly greeting;

"That many another hath done the same,
Though not by a sound was the silence broken;
The surest pledge of a deathless name
Is the silent homage of thoughts unspoken."

Many of Longfellow's personal poems are felicitous and full of natural feeling. His lines upon Bayard Taylor, the poet and traveller, who died at Berlin while United States minister to the German court, by their directness and simplicity fix themselves in the memory of the reader. One thinks, too, of a line in Hadrian's address to his soul as having been in the poet's mind: *Quæ nunc abibis in loca?*

"Dead he lay among his books!
The peace of God was in his looks.

"As the statues in the gloom
Watch o'er Maximilian's tomb,

"So those volumes from their shelves
Watched him, silent as themselves.

"Ah! his hand will nevermore
Turn their storied pages o'er;

"Nevermore his lips repeat
Songs of theirs, however sweet.

- "Let the lifeless body rest!
He is gone, who was its guest;
- "Gone, as travellers haste to leave
An inn, nor tarry until eve.
- "Traveller! in what realms afar,
In what planet, in what star,
- "In what vast, aerial space,
Shines the light upon thy face?
- "In what gardens of delight
Rest thy weary feet to-night?
- "Poet! thou, whose latest verse
Was a garland on thy hearse;
- "Thou hast sung, with organ tone,
In Denkalion's life, thine own.
- "On the ruins of the Past
Blooms the perfect flower at last.
- "Friend! but yesterday the bells
Rang for thee their loud farewells;
- "And to-day they toll for thee,
Lying dead beyond the sea;
- "Lying dead among thy books,
The peace of God in all thy looks!"

If, as Lowell says, a sonnet should "burst with a wave-like up-gathering at the end," this upon Milton is certainly a magnificent specimen. The steady rise to the climax is a striking piece of art:—

- "I pace the sounding sea-beach and behold
How the voluminous billows roll and run,
Upheaving and subsiding, while the sun
Shines through their sheeted emerald far unrolled,
And the ninth wave, slow gathering fold by fold
All its loose-flowing garments into one,
Plunges upon the shore; and floods the dun
Pale reach of sands, and changes them to gold.
So in majestic cadence rise and fall
The mighty undulations of thy song,
O sightless bard, England's Mæonides!
And ever and anon, high over all
Uplifted, a ninth wave, superb and strong,
Floods all the soul with its melodious seas."

Here is a vision of Venice, airy and entrancing as a sea-dream, delicate with vanishing effects like Turner's:—

- "White swan of cities, slumbering in thy nest
So wonderfully built among the reeds
Of the lagoon, that fences thee and feeds,
As sayeth thy old historian and thy guest!
White water-lily, cradled and caressed
By ocean streams, and from the silt and weeds
Lifting thy golden filaments and seeds,
Thy sun-illumined spires, thy crown and crest!
White phantom city, whose untrodden streets
Are rivers, and whose pavements are the shifting
Shadows of palaces and strips of sky;
I want to see thee vanish like the fleets
Seen in mirage, or towers of cloud uplifting
In air their unsubstantial masonry."

The reader will not expect quotations from the early and well-known poems; every one knows them by heart—their sentiment and melody—and it is better to give our at-

tention to the later productions in a different vein.

Longfellow was steeped in the German influence in his early days. He translated quite as much from the French, Italian, and Spanish; but the tone of his first poems recalls the dreamy atmosphere, the quaint fancy and the melodic movement of German lyrics. There is a German translation of his poems, following them, line by line, in such perfect cadence that it might be thought the original, and Longfellow's only the translation.

But this manner gradually disappeared. It appears to me that in the later poems—such as the sonnets upon Venice and Milton already quoted—there is far more power, more imagination, and more art than in those which first brought him fame.

THE POET AND HIS SONGS.

- "As the birds come in the Spring,
We know not from where;
As the stars come at evening
From depths of the air;
- "As the rain comes from the cloud,
And the brook from the ground;
As suddenly, low or loud,
Out of silence a sound;
- "As the grape comes to the vine,
The fruit to the tree;
As the wind comes to the pine,
And the tide to the sea;
- "As come the white sails of ships
O'er the ocean's verge;
As comes the smile to the lips,
The foam to the surge;
- "So come to the Poet his songs,
All hitherward blown
From the misty realm, that belongs
To the vast Unknown.
- "His, and not his, are the lays
He sings; and their fame
Is his, and not his; and the praise
And the pride of a name.
- "For voices pursue him by day,
And haunt him by night,
And he listens, and needs must obey,
When the Angel says: 'Write!'"

"Daybreak" may be familiar, but it will bear re-reading; there is a thought and a picture in each couplet.

- "A wind came up out of the sea,
And said, 'O mists, make room for me.'
- "It hailed the ships, and cried, 'Sail on,
Ye mariners, the night is gone.'
- "And hurried landward far away,
Crying, 'Awake! it is the day.'
- "It said unto the forest, 'Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!'
- "It touched the wood-bird's folded wing,
And said, 'O bird, awake and sing.'

"And o'er the farms, 'O Chanticleer,
Your clarion blow: the day is near.'

"It whispered to the fields of corn,
'Bow down, and hail the coming morn.

"It shouted through the belfry tower,
'Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour.'

"It crossed the churchyard with a sigh,
And said, 'Not yet! in quiet lie.'"

Longfellow only asked fifty dollars—ten pounds—for a poem in the early *Atlantic* days; and I remember that when he brought "Daybreak" with another poem he would take payment but for one, because, he said, "Daybreak" was such a trifle. In later years he received much larger prices. For "The Hanging of the Crane," it is said, he received three thousand dollars—six hundred pounds.

One of the most impressive poems of Longfellow's prime was that upon the death of the Duke of Wellington, entitled, "The Warden of the Cinque Ports." No one will venture to rate Longfellow with Tennyson in power or achievement, but this poem may well bear comparison with that of the Laureate on the same theme. Two stanzas especially dwell in memory:—

"Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure,
No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure,
Awaken with its call!

"Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited,
The sun rose bright o'erhead;
Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead."

I never knew of Longfellow's making excursions to the Adirondacks or Moosehead Lake, as Emerson and Lowell did. The descriptions of scenery in "Evangeline" are exquisite, yet he told one of my family that he had never set foot in Nova Scotia. In "Hiawatha" we feel that his sense of what is characteristic of the places of action is adequate, although his delineations are quite general. It was the human interest with which he was chiefly concerned. The two poems just mentioned are assuredly his best, and it would not have helped either of them if the poets of the Sierras had gone over the regions with him; and both Bret Harte and Joaquin Miller could have instructed him in picturesque topography. The landscapes of Corêt are delicious for their sentiment, although sometimes we cannot tell whether his trees are oaks or beeches.

In like manner he was somewhat conventional as a portrayer of character; he knew mankind, but the persons of his dramas, though in many ways interesting, are seldom

individualised—real men, known and recognised as additions to the gallery of fiction.

His was a globular mind, seen in an almost unvarying aspect, but his themes were infinitely varied, and he employed successfully nearly all the rhythmic forms of which the language is capable, excepting blank verse. Some critics have laid stress upon his want of spiritual insight and of dramatic power; they say he did not create, but found and adorned; that he was never witty, and seldom humorous; that his points were not far to seek, and that his moral applications were apt to be superfluous. But if his limitations are obvious his merits are equally so. His poems cover a wide field of human interest, and are upon a general high level of excellence; his sense of the beautiful was delicate and true; his learning enriched without cumbering his verse; above all, he has touched the feelings common to mankind with a power given to few men that have lived. Borrowing a word from politics, he has the largest constituency of any poet of the century; and it has not been necessary to form co-operative societies to interpret and enjoy him.

It may be questioned whether profundity may not be pushed too far. If a poem requires as much study as the calculus it is no longer a poem, except for a limited circle. We are agreed that mathematics may become more and more abstruse, until its professors leave all but their swift-footed pupils behind; but poetry is for the culture and pleasure of a fair average of educated readers. When it attempts to be more sententious than Pope, more full of recondite allusions than Milton, more soaring than Shakespeare, one may fairly object when asked to admire.

When we think of the ever-increasing millions who read English, and of the universal delight felt in the poems of the home affections, and of the ever-recurring incidents of our mortal life, and when we think of our poet's manly, christian character, and the cheerfulness with which he faced the great problems of death and immortality, must we not consider that the world is brighter and better for his having lived in it?

The conspicuous thing in Longfellow was the serene loveliness of his nature. What a true homage was that paid by Emerson as our poet lay in his coffin! Emerson had lost his memory, except of ideas and feelings, and was nearing his own end. After looking at the placid face of the dead, he said, "*That was a beautiful soul. I am sorry I cannot remember his name.*"

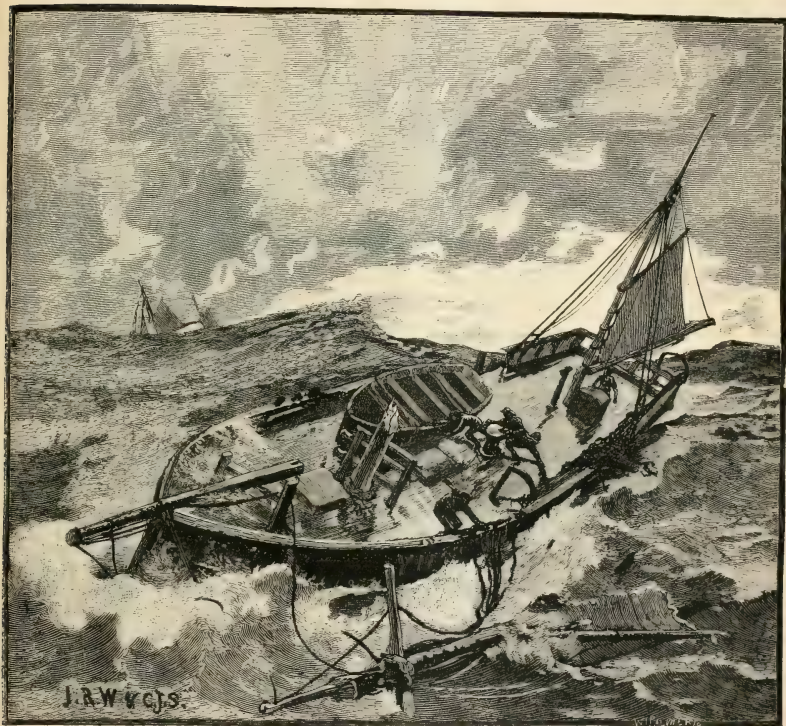
THE BATTLE OF THE BIRDS.

An Apologue.

By HAMILTON AYDÉ.

A DISCUSSION among British Birds once arose,
As to where they should praise the Almighty ;
The reverend faction of Rooks were the foes
Of the Swallows, whose tenets were—flighty.
These wanderers lax from the South cried, “ Rejoice !
No matter the soil or the tree,
On which one alighteth to lift up his voice
To the Lord of the land and the sea ! ”
“ Not so,” cawed the Rooks, with a vehemence fit
Opposition to drown, or o’erwhelm,
“ For worship, in one place alone must all sit,
’Neath the high Gothic arch of the elm.
The Cardinal, Parrot, or such foreign bird,
’Neath the palm’s rounded dome *he* may perch ;
But we, who are quite set apart from the herd,
Should abjure pagan forms for a church.
That impudent Wren has selected a larch,
Whose boughs form a cupola quite ;
We must carry down twigs from our elm’s Gothic arch,
To make it an orthodox site.”
Then a great storm arose, while the advocates fought,
The Geese cackled round as of old ;
The Magpies repeated the words they were taught,
The Gulls swallowed all they were told.
The Owls hooted round their discordant assent
To the dreariest doctrine. The Dove
Coo’d in vain, ’mid the tumult, and did not resent
That none heard her message of love.
Till the Lark, soaring up to the blue summer sky,
Rained down her notes o’er the crowd ;
E’en the Nightingale’s singing was hushed by the high
Small voice that was heard from the cloud.
“ I am nighest to Heaven, and up here, my friends,
Your squabbles appear very small ;
Every spot whence the voice of true worship ascends
Is blest by the Maker of all.
Sing out in the wild wood, ye Mavis and Merle !
Ye Ptarmigans, cry o’er the moor !
Caw, ye reverend Rooks, round the elms of the earl !
Robins, pipe round the homes of the poor !
The Master who gave each a different tone,
And a plumage diverse as our birth,
Never meant that one form of a tree, or a stone
Should be hallowed alone upon earth.

Let the Rook have his lancet-shaped aisle and groined roof,
 His dome of rich foliage the Wren ;
 Then shall Birds, in their harmony, carry reproof
 To the turbulent Children of Men."



Dismasted.

LIFE AMONG THE NORTH SEA TRAWLERS.

By THOMAS PAUL.

"A LIFE on the ocean wave." Of course it is free and jolly, and adventurous. Have not the poets sung its wild delights? Were not the books which in boyhood's days entranced us, tales of its wonders? We may be the worst of sailors, may feel miserable indeed half a mile from shore, yet none the less do we own the charm of a sea story.

Possibly, however, the romance and poetry might fade were we permitted to spend a week or two on board a North Sea trawler in the winter season. Snow and ice may be capital fun on land, when the rapid motion of the sleigh, the merry tinkle of the bells, the joyous freedom of the expert skater lend life and go to the scene. But pent up on the

narrow deck of a tiny vessel the case is different. Hardly room to move, certainly none for a smart walk to warm the blood, the keen north-easter tingling our ears, and the fierce, relentless ice-cold billows swishing over the low bulwarks, surging over the deck, and well-nigh taking us off our feet; these are scarcely enjoyable phases of sea life. The romance seems somehow to have fled, leaving but the undeniable misery and discomfort. Yet this is only an ordinary winter's experience with the hardy fishermen who win from the North Sea the fish supply of England.

The North Sea is that which lies between the coasts of the British Isles and Holland, Denmark, and Norway. From the time of the "Vikings" it has often borne many a proud fleet designed to carry desolation and death to neighbouring shores. Now, however, its waters are studded by numerous fleets engaged in more peaceful and beneficent pursuits.

The configuration of the sea-bottom just suits the habits of vast multitudes of the finny tribes. Beneath the surface the ground rises in the form of a series of ridges, generally termed the Dogger Bank, though there are a whole chain of banks, each with its distinctive name. These slopes are the great harvest field of the North Sea, from which are trowled endless quantities of sole, plaice, turbot, cod, and haddock.

In bygone days, when the demand was small and trawlers few, the fish were sought on the sides of the bank nearest land, and the fishing smack having filled up ran home with her catch. But in these go-ahead days more comprehensive and economic measures have been adopted. Fleets have been formed by various enterprising firms; the smacks composing a fleet work and sail together, under the guidance of an "admiral," and send home their fish by swift steam carriers specially constructed for the trade.

This system has, moreover, effected a revolution in the fisherman's life and habits. Instead of being home for a few days every week or so, he is now a constant wanderer on the restless billows, incessantly plying his vocation farther and farther from land and loved ones. Every eight or nine weeks his smack is compelled to run home for refitting, but, with this exception, he is at his post from the day he first ships as "cook," until premature old age incapacitates him from further service, or until, as too frequently happens, he falls a victim to the wintry blasts of the wild North Sea. Shut up in

his tiny smack, cut off from home influence and home privilege, without opportunities such as land-dwellers enjoy, scarcely knowing what is passing in the big world beyond the horizon; what wonder if the North Sea trawlers become, as too many of them have become, rude and boisterous in manner, unconventional and careless in dress and speech, reckless and heedless in the highest of all interests!

Let me now, however, introduce my readers to the North Sea trawlers, as I saw them when, by the courtesy of the Founder and director of the "Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen," I have visited the fleets, and spent a week or two with them.

Embarking at Yarmouth in the *Edward Auriol*, a fine smack of a hundred tons, built expressly for Mission service, I found myself in the thick of a fisherman's farewell. The quays were thronged by wives, mothers, sisters, and sweethearts, who well understood the real good done by such vessels amongst their husbands, sons, brothers and lovers in the fleets.

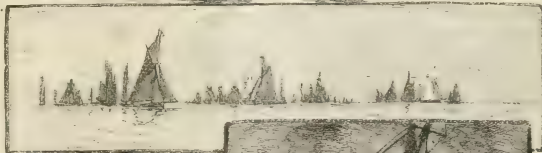
"Why," exclaimed one enthusiastic woman, as she hugged a sturdy little future fisherman, "it be a reg'lar treat to 'ave Bill a comin' home now. He be a new man, that he be and no mistake."

When a feeling of this kind is general, the natural result is abundant good wishes for our trip. The captain of the tug *Cruiser*, engaged to tow us down the river, seemed fully to share the popular view, and permitted a large number of well-wishers to board his boat in order to escort us to the "Roads," and cheer us on our way. It was a genuinely spontaneous expression of fisher-folks' gratitude for the past, and hopefulness for the future. Soon we were out of the river and entering Yarmouth Roads, tow ropes were cast off, the steamer put about, a cheer rang from her deck, and amid the waving of pocket handkerchiefs the vessels parted, the white flutter of these signals of friendship gleaming afar from the returning steamer's deck.

We have about two hundred miles to run to find the "Red-White" fleet, to which we are commissioned, so while the vessel is speeding onward let us have a look round her. That ponderous spar-lashed to her bulwarks, and looking like a spare mast, is the trawl beam. To each end is attached a heavy D-shaped iron head, and fastened along the beam is a huge net. Dropped to the bottom the net is held slightly open by the trawl heads, and being towed after the smack sweeps up every



Trawler
in full sail,
with gear down.



Fleet becalmed.



Steam Fish-carrier running for market.

living thing in its track, not infrequently also things less desirable and welcome. Then on deck, placed well aft, is the steam captain, the "strong man," as fishermen playfully term it. Happy the crews whose smacks are thus fitted, pleasant the relief from the toilsome and weary manual labour previously involved in "getting in the gear." Below is the large hold specially fitted up in this vessel for holding services. Then comes the forecastle, the crew's quarters, the hammocks slung round the sides, the great galley fire blazing in the centre. Farther aft is the cabin, a luxury unknown in an ordinary trawling-smack, but here introduced for the accommodation of clergymen, doctors, missionaries, and others, who may visit the fleets and help in the work, as many have done in their vacation. There is, in this particular vessel, even the additional convenience of a tiny but cosy ladies' cabin, and already ladies have been found daring enough to adventure the trip. Their welcome, by men who never before had seen a lady at the fleet, was exceptionally enthusiastic. But the cabin was more in it than mere comfort for passengers.

There in the corner may be noticed a mysterious array of bottles, as well as all sorts of surgical and medical appliances. It is the dispensary, and likely enough we shall find the use of it before we complete our trip. In another corner is a closet filled with bags, which on examination prove to be stuffed with books. Then stowed away in cleverly contrived lockers may be found Bibles, prayer-books, supplies of woollen mittens and comforters, and all kinds of possible requisites at sea.

While we have been inspecting, the *Edward*

Auriol has run rapidly to the north-east, and the skipper proudly reports she has done ninety miles in twelve hours. "If this wind holds, we'll make the fleet by sundown to-morrow." The wind does hold, and sure enough, just as the dying rays of the setting sun are crimsoning the crests of the restless billows, a smacksmen's keen eye discerns the sails of a trawling fleet far on the north-eastern horizon. Noting their course the skipper holds after them all night long, and at break of morn we run into the thick of the fleet. It is a stirring and a lively scene ;

one not soon to be forgotten. Round us are some hundred and fifty to two hundred vessels, sailing in company, tacking, running before a fresh breeze, yet handled so cleverly and smartly, and answering their rudder so quickly, that accidents from collision, save in exceptionally thick and rough weather, are quite unusual.

They have not come so near us for nothing. The blue flag flying at our main has told them who and what we are, and they are prompt to greet the Mission-ship.

But long before this we have become *de*



The Dispensary.

facto a trawling-smack. Late last night on making the fleet in the offing our skipper had dropped his trawl, and at 4 A.M. we were startled from a comfortable sleep by the stentorian shout, "Trawl's comin' up, sir." None of us were willing to miss the sight, so we tumbled on deck with little delay over toilet arrangements. Already steam was up, the tiny engine was puffing away vigorously, and with many a creak and groan the capstan was hauling in the trawl ropes. At length it is hoisted to the ship's side, every man is at his post, leaning over and gripping

as much as he can of the net, and hauling it in hand over hand. The net is heavy, but that proves nothing ; it may be filled with sand, or stones, or mud, or a lost anchor, or a good catch of fish. "There it comes !" is the shout as the "cod-end" of the net slowly emerges from the water, stuffed as it seems to us with some slimy, slippery, moving mass. It is pulled on deck, the lashing is let go, and out tumble the finny spoil, and wriggling, struggling, gasping all over the deck, are strewn cod, haddock, sole, plaice, and a few much prized, because high-priced, turbot.

Oysters, crabs, lobsters, gurnet, latchet, and other denizens of the deep are represented, many of which being worthless are heaved overboard and swim swiftly back to familiar haunts.

While, however, we, the useless passengers, are idly watching, the crew are

otherwise engaged. Sharp is the word with them, there is no time to lose if they would get their catch on board that morning's carrier. Hence they are hard at work, cleaning, sorting, and packing the fish in boxes, technically called "trunks," for shipment to Billingsgate Market. Each trunk contains



Loading for Market.

about half a hundredweight of fish; across its open top are laced cords to keep in the contents, a wooden label is affixed with the name of the smack to which the fish salesman in London will credit the value received. The fish are roughly classified as "prime" and "offal." The "prime" being turbot, sole, &c.; the "offal" less valuable sorts.

The boxes are ready, the boat is put over the side, and the skipper inquires, "Will you go with the fish to the steamer?" Only too glad of the chance I jump into the boat. The men pull off, and I find myself in danger on one hand of a salt-water drenching, and on the other of being bruised by the sharp edges of the fish boxes, to which a jerking

motion is imparted by the abrupt pitching of the waves. Reaching the steamer I scramble on board—rather ignominiously, it must be confessed; for there is no ladder, and the feat of springing over the bulwarks from a boat tossing on the billows, though it looks wonderfully easy, is one requiring long experience to be done scientifically. Once on board I mount the bridge with all speed, for the sight awaiting me may be witnessed but once or twice in a life-time. Words are weak things to picture the exciting spectacle. Our artist has caught the scene well, and but a few words are needed to add vividness to his picture. The steamer herself is rolling heavily, dipping her bulwarks and shipping a deluge of water at every lurch. Round her, but just a little way off, dance the fishing-smacks, running under her lee and dropping their boats. These are pulled as speedily as possible to the steamer, adding continually another and another to the swarm of boats surrounding her. The sea is very rough, and the heavily-laden small boats are now plunged far down in the trough of the sea, and now surge up in a moving mass almost over the steamer's bulwarks. Again and again as they suddenly rise it seems they must be flung on deck, and indeed this does at times happen with terribly disastrous effects. Habituated to this curious motion the men heed it not in their eagerness to get their fish on board. There go the boats jamming against the side, while one man from each, skilfully choosing the right instant, springs on board, gripping the bulwarks when his boat is on the crest of the wave, and being left as it descends hanging on the steamer's side. Another moment and he is on deck and makes fast the painter he carried with him. His companions in the boat heave their boxes to him: he adds them to the piles on deck. Meanwhile others are equally eager to get alongside, and shout, expostulate, and struggle in the mass of boats, good-humoured enough for the most part, but craftily doing all they can to cut one another out. It is amusing to watch how they do it. One boat is in a good place, but another, coming astern, gets her sharp prow inserted, like a wedge, between the first boat and the steamer's hull, then a slight push and the first comer is ousted from the coveted position, while the intruder has secured the inner place, only perhaps to be cut out in his turn by some other and equally cunning smacksman. Of course the first arrivals do not submit silently, hence the shouting and clamour is deafening. All this, added to the thumping of the

boxes, the grinding and motion of the boats, the rolling of the steamer, the hurrying to and fro of men, the whistling of the wind and the swish of the water, makes up, it will be confessed, a pretty lively and noisy scene.

But while all this is going on alongside, there is plenty of life and motion on board the steamer. There the boxes are being flung, pushed, kicked, or dragged to the hatchway. Men are pitching them down as fast as hands can do it; yet with a hundred or so boats discharging their boxes, the deck is soon blockaded right along, and the boxes are piled as high as the bulwarks. Below, men are packing with ice; between each layer of boxes a layer of ice is placed. The extent of the trade will be realised when it is stated that about £20,000 worth of ice is annually used for the purpose of packing the fish on board the various steam-carriers.

Such is "ferrying the fish" in the North Sea. To the beholder it is a scene alike exciting and novel; to the men engaged it is one of grave risk and serious peril, for many lives are lost in this work. A hawser gets beneath a boat's keel, and in the maze of boats and ropes this may easily happen. A man makes a slip, the "trunks" lurch too suddenly and too far, a cross sea catches her, and over goes the boat, and her crew go down like lead. One despairing cry and all is over. Seldom does a man rise from the depths of such a sea. "He is drowned," say the fishermen, "ere he touches bottom." At all events his heavy sea-boots do not help him to rise.

At length the last laggard has put her boxes on board, the steamer is "filled up," the signal is given, the scream of her steam-whistle gives warning to the clustering boats, "Clear out! we're off." Having no fancy to form part of her cargo, I dropped into our boat and was pulled back to the Mission-ship. Jumping on board, I find the deck crowded with visitors. Fine, frank, hearty fellows, most of them; curiously mixed as to blood and race, decidedly unconventional in speech and costume; their talk of the sea, and the sea only.

Most of them have come to see the ship or the visitors; but not a few had sore enough need to come. In a rough life of this sort, knocking about amongst running tackle and gear, swinging booms and straining ropes, many get grievously injured. No matter how badly a poor fellow may be wounded, how seriously he may fall sick, there is for him neither help nor healing; he must suffer,—it may be, die—until he

can be sent home by returning smack or fish-carrier. The Founder and present Director of the Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen discovered this state of things in 1881, and the result is that in each of the Mission-ships, now numbering seven, is a dispensary—the closet with the mysterious rows of bottles we have already noticed. Each mission skipper has received special training, and has at hand a book, issued by the Board of Trade for use

of captains at sea, giving clear and explicit directions as to proper remedies and the application of splints, bandages, &c. Moreover, they hold the certificate of the National Health Society and St. John's Ambulance Association.

The first comer has had his head badly cut; it is a week since the accident happened, and neglect has caused the wound to fester considerably. It is horrible to look

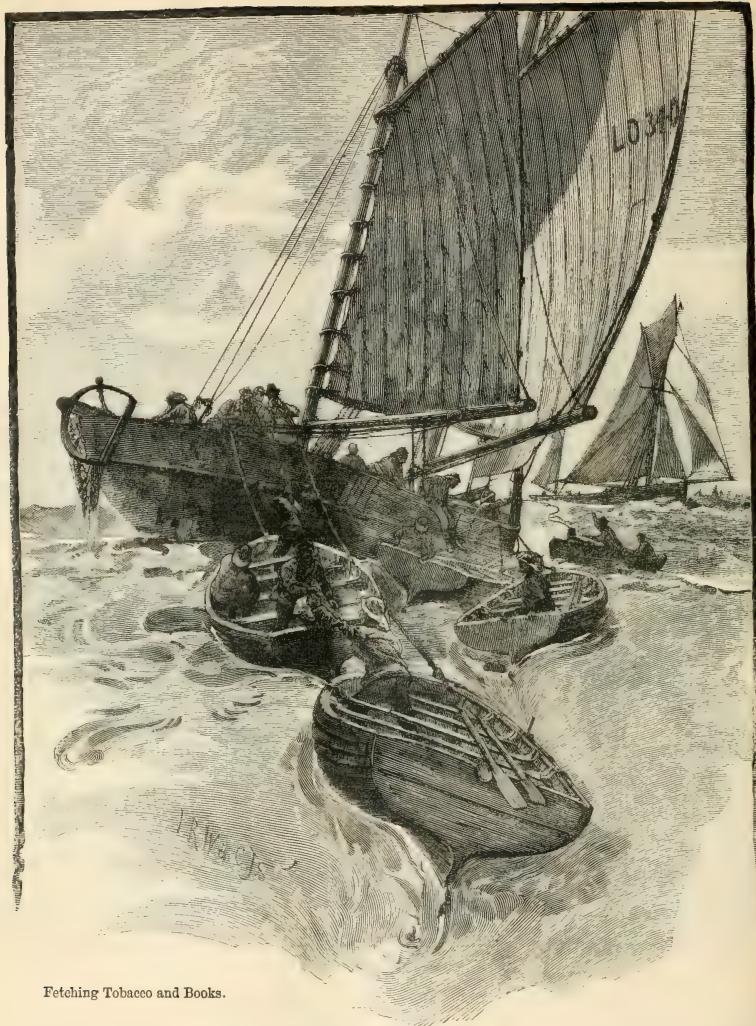


A Haul.

upon; it must be worse to endure. He is taken in hand, the hair cut away, the wound washed with some preparation, liniment and bandages are applied, and soon he looks a new man. A week after he is fit and strong again.

The next is suffering from weakness and a bad cough. Neglected, this may tend to consumption; taken in time, it is cured. The appropriate remedy is selected after careful inquiry and reference to the

book. So they crowd in one after another, until some twenty to thirty men and boys have been treated. The most common troubles are wounds, bruises, broken arms, gashed heads, coughs and colds, and rheumatism. "Little marvel," was the remark at the end of the dispensary practice, "these vessels are hailed as untold blessings by the fishermen. Putting aside the religious and moral work, they are a priceless boon in time of pain and sickness."



Fetching Tobacco and Books.

But there are plenty on board who want no doctoring, though well they know they may want it soon enough. They are after something to read. There are no book-stores at sea, and the morning paper is unknown. Yet in the long tedious hours between getting in the gear at daybreak and dropping it at sundown, there is time to read, and there are many who sorely miss a book

or newspaper. For this the Mission makes provision in the form of library bags. Every smack may have a bag of books if the crew so desire, and these being read may be changed. Does it seem a trifling matter? Well, I know hundreds of men and boys do not think so, and are eager enough for the books.

While, however, all this goes on, and the Mission takes cognisance of these wants and

endeavours to meet them, it will be understood it has higher aims, one great definite purpose ever held steadfastly in view. It does not merely want to improve the social and physical condition of the fishermen, but to raise them morally and spiritually. Every Sunday two services are held, attended by throngs of eager fishermen. At these services there are singing and prayer, but also, in plain, straightforward style, the preaching of practical truths, which otherwise these men have no chance of hearing. When I was there last we had a congregation every day in the week, who begged, "Give us a bit of a talk; we don't have the chance often." Whatever may have been the case in former days, when no Mission-vessels were known, it is plain enough now to any impartial witness that the fishermen really are anxious to hear something which will lift them above the careless, heedless, low-level lives they formerly led. Only on board these vessels have they opportunity of so gaining knowledge of higher and better things.

The results of this work are abundantly evident and obvious. The owners, who have good reason to know, speak highly of the excellent influence on their men, and are among the warmest friends of the Mission. Wives and mothers declare the good it has done those dear to them. I have myself met not a few men, formerly and notoriously drunkards, gamblers, fighters, and generally the worst of characters, who are now, through this work, completely changed, and are acknowledged sober, quiet, Christian men. In one fleet he who was nicknamed "the biggest drunkard in the fleet" is now a good, hearty, earnest fellow. If it were wanted, I might adduce hundreds of such facts; but the good influence and beneficial results of such work will readily be understood.

Now, however, for one very practical and tangible matter. When I first visited the fleet my attention was called to a foreign-built smack, flying a little rag on her fore-stay, and apparently cruising, for no obvious purpose, with the fleet. She had a purpose, however; she had come from Holland with grog and tobacco. To the latter little objection might be urged, to the former the most serious objection must be raised. Even those who frequented this vessel were ready to declare her the "pest of the fleet." The grog retailed by the "Copers," as these vessels are termed, is the vilest possible compound of aniseed and various drugs; its effects are simply maddening, and the loss of life and property directly due to the

"Copers" is incalculable. Then why do the men go? Ah, why do men everywhere get in harm's way? Public men have been untiring in their denunciation of the "Copers," and the evil they work. In Parliament and out of it much had been said and many suggestions had been made; but the practical question remained, How were the copers to be kept out of the fleets? Their strength lay in the demand for tobacco; but for that it would not be worth their while to come. Fishermen are fond of the weed; those who blame them for it should try a long wintry night's watch on deck. Dreary and cold and wet, it is little wonder if in the pipe they find some solace for the discomfort and monotony of the weary hours. At all events the fact remained—and facts are hard things—that fishermen would have tobacco, and that they could have it from the copers immensely cheaper than they could purchase it at home. English long-voyage sailors are allowed to obtain tobacco "for use at sea" out of bond, but the law—a remnant of old days, when fishermen, as we have seen, worked off the coast—did not permit fishermen to share the privilege. This arrangement left an open field for the copers; the men came on board for 'bacca, and, being there, were tempted to taste the grog. One glass wanted a companion, and the results were terribly evident. So long as this was the case no amount of talking would drive out the coper. The Director of the Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen was shrewd enough to see this, but the remedy was hard to hit. Repeated appeals, backed by influential men, were unavailing, the official reply being that it was contrary to law that any smacks should obtain tobacco out of bond. However, "where there's a will there's a way," and at length the difficulty was solved by the expedient of obtaining tobacco in a foreign port and selling to the men for use at sea only. The tobacco is sold at cost price—at sixpence per pound less than the copers retail it—and so the thing is done. The copers' occupation is gone, and from every fleet in which the experiment has been made the copers have vanished.

The working of the new system may be seen any morning; but as few of my readers are likely to visit a North Sea fleet, they must be content to see it through the artist's eye. The boats are clustering round the Mission-vessel; the tobacco is being handed out in half-pound packets, each bearing the simple injunction, to prevent infringement of Custom-house regulations, "For use at

sea only." Of course there is no grog, and therefore no drunkenness. To any who have considered the disastrous influence of the copers and their grog this tobacco adventure will appear a praiseworthy and enterprising effort to beat the enemy on his own ground. Nor is it so far aside, as at first blush may seem, from the Mission work; it is a direct and practical endeavour to destroy a great evil and promote the well-being of the trawlers.

Grand as this achievement is, it is limited to seven of the twelve trawling fleets cruising in the North Sea. The Mission has but seven vessels, and therefore can reach but seven fleets. Would that it had five more! Would that every fleet on the trawling grounds numbered on its books one smack flying the blue Mission flag! Better a thousand times the blue flag of peace and temperance than the white flag of the baleful copper. Where the

blue flag flies the white rag has been struck; where the blue flag has failed to reach, there the copper may ply his deadly trade. I doubt not there are many who would right gladly see the copper banished from every fleet; they certainly would if they fully knew the mischief she does. There is but one way—to enable the Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen to commission a smack to every fleet.

When will it be done? Just as soon as those who profit by the fisherman's toil take some real thought for his welfare. The men are crying out, pleading, imploring for such vessels. Well-nigh every post brings to the Director at his offices, 181, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C., letters asking, "Why can't we have a Mission-vessel?" "Why should our fleet be left out?" Why? Only because seven vessels cannot reach twelve fleets, working far apart. How long, I wonder, will this be so?

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADENOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE DEED IS DONE.

SIR BRIAN departed for London by the early express on the following morning, which was a Thursday. He left no message for either of his sons; but stated, for the information of the servants, that he would be back before dinner on the Saturday. The night had neither softened his heart nor altered his mind. He had already telegraphed to the family lawyers to announce his approach, and his wrath against Brian had been rather increased than diminished by six or seven hours of broken rest. Perhaps what provoked him more than anything else was that his son had evidently not believed him to be in earnest. "He will find that he makes a mistake," muttered Sir Brian, as he sat down in the corner of the railway carriage; "I am not a man to say one thing and mean another."

He was fond of making this assertion about himself, because in his heart of hearts he knew well that that was exactly what he was. Indeed, if he had chosen to examine closely into his motives for undertaking this hasty journey to London, he would very likely have discovered that fear of relenting was at the bottom of them. When once he had made his new will he would be ashamed

to tear it up and revert to the old one. But of course he did not put matters before himself in a light so unflattering to his pride. When old Mr. Potter, of the well-known and highly respectable firm of Potter and Dodder, called that afternoon, by appointment, at the hotel in Albemarle Street which Sir Brian frequented, he found himself in the presence of a stern, unbending gentleman, who gave his instructions with military brevity and precision.

"How do you do, Mr. Potter? I hope you are quite well. I wish to have a fresh will prepared for me and to be ready for signature in the course of to-morrow. The small bequests to the servants and so forth will remain as in the former one; but my heir and residuary legatee will be my son Gilbert, not my son Brian."

"Why, bless my soul!" said Mr. Potter. "Dear, dear, dear!"

Sir Brian was ready and eager to quarrel with anybody.

"Am I to understand from these ejaculations," he inquired, with elaborate politeness, "that I have not made my meaning clear?"

Mr. Potter was a stout, prosperous little old gentleman who had to deal with many testy clients and was not much in awe of any of them.

"Oh, your meaning is clear enough," he replied, sitting down and crossing one plump leg over the other; "but I should doubt whether your head is. Now, be advised by an old friend, my dear Sir Brian, and take a little longer to consider it. Say a week."

"I am obliged to you, Mr. Potter," returned Sir Brian coldly, "and I think you will allow that your advice as to matters of business has always had due weight with me. In the present instance, however, I did not come to London to seek advice."

"Well, well! you needn't snap a man's nose off. Come, what has the poor young fellow been doing? You know you are dying to tell me."

"I am not dying to tell you; I don't see that it is any business whatsoever of yours, and—and— Well, if you want to know, he has been backing a bill for £2,000 (by the way, I shall want you to advance me £2,000 at once, and you shall be repaid as soon as I can get the money sold out), and not only that, but he has been threatening, or as good as threatening, to dispose of part of the estate for building purposes after my death. You are aware, Potter, that that is an offence which I cannot forgive and ought not to forgive."

"I am aware that you think so, certainly. He deserves to be soundly rated and kept upon short commons for backing bills; but as for disposing of that land, which has never been worth anything, why, in my opinion, he would be a great fool if he didn't. He was a fool to let you know of his intentions, though."

"Potter, I will not stand this! You are presuming, sir—you are forgetting yourself and insulting me. Will you obey my instructions, or am I, after all these years, to look out for another firm of solicitors?"

"Oh, you shall be obeyed," answered Mr. Potter, rising in some displeasure. "It is not very convenient to be hurried like this; but I will take care that your will shall be ready for signature by to-morrow afternoon, and the money that you require shall be paid in to your bankers the first thing in the morning. Take your own way, by all means—and a nice mess you are going to make of it! You can't prevent Brian from selling the Manor House; in fact, you virtually force him to do so by leaving him without a penny. I dare say he will employ me, if I am alive, and I have no doubt but that I shall do well enough for him to secure him a small income out of the proceeds. As for Gilbert, who has a little money of his

own, and who would have made his mark at the Bar, you need not flatter yourself that he will be content to live down at Beckton all his days, with just funds enough to keep the place up and no more. There will be bricks and mortar from Kingscliff to the lodge-gates before he has been in possession long, as sure as you're alive now and will be dead twenty years hence!"

Mr. Potter had reached the door while giving utterance to these atrocious predictions. He now wheeled round and trotted down-stairs as fast as he could go, leaving Sir Brian choking with indignation on the hearthrug.

"You—you malignant ruffian!" gasped out the old gentleman. But nobody heard him, so he swallowed his wrath and wisely determined not to think about things which had obviously been only said for the purpose of enraging him. It is perhaps hardly necessary to add that he thought a great deal about them in the course of the ensuing evening and night.

What gave him some satisfaction was the paying off of Mr. Solomonson the next day, and the addressing of a few pungent observations to that worthy.

"Aethionable language, thir—I caution you that your language ith aethionable!" cried Mr. Solomonson, who had begun by being most civil and subservient, but who changed his tone after being called an infernal, blood-sucking thief of a Jew.

Sir Brian, however, was not to be intimidated. "Bring your action, if you dare, my man," returned he; "you'll recover no damages, and I shall expose you in a way that you won't like. Consider yourself lucky to have got £1,900, and don't let me hear any impertinence from you, unless you want to have a chance of summoning me for assault."

Mr. Solomonson, it must be assumed, did not think it worth while to earn that privilege, for he retreated precipitately into his den, and Sir Brian, with his head in the air, marched out into the street, twirling his stick victoriously.

After this encounter he felt quite brisk and invigorated for a time, but the excitement of it did not remain with him long, and when that passed off he began to hang his head and feel miserable. After all, who could say that the lawyer was wrong? Was it not, at all events, certain that this disinheriting of Brian would seal the fate of the old Manor House? And what are the whims and crotchets of a dead man worth? Some-

times he had an uneasy feeling about Gilbert—a half doubt whether the good boy was so thoroughly straightforward as the bad boy. Without quite knowing why, he thought of the parable of the two sons, of whom one said, "I go, sir," and went not, while the other refused, "and afterwards he repented and went." But really it was a great deal too late in the day to dwell upon such gloomy forebodings as these; besides, there was no justification for them. To distract his mind, Sir Brian made for the United Service Club, and there, falling in with Lieutenant-General Sir Hector Buckle, sat down to luncheon with that veteran, and discoursed upon the rottenness of the short-service system until the afternoon was well advanced.

Sir Hector was a bachelor, and confided to his old comrade, with a sigh, that he wished he wasn't.

"I'm getting old, Segrave, that's the truth. People don't ask me out to dinner as they used, and it's very lonely dining here all by one's self, and falling asleep afterwards. I asked the Duke the other day whether there was a chance of my ever getting any more soldiering, and he said he thought I had had a pretty good innings. What is a man to do when he's put on the shelf and has no home? I wish I was a married man—I do, upon my word! Or rather, I wish I was a widower, with a couple of sons, such as yours, to give me an interest in life."

Sir Brian shook his head. "Buckle," said he gravely, "you don't know what you are wishing for, and you needn't envy me, I can tell you. I am in very great trouble about my eldest boy at this present moment. In fact, I don't mind saying to you, as an old friend, that I find it necessary to cut him out of his succession to the property. That isn't a pleasant thing for a man to be compelled to do."

"H'm! Still less pleasant for the man who has it done to him, I should say."

"Perhaps so; but he has brought it upon himself. I really have no alternative."

And straightway Sir Brian poured forth the story of his wrongs, not sorry to confide them to a brother officer, who had always borne the character of a martinet, and who presumably would consider no punishment too severe for insubordination. But severity in the public service, as many examples from history show, is by no means incompatible with leniency in private life, and Sir Hector Buckle, very vexatiously and unnecessarily, espoused the cause of the delinquent.

"Stuff and nonsense, Segrave! you're making mountains out of molehills, as you always do. Hang it all, man! young fellows will be young. For my own part, I don't like to see 'em too cautious and saving; I look upon that as a bad sign of 'em—I do indeed."

"Oh," returned Sir Brian, "it is easy to pardon the extravagance of other men's sons, of course. Not that this is a case of mere extravagance. If it had been I should have acted differently."

"Would you? I'm not so sure of that. Anyhow, you'll act like a thundering ass if you do as you propose. So now you know what I think about it."

"It is the more obliging of you to favour me with that polite expression of opinion," replied Sir Brian, becoming very red in the face, "because, to the best of my recollection, it was unasked for."

"Now, Segrave, it's no use getting on the high horse with me. I'm not going to quarrel with you, and I've known you long enough to call you an ass when you deserve it. You very often are an ass, Segrave; but if you disinherit your son you'll be worse than an ass."

"Oh, very well! very well!" cried Sir Brian, jumping up. "I'm a brute, I suppose, and you are perfectly right to call me so. You only anticipate the general verdict. No doubt that is what everybody will say of me when I am dead and my will is known. But I am not in the habit of letting myself be deterred from doing my duty by the fear of hard names; nor have you condescended to give me a single reason for condemning me. I am sorry I introduced the subject. Good day, Buckle."

He charged out of the club, without waiting for a reply, and was as nearly as possible knocked down by a hansom-cabman, who pulled up with a jerk and addressed him in language which nothing could excuse. Sir Brian stood in the middle of Pall Mall, shaking his stick at the cabman, whose number he took, and causing some interruption to the traffic, until he was courteously, but firmly, taken in tow by a policeman, who remarked that the roadway was intended for wheeled vehicles and the pavement for foot-passengers. Sir Brian wanted to argue that point; but the constable interrupted him, alleging that he "reelly hadn't no time for talking non-sense." Sir Brian then took the policeman's number also and went on his way rejoicing.

He hardly knew whether to be glad or

sorry when, on reaching his hotel, he found young Mr. Dodder waiting for him with the new will, all ready for signature, and an apology from the head of the firm, who had an important appointment elsewhere. It would have been pleasant to say some of the sharp things to Potter which that gentleman had escaped by his abrupt departure on the previous day; but then again Potter was not easily snubbed, and, after all, altercation with one's lawyer is a thing to be deprecated.

Young Mr. Dodder had no remarks of any kind to offer; only he insisted, despite his client's protests, on reading the will through from beginning to end in a hasty, gobbling voice. This ceremony completed, witnesses were summoned and the instrument whereby the principle of primogeniture was set at nought by one of the staunchest Tories in England was executed in due form.

On the ensuing afternoon Sir Brian, with all the anger and excitement gone out of him, alighted at the Kingscliff station and, handing over his portmanteau to the groom who had driven down to meet him, said he would walk home. Already he was sorry for what he had done; but that, as he inwardly asseverated more than once while pensively making his way down the High Street, was quite a different thing from repenting of it. The judge who condemns a prisoner to death or penal servitude may, and no doubt frequently does, feel very sorry for the criminal; but the law has to take its course all the same. Sir Brian's sorrow (so he assured himself) was perfectly legitimate and implied no tardy misgivings. Or, at least, if there was one thing that he blamed himself a little bit for, it was that he had not bequeathed some portion of his small personal property to his elder son. Gilbert, after all, had a few hundreds a year of his own, inherited from a maiden aunt, and now Brian would have absolutely nothing, except the Manor House. However, this error, if it was an error, admitted of reparation. A change of that kind could hardly be counted inconsistent, even by that impertinent old Potter. If only the sale of the Manor House could be averted! But of course that was impossible. Potter—confound him!—had said it was impossible. Though, for the matter of that, Potter had said some other things so atrocious that they would not bear thinking about. Alas! when a man dies he has done with this world for ever, and the world has done with him. At times it almost seems as if a fuller re-

cognition of this fact might be the truest wisdom.

Thus, revolving many matters in a troubled mind, Sir Brian traversed Kingscliff. He mechanically raised his forefinger to the brim of his hat in acknowledgment of the salutations which greeted him, but spoke to nobody until, as chance would have it, he ran full into the arms of the very last person in the world with whom he wished to exchange a word.

"Well, Sir Brian Segrave," said Mr. Buswell, with his accustomed affability, "and how are you to-day? Been thinking at all over the little plan I submitted to you last time we met? I suppose not, eh? Well, a wilful man must have his way, as they say; but you really are foolish, Sir Brian, if you'll excuse my telling you so. It ain't bad policy to hold on in a rising market, I grant you; but you may hold on a bit too long, don't you see. It's against my interest to say it; but now's your time to begin letting. More than that, now's your time for selling outright. Why, bless your soul! there won't be such a thing as leasehold property twenty years hence."

"Mr. Buswell," answered Sir Brian, "you appear to be under some strange misapprehension. I have told you before, and I tell you again, that no portion of the property that you speak of will ever be either let or sold."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Mr. Buswell; "that's good! That's what I call a pretty bold prophecy to make. I shouldn't venture to make it if I was in your skin, Sir Brian."

Sir Brian bowed coldly and passed on; he was not going to bandy words with the fellow. Nevertheless he was wounded and vaguely alarmed. In his young days no man in Buswell's position would have dared to speak so to his betters; and Buswell seemed to be horribly confident, too, as well as impudent. The world was turning topsyturvy; the young generation was rushing towards revolution with a light heart, and no one—not even that sober, sensible old Potter—believed that the next owner of Beckton would be guided by the wishes of his predecessor. "Who knows? who knows?" Sir Brian kept muttering sadly to himself as he mounted the hill.

His way led him past the church of St. Michael's, whence issued the subdued sound of the organ and the clear singing of young voices. Sir Brian was a little tired with his walk; he thought he would go into the church and rest awhile and listen. So he

stepped through the open door and seated himself on a bench near it. The daylight was almost gone; half-a-dozen candles in the chancel barely rendered visible the chubby faces of the choir-boys who were standing there. It was the *Nunc Dimittis* that they were practising. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." The child who sang the words in his sweet, bird-like treble, thought little of their meaning, perhaps, but they found their way to the heart of the old man who heard them from his far corner. His own departure could not now be very far distant; but whether, when it came, it would be peaceful seemed somewhat uncertain. "I have always tried to do my duty," thought Sir Brian, and that was true enough. His duties, however, as he had seen them, had been concerned almost exclusively with the affairs of this present world. He was too honest to deceive himself. He knew that he had been a worldly man, albeit a conscientious one, and it was too late to change now. After all, he had been as other men are. Gray's hackneyed lines came into his head—

"For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor east one longing, lingering glance behind?"

Well, possibly there were some who looked forward, instead of looking back. For a minute or two Sir Brian tried to look forward, but found that he could not manage it. He shifted his position, sighing impatiently, while the choir boys, relieved from their labours, clattered away through the vestry, and the organist went on playing softly.

Presently the music ceased; there was a sound as of the shutting up and locking of the instrument; and then a tall figure came striding down the aisle. Sir Brian recognised his son, and, as he rose, his son recognised him. The last grey glimmer of daylight fell through the porch upon the young man's features. He raised his eyebrows quickly and smiled holding out his hand. Had he forgotten the scene of two days back, or was it only that he remembered, in his careless way, that there had been a quarrel, and that he wanted to make it up, as he had done many a time before?

Something caused Sir Brian's heartstrings to tighten, and brought an unwonted ring of pain into his voice as he exclaimed, "Oh, Brian, Brian! why are you so impracticable?"

Brian did not understand; he knew that his father thought music a somewhat effeminate art. "The organist is ill," he said.

"Monckton asked me to take his place to-morrow."

"Oh, Monckton and the organist! Boy! don't you know that you have ruined yourself? I have been up to London, and I have altered my will. Your brother will have everything. You are a pauper—do you understand me?—a pauper. I have paid that Jew for you; and I suppose—yes; I suppose you had better begin to think about earning a living for yourself."

They were standing outside the porch now. The young man's face had become very grave; but he answered not a word, and so long a silence supervened that at length Sir Brian was constrained to break it.

"You blame me, of course," said he; "yet this has been your own doing. You would not believe that I was in earnest; but now you see that I was, as I told you I was. I have acted as it seemed to me right to act."

Still Brian remained silent. The old man could stand it no longer. "Speak!" he exclaimed, stamping his foot. "Curse me, if you like; but say something!"

Then Brian broke into an odd laugh. "No," he answered, laying his hand on his father's shoulder; "I won't do that. We must remain friends, whatever happens; but I think you have treated me unfairly. There! I had to say that much; but it is the last word I shall say about the matter. When we meet again we'll take the new order of things for granted. Gilbert is to be Segrave Major in future and I'm Segrave Minor. It is understood."

Then he turned on his heel and walked away in the direction of the Vicarage, while Sir Brian stood still for some minutes longer, abstractedly prodding holes in the damp ground with his stick.

CHAP. IX. THE ELOQUENCE OF MR. MONCKTON.

If Sir Brian did not enjoy his dinner that evening, the fault certainly did not lie with his elder son, who apologised for coming down late, explaining that he had mistaken the dinner-bell for the dressing-bell, and who took a good deal more pains than usual to prevent the conversation from languishing. There was no denying that the young man behaved admirably. He was cheerful and good-humoured, without apparent effort; he talked politics with his father, condemning the Liberal ministry which was then in power; he chafed his brother (who, for his part, was evidently a little excited and ill-at-ease) about a public ball which was to take place shortly in Kingscliff, and at which the

feminine element seemed likely to predominate in the proportion of about twenty to one. In short, he let it be understood that he accepted the situation frankly, and was determined not to sulk over it.

This, though creditable in one sense, was not agreeable to Sir Brian, who felt that he was being magnanimously forgiven for having performed a painful duty. He did not want to be forgiven; he would greatly have preferred to be abused. Had his son taken up that line, he would have been prepared to show, kindly and temperately, that what he had performed had been indeed a duty, and likewise that it had been a painful one. Natures like Sir Brian's are subject to continual reactions. After allowing himself to be carried away by his feelings in the church, he had begun to be ashamed of the words which he had spoken, and which, when recalled in cold blood, sounded not a little undignified. He remembered that he had called upon Brian to curse him. How melodramatic and ridiculous! The boy had not been able to help laughing. And now, somehow or other, he seemed to have got into a false position. He found himself involuntarily using a tone of apology; and when he tried to discard that, the only result was that he became peevish and rude. Sincerely thankful was he when the meal came to an end, and when Brian, with a murmured excuse, took himself off. Even this discreet proceeding caused the old gentleman some additional irritation. It was not Brian's habit to leave the room immediately after dinner. He had, of course, done so now in order to leave the coast clear for the explanation between his father and brother, which both of them might be assumed to desire. Surely that last coal of fire might have been dispensed with!

However, since the opportunity had been given to him, Sir Brian deemed it well to take advantage of it. The sooner this unpleasant subject was broached and settled and done with the better. So he began, in a rather hard and constrained voice:

"Gilbert, you will recollect what I said to you the other day about a change in your prospects. I wish you to know that this is now an accomplished fact. Yesterday I signed a will under which you will inherit the whole of my property, real and personal. You know what has induced me to make this change, which—which I won't deny has cost me a pang. Rightly or wrongly, I conceive it to be my duty to keep together the lands which have descended to us from our

forefathers; and it is my wish and command that you shall do the same after I am gone."

"In that case," said Gilbert slowly, "would it not be better to give me a life-interest only, with remainder to the next heir male?"

"No; if that had been practicable, there would have been no need to disinherit Brian. But I dare not do it. Land is steadily falling in value; we live in bad times, and worse times may be coming. You might possibly find yourself so circumstanced as to be obliged either to part with a few acres for building purposes or to shut this place up and go away. In the presence of such an alternative I myself should decide to sell; but I should sell as little as would suffice, and I trust you to act as I should. I could not trust your brother. That is all I have to say about it, I believe."

Gilbert was silent for a minute or two. "Don't you think," he said at length, "that you have been rather hasty in coming to this decision, and rather hard upon poor old Brian?"

"No," answered Sir Brian curtly, "I don't. Brian has been hard upon himself. As for me, I have given the matter full consideration."

"Yet I should not be surprised if you were to change your mind about it. I'm sure I hope you may."

"It really is a most extraordinary thing," exclaimed Sir Brian, jumping up and beginning to walk about, "that neither you nor your brother give me credit for common firmness! I don't know that, in the course of a long life, I have ever earned a character for vacillation. On the contrary, I have frequently been called obstinate."

A smile flickered for an instant over Gilbert's features and vanished. That confident assumption that vacillation and obstinacy are incompatible qualities tickled his sense of humour. But he replied with proper gravity: "Nevertheless, certainty is very necessary for me. If I am to take Brian's place, I must give up the Bar, I suppose. Now, it would be a very foolish thing on my part to sacrifice my career for the sake of a mere possibility."

"You are extremely prudent, I must say," remarked Sir Brian, with something of a sneer. Gilbert's business-like tone jarred upon him. Moreover, it may be that in transferring the privilege of heirship to his second son he had also transferred to him a little of that feeling of half-conscious antagonism with which so many men are apt to regard their heirs.

"That's better than being imprudent, isn't it?" asked Gilbert, laughing.

"Oh, no doubt. You had better stick to the law, I should think. You may have to wait another ten years before you enter into possession here, and it will be well for you to have some occupation in the meantime. Besides, any money that you may make by your profession will be useful to you. I forgot to say that I may perhaps so far alter my will as to leave the few thousands that I have been able to save to Brian, instead of to you. As matters stand at present, you will both of you require them; but maybe he will require them more than you will."

"I think Brian should have the money," said Gilbert.

"Well, yes; I am disposed to agree with you; but it is not necessary to come to any final decision upon that point yet."

Gilbert said no more; thereby disappointing his father, who had secretly anticipated a less ready acquiescence. Convinced though he was that he had acted rightly in superseding the elder brother, it was hardly satisfactory to him that the younger should only have a half-hearted plea of a few words to urge against the execution of such a decree. But in truth it would not have been very easy to satisfy Sir Brian that evening.

The next day being Sunday, Gilbert and he attended morning service as usual at Beckton church, a small, dilapidated structure of which the parish lay in an opposite direction from Kingscliff. The congregation, besides the Squire and his son, comprised some half-dozen farmers, with their wives and families, and perhaps as many labourers. The parson, who was old and toothless, took a long time to get through the service, and when he climbed up the creaking pulpit-stairs his audience, as if by signal, settled themselves, one and all, in their respective corners and closed their eyes peacefully.

"Poor Venables is breaking up," observed Sir Brian, as they strolled away. He said the same thing every Sunday morning, and Gilbert returned a mechanical assent. But Sir Brian's next remark, being quite novel, was more calculated to arouse attention. "I think," said he, "I will walk over to St. Michael's this evening and hear what Monckton has to say for himself. I have no fancy for all these newfangled ceremonies; but Monckton has done good work among the fishermen, and they tell me he can preach."

"Walk over to St. Michael's in the evening!" ejaculated Gilbert, opening his eyes. "What will you do about dinner, then?"

"Why, go without it for once, like other people," replied his father a little tartly. "I suppose that woman will allow me to have some supper when I come in, won't she? She does it for Brian."

Gilbert smiled. He was thinking to himself, "Most decidedly I shall not give up the law yet awhile."

He was wrong in his deduction, however; for Sir Brian was neither relenting nor thinking of relenting. It was, indeed, precisely because he was not that he felt himself more drawn towards the lad whose ways had hitherto been incomprehensible and amazing to him. It occurred to him that he would like to see for himself what were the attractions of St. Michael's; and then, too, he had another incentive of which he was only in part conscious, in the shape of an undefined feeling of jealousy of the Vicar of that popular place of worship. Brian was spending the day with Monckton; he had gone straight off to see him after his interview of the previous afternoon and had doubtless poured forth all his troubles there and then. "He is a sort of father-confessor, I suppose," thought Sir Brian. And then—"Confound the fellow!" he said aloud, scarcely knowing why he said so or what he meant by it.

"Confound whom?" Gilbert inquired pleasantly.

"Confound Gladstone!" replied his father, with commendable promptitude, and with an emphasis betraying the unslumbering zeal of his political opinions. "Confound Gladstone and all his slavish crew. I wish I may never say anything worse than that on a Sunday morning."

It was not, however, about politics that Sir Brian was thinking as he made his way into the crowded church on the Sunday evening afore-mentioned. Every seat was already taken, but the verger procured a chair and placed it for him behind the last bench, whence he took mental notes of the proceedings as critically as if he had been an emissary of the Church Association. The lighted candles and flowers on the altar, the surpliced choir and the intoned prayers he set down as more or less objectionable—not so much because he saw any particular intrinsic harm in these things as because he considered them to be innovations, and all innovations were hateful to him—but with a fine liberality he admitted the beauty of the music and the reverent behaviour of the congregation. Then John Monckton stepped quickly up into the pulpit, and in less than five minutes Sir Brian had pardoned him his coloured stole,

had ceased to attach any importance to accessories, and was listening with breathless attention.

For Monckton had learnt what, unfortunately, not one in a hundred of our clergy think it worth their while to master—the art of elocution. He spoke with ease and fluency and without the aid of notes; he knew how to manage his voice; he had found out by experience that hearers and readers are two distinct classes, to be approached after entirely different fashions, and that many preachers whose sermons look well enough in print cannot be listened to without weariness and discomfort. But in addition to this technical skill he had the immense advantage of being thoroughly and even passionately in earnest. To the use of the tricks—if any one likes to call them so—which every public speaker must acquire he had schooled himself long ago, and they now came naturally to him; but his emotion was real, his language was singularly clear and simple, and it was curious to see with what rapidity he took hold of his audience and how lightly, yet firmly, he maintained his grasp up to the end. His detractors (of whom he had a few) called him sensational; but that was after they had reached home and had had time to become ashamed of having allowed their great intellects to be held in subjection for half an hour. His admirers, who were far more numerous, were very well content to make unconditional surrender to any man who could force them to it; and on this occasion it was his privilege to earn a fresh partisan of the most obstinate type.

His text, to be sure, was a little unpromising, "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." When Sir Brian heard that he gave a jump and thought for a moment about making for the door. Had this man espoused his son's cause, then, and was he going to be preached at? But it soon appeared that the preacher's intentions were not so equivocal. His sermon would doubtless look commonplace enough, if reported in cold black and white; it was his manner which carried conviction with it and robbed self-satisfied people of their self-satisfaction.

"I assume," said he, "that I am addressing Christians. You must allow me to assume that much from your presence here; otherwise the words of the text can only come to you without authority, and their reasonableness will be open to discussion, like any other moral or philosophical precept. But we, as Christians, have to admit their divine

origin; so that the sole practical question for us is how far our conduct accords with them. We ask and expect forgiveness in return for a repentance which is very often evidenced by nothing but our own declaration; and by forgiveness we mean an absolute blotting out of past transgressions. Very well, then; we must concede to others what we demand for ourselves; there is no escape from the obligation. That is a hard saying; is it not? To tell one who has injured us, 'I not only forgive you, but the injury that you have done me shall be altogether obliterated, and you shall, if you choose, have the opportunity of injuring me in the same way again'—is that unreasonable? Is it weak and foolish? It is, at all events, the rule laid down for us, and unless we conform to that rule we cannot truly say that we have forgiven at all. To talk about expediency will not avail us; we are never told to do what is expedient in a worldly sense; and if we find the laws of Christianity too hard, too unreasonable to obey, we had better say so honestly, and at least not shelter ourselves behind that shabby plea of duty which we are so apt to bring forward when we have made up our minds to be guided by worldly wisdom. Only then we shall have to go a step farther, and confess that we are not Christians in anything save the name, whatever that may be worth."

These sentences made a painful, yet not altogether unwelcome, impression upon Sir Brian, who had a tender conscience. They occurred amongst others which had a less direct bearing upon his own case; but there was not a word of Monckton's discourse but found an echo in his honest heart. He himself was by nature averse to compromises, and he loved an uncompromising man. The doctrine which Monckton proclaimed was not very easy to swallow; but he believed that it was the truth, and after listening to it he felt, with a certain comfort, that he could no longer deceive himself. It was a conviction of expediency, not a sense of duty, that had caused him to disinherit his son; and since his conviction remained unaltered it was clear that expediency must go to the wall, unless duty could be proved to coincide therewith. At the moment he did not think that such proof could be given; the claims of ancestors and posterity seemed somewhat too shadowy for the purpose. He thought he would have to undo what he had done, and he saw, or believed that he saw, quite plainly what would happen in that event. He would be humiliated; he would be made ridiculous; the labour of his life would be rendered vain;

his self-sacrifice would be absolute. Nevertheless, he could not see his way to an alternative; he must act after the fashion which he conceived to be right, at whatever cost, and with no hope of reward, except, indeed, that held out by the preacher—"That ye may be the children of the Highest; for He maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Poor Sir Brian heaved a long sigh when he stood up with the rest of the congregation after the sermon. It is perhaps hardly necessary to say that he was neither a very strong-minded nor a very clear-sighted person. Just now his mind was in a ferment of conflicting emotions. He wanted to do what was right, and he wanted very much to be reconciled with his son; but he could not enjoy the prospect of Potter's indulgent smiles; still less could he contemplate with equanimity the probable triumph of Buswell and the break-up of the old Beckton estate. He was one of the first to leave the church; but, instead of starting homewards, he prowled in a guilty fashion round the building while the organ pealed out the concluding voluntary and the assembly streamed through the porch and gradually dispersed.

At length he saw what he had been waiting for. The small side-door which gave access to the vestry was thrown open; a broad shaft of light shot through it into the night, and a dark figure, clad in a cassock, stepped forth hastily and moved towards the Vicarage. Sir Brian at once gave chase, and a few strides brought him to Monckton's side.

"Mr. Monckton," said he in a voice which lacked its customary assured ring, "excuse me! Can I have a word with you?"

"To be sure," replied Monckton, standing still and peering at his questioner. "Dear me! isn't it Sir Brian Segrave? Who would have thought of your turning out at this time of night?"

Sir Brian was a little chilled. It gave him something of a shock to be addressed in such colloquial language by the orator who just now had swept him up to the most heroic heights, and he was half inclined to draw back. However, it was too late to do that, so he replied confusedly—

"Well, I don't as a rule go to evening services. I am old, you know, and old-fashioned. In my time we didn't have them. There was the morning and the afternoon, and sometimes the ladies went in the afternoon, but not the men—not the men. My father, I

remember, used to have the ferrets out—but no matter. I wanted to say to you, Mr. Monckton, that I have been very much struck and—and affected by your sermon, and that it has made me feel myself in the wrong about my son Brian. At the same time I do not see my course as clearly as I could wish; and I should take it as a great kindness on your part if you would advise me."

"Of course I will do that with all my heart, so far as I am competent," answered Monckton wonderingly. "Won't you come in and have some supper? Brian will join us presently."

The old gentleman started back. "No, thank you—no," he answered nervously; "I would rather not meet Brian to-night. Will he be coming out soon?"

"Oh, no! I think we may count upon his remaining where he is for another quarter of an hour," said Monckton laughing. "He won't leave the organ until the verger loses patience and puts the lights out. We can stroll up and down outside, if you are not afraid of catching cold. You were saying that you were troubled in some way about him."

"Yes; I am troubled. You are in his confidence, I believe, and no doubt he told you yesterday of the change which I thought it my duty—well, yes, I may say that I conscientiously thought it my duty at the time—to make in my will."

"No; he has said nothing about that to me. Some days ago he told me of a money difficulty which he had foolishly allowed himself to be drawn into, and I recommended him to go straight to you; but nothing passed between us upon the subject yesterday. As far as I can recollect, we only spoke about the music for to-day's services."

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Sir Brian; "that boy of mine really is the most astonishing fellow I ever met or heard of! He finds himself suddenly cut off with a shilling and he doesn't even think the circumstance worth mentioning! Now what can you expect—but I am forgetting what I wished to say to you. My dear Monckton, when I heard you speaking this evening, I said to myself that I was in the wrong; though I did seem to have been in the right. Potter told me I was in the wrong, and Buckle, too, but that was on other grounds. Let me lay the whole matter before you, and then tell me what you think. I believe I shall be content to be guided by your judgment."

John Monckton, though bold enough in

the pulpit, was a very modest and somewhat timid man in private life. After hearing Sir Brian out, he pushed his biretta to the back of his head and slowly drew his hand several times across his face and beard.

"Are you sure," he asked, "that you have chosen the right person to consult? This is a serious matter, and I don't know that I am capable of advising you wisely."

"Do you shrink from the responsibility?" asked Sir Brian quickly.

"No," answered the other; "if you put it in that way, no. According to my view, you would not be justified in disinheriting Brian, because—if for no other reason—you have brought him up as your heir, and have never given him the chance of learning how to make his living. It is probably too late for him to learn now. All the same, there is your side of the case to be considered. It is quite true that Brian is utterly unbusiness-like, and I can't say that I think your fears about the property at all unwarrantable."

"Put that aside," interrupted Sir Brian. "I am not to do wrong that good may come of it. And besides, I don't suppose that good would come of it—how can we tell? If I have wronged my son, the wrong must be undone, that's all. I gather that that is your opinion."

With a sudden impulse, Monckton wheeled round and shook hands with the old gentleman. He understood the generosity and simplicity that those few words implied. It is not easy for a proud man to recede from a position which he has taken up in spite of the protests of those about him, and to assign no reason for so doing. Still less easy is it for an obstinate man who has long directed all his efforts towards one fixed aim, to put the accomplishment of that aim in jeopardy; and when one meets with such an individual it is refreshing to be able to shake him by the hand.

Very little more was said after this tacit assurance of mutual respect; only on parting with Sir Brian, Monckton begged him to postpone his final determination for a short time.

"If you will pardon my saying so, you have acted hastily once," said he; "it would be as well not to repeat that mistake. I have told you what I think; but I am not infallible, Heaven knows! and it is possible that some middle course may be open to you, though I own I don't see any. At all events, there can be no harm in allowing yourself leisure to consider it. I dare say I needn't remind you that the safest and surest help to

a decision can only come in answer to prayer."

"I have never been in the habit of introducing such matters into my—my devotions," said Sir Brian, to whom the proposition seemed, oddly enough, to savour slightly of irreverence; "but perhaps you are right as to the wisdom of deliberation. My own feeling would have been to go up to London again to-morrow and set things straight."

"No, no; there is no such hurry as that. Let it stand over for a few days, say till the middle of the week," returned Monckton, making the most unfortunate suggestion that he had ever made in his life.

"Very well; so be it, then," agreed Sir Brian. "Good-night, Monckton, and thank you. Don't tell Brian that you have seen me, please."

CHAPTER X.—BRIAN GOES OUT TO DINNER.

A SOURCE of constant wonder to Admiral Greenwood was the difficulty of getting people to amalgamate and be friendly together at the somewhat overgrown dinner-parties which it was the delight of his hospitable heart to offer to the neighbourhood. A. was a good fellow, he would declare; B. was a good fellow; Mrs. A. was a most superior woman, and Mrs. B. quite charming when you didn't rub her the wrong way; yet, somehow or other, A. could not be brought to entertain that opinion of B., nor B. of A.; while as for Mrs. A. and Mrs. B. it seemed as if they were unable to encounter one another without a passage of arms. This was a very odd thing. The Admiral often remarked that it was, and so did his wife. But what was not at all odd, considering the character of this excellent couple, was that it never occurred to them to acquiesce in the mysteries of an incomprehensible world, and divide their guests with a view to the probable preservation of peace. They adopted no such system; but when they thought it was about time to give another dinner-party, Mrs. Greenwood put on her spectacles, consulted a large volume, in which the names of her visitors were inscribed, and found out whose turn it was to be fed. Sixteen or eighteen of these were selected, with due regard to priority of claim, and it too often happened in the sequel that they quarrelled over their food.

"Perhaps he doesn't do it on purpose," Sir Brian used to say; "I am willing to believe that he does not. Still, it is a little unfortunate, to say the least of it, that if there is a man in the county with whom I

am not upon speaking terms, I can count with absolute certainty upon meeting that man at Greenwood's table."

He might have added that there was always a strong probability of his falling out with Admiral Greenwood himself before the evening was over: for the Admiral, sad to say, was a Liberal; and though he called himself a Whig and professed to be more conservative than a modern Tory, there was very little consolation in that when he recorded his vote for the wrong side. However much one may esteem a man in his private and personal capacity, it is difficult to have patience with political inconsistency. For these reasons Sir Brian hated dining at Morden Court, and as he did not like to decline when asked (for previous engagements are not believed in, in a country neighbourhood, where all possible engagements are known) he not unfrequently excused himself at the last moment on the plea of an attack of gout.

On the day succeeding that on which Monckton's eloquence had achieved such striking results, Admiral Greenwood had a dinner-party and Sir Brian had the gout. He said so to his sons at breakfast-time, and it was about the only thing that he did say in the course of that meal. So silent and subdued was he that they both gave credence to the statement; although, as a truthful man, he felt bound to qualify it a little.

"It has not come on yet," he confessed, "but I am sure that it would come on if I were to drink champagne; and you know, if one doesn't drink champagne, Greenwood at once concludes that there is something wrong with the wine, and his feelings are hurt. I don't want to hurt his feelings; so Brian, my dear fellow, I shall be greatly indebted to you if you will take my place. I think they didn't ask you, did they?"

Brian had not been invited (Mrs. Greenwood, who liked Gilbert better, was wont to say that she was sure Brian was bored to death by dinner-parties); but he was very willing to oblige his father, and was rejoiced to notice the change in the old man's tone. Disagreeable as it was to him to be despoiled of his inheritance, it was more disagreeable still to feel that the penalty inflicted upon him was not held to have purged him of his offence.

In the course of the day Gilbert said a few kind words to him about the change in their respective positions. "It isn't my doing, Brian, and I think it's an awful shame; but there's no use in saying so. You know

what my father is; we shall have another shift of wind before long, depend upon it."

But Brian had made up his mind not to expect that. He was trying to make up his mind also to the new régime and its natural consequences; but his was not a practical mind, and it was sure to take him some time to realise what it means to have the ground cut from under your feet. For instance, it was not until he entered the Morden Court drawing-room, and caught sight of Beatrice Huntley engaged in conversation with the Admiral, that a chill sense of remoteness from her in respect of worldly circumstances crept to his heart. A more practical man might perhaps have reflected that Miss Huntley had money enough for two; but Brian only saw that it must be many years before he could earn an income sufficient to justify him in offering marriage to anybody; and this not only rendered him sad and pensive, but prevented him from approaching his idol for the time being.

It must be owned that Miss Huntley did not appear to feel this neglect very keenly. She nodded to Brian from afar and went on talking to her companion, whom she found most amusing. The Admiral was telling her who everybody was.

"That big man with the beard is Pollington—Sir John Pollington, you know, one of our county members. Good fellow, Pollington, though rather long-winded, perhaps. The little fellow with the bald head and the eye-glass is his nearest neighbour, Stokes, who stood against him in the Liberal interest at the last election and got beaten by a small majority. Better luck next time, I tell him. Pollington and Stokes won't speak, which is a great mistake—don't you think so? Why not sink political differences in private life? Well, then, let me see: Monckton you know already, and Mitchell. The lady with the hook nose, talking to my wife, is Lady Barbara, who has gone in so strongly for the blue-ribbon movement of late. No accounting for tastes, is there? I should think she must find it rather slow work, drinking nothing but water when she dines out; but her intentions are good, I'm sure. I expect she'll have a word or two to say to my friend Hopwood, before she goes. You've heard of Hopwood and Maltby, the great brewers, no doubt."

"And who," inquired Miss Huntley, "is the distinguished-looking man on the hearth-rug, with the massive watch-chain?"

"Eh?—distinguished-looking? Oh, come now, Miss Huntley, that's too bad of you!

Poor Buswell! his appearance isn't aristocratic, I admit, and Mrs. Greenwood was rather down upon me for asking him here; but then look at what he has done for the place! Why, Kingscliff would have been nowhere, if it hadn't been for Buswell. That fat woman, with the diamonds all over her, is his wife. I'm afraid people are rather inclined to show them the cold shoulder; but they'll live that down, you'll see. After all, why should we give ourselves airs?"

Well indeed was it for Sir Brian that he had been attacked by those timely symptoms of gout!

As for Miss Huntley, she rather prided herself upon her immunity from "airs," and would have been quite content to accept Mr. Buswell's arm, had that person been requested to take her in to dinner. But fate and Mrs. Greenwood had appointed for her another partner, with whom, as it chanced, she was even better pleased.

"Mr. Monckton," said she, turning to the individual thus favoured, as she took her place at the table, "I have been hoping, ever since I heard you preach last night, that I should get an opportunity of talking to you some time or other, and now I am lucky beyond all expectation, because here you are for the next hour at least. There is no escape for you."

"I have no wish to escape yet," answered Monckton. But he thought to himself that he very likely would experience that desire before long; for he suspected Miss Huntley of being one of those flippant young women, whom he did not like.

Her next words were not of a kind to raise her higher in his estimation. "I am going to be very impertinent," she said; "I am going to criticise your sermon. It was a beautiful sermon, and I was carried away by it at the time, as I suppose that most of your hearers were. But when I reached home I took it to pieces, and I found that it had the fault which almost all sermons have. You begged the whole question from beginning to end."

"How so?" inquired Monckton, wondering whether it would be unpardonably rude to say that he must be permitted to do his own work in his own way.

"Well, you assumed what you had no right to assume. You took it for granted that we were all Christians, whereas you must have known as well as I do that a large proportion of every congregation—shall we say a half?—are no such thing."

"I don't know what meaning you attach

to the word, Miss Huntley. I take it that men and women may be Christians without acting up to their principles."

"Oh, of course; that isn't what I mean. I mean that a good number of us who go to church are not really convinced of the truth of Christianity at all."

"Even if that were so, I should not have been begging the question, should I? I only tried to show what I thought to be our duty, upon a given hypothesis. If every sermon had to begin with a demonstration of the truth of our religion, there would never be time to get farther than the beginning."

"Very well, then, I withdraw the particular charge," said Miss Huntley, who in truth had only formulated it by way of prelude; "but I maintain that the clergy in general beg the question. Your conclusions must always sound impotent so long as you refuse to discuss your premisses. You profess to be convinced of the truth of those premisses; but why won't you tell us how you have managed to convince yourselves? Most people, I am sure, would like to believe, if they could; only they have an idea that it is wrong to doubt; so they are obliged to do the best they can with a sort of pretence of religion which they are afraid to inquire into. But it seems to me almost impossible that any one should believe without first doubting."

"I can't agree with you there," answered Monckton; "but certainly if you have doubts you ought to face them."

"Let us say that I have doubts, then, and that I face them and look up the evidence. I discover that Christianity claims to be a revealed religion and grounds its claim upon four narratives, said to be written by four eye-witnesses of certain miraculous events. But whether these four narratives were really written by the four eye-witnesses or not, is what nobody knows. The first record that we have of their existence is given us by Irenæus towards the end of the second century, and Papias, who wrote about forty years before, I think, doesn't appear to know of any written Gospel, except a rudimentary one, attributed to St. Matthew. That is hardly conclusive, is it?"

"Of course it isn't," answered Monckton quietly. "You ought to have mentioned St. Paul; but you are not obliged to accept his evidence as conclusive either. It has never been pretended—or at all events it never ought to have been pretended—that the truth of Christianity can be proved like a proposition in Euclid."

"Why should we believe it, then? Because the Church answers for it? But who will answer for the Church?"

"The Church, I think, can show you the way to obtain faith, and through faith you may obtain the certainty that you ask for. From the nature of the case it is plain that you cannot gain it in any other way. What is supernatural is not to be explained by reasoning."

"Ah, Pascal's remedy! 'Follow the precepts of the Church; practise religion; *faites dire des messes. Cela vous abêtiira naturellement et vous fera croire.*'"

Monckton, who had hitherto kept his eyes fixed upon his plate (because, although he did not like to decline the discussion, he thought it ill-timed and possibly insincere), now glanced up at his neighbour and smiled. "Do you know, Miss Huntley," said he, "I suspect that if you ponder upon 'the eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness,' and ask what that is and how it can be proved, you will soon find yourself as completely *abêtié* as if you had followed Pascal's supposed advice, and that you won't find yourself in possession of the promised reward."

Miss Huntley returned his look for an instant, then lowered her eyelids and blushed—a not very common weakness with her.

"Yes," she returned suddenly, "you are quite right. I am a humbug, and you have found me out, and I won't say what I was going to say about St. Jerome. I got him and Irenæus from the source that you know of, and I got Papias out of Renan, and I have read my Gibbon, and—and I believe that is about all. Now you have knocked me down completely and can dictate your terms; I surrender at discretion. Someday soon you will find me waiting for you after one of the daily services and ready to accept orders in a spirit of meekness. I only hope you won't make me teach in a Sunday-school, like little Miss Greenwood, because I have such a very strong dislike to the smell of damp corduroys. Still, I feel that I am capable of submitting even to that if you insist upon it."

"I don't know whether you are serious or not," said Monckton, somewhat taken aback by this abrupt capitulation, "but in any case you are not quite fitted to teach in a Sunday-school at present, I think."

"Oh, I am serious enough; and if I can't help your church and your people in any other way I can at least give them money, which, I suppose, might be useful if properly

applied. After all, I am only a woman, and what I want is conviction, not proofs. Let us talk about something else now. Is it true that you know how to manage a boat as well as any sailor in Kingsliff?"

Admiral Greenwood, beaming down the long table upon his assembled guests, noted with self-congratulation that one pair among them were getting on together famously. To this social success he might have added a second, in the persons of his daughter and Gilbert Segrave; but there he would have had to stop. If some of the rest of the company were not tearing each other to pieces it was perhaps only because they were separated by a piece of furniture as substantial as that which a deceased statesman once declared himself fortunate in being able to interpose between himself and his rival in the House of Commons. Lady Barbara Pollington had fallen upon the brewer, tooth and nail, and was proving conclusively to him that in anything but a corrupt and rotten state of society he would at that moment be working off a well-deserved sentence of imprisonment with hard-labour. Mrs. Greenwood, with Sir John Pollington on her left hand and his political opponent on her right, was rendering it well-nigh impossible for these two gentlemen to ignore one another, and was thereby rapidly reducing them both to desperation. Captain Mitchell, unable to remove his eyes from Miss Greenwood and Gilbert, had so exasperated his neighbour by the irrelevance of his answers that she had felt it only due to herself to turn her back upon him, and was thus eating her dinner under serious disadvantages of posture; worst of all, Mr. Buswell, who had been judiciously placed between two of the most influential old ladies in Kingsliff, had triumphantly defeated their attempts to overawe him, and was now holding forth in stentorian tones upon the improvements which he hoped to effect before long in the town.

"We want a music-hall, that's what we want," the Admiral heard him saying. "We must have some attraction of that kind to draw the people from the great towns and get a season all the year round, don't you see? 'Tgh-class visitors from October to May, and the million during what I call the 'oliday months. I don't see no reason at all why Kingsliff shouldn't become the Margate of the West."

The old ladies fanned themselves in speechless fury; some of the other guests pricked up their ears and exchanged looks which per-

haps meant, "I will if you will." However, nobody went so far as to rise and quit the table, although it subsequently became the subject of serious debate whether Admiral Greenwood ought not to be made in some way sensible of the affront which he had seen fit to put upon his friends by inviting them to meet such an atrocious ruffian. Indeed, from that evening may be said to date the commencement of the great Social or Buswellian War, with which this narrative is little concerned, but which was waged with intense bitterness in Kingscliff during a considerable period of time, and smoulders on even to the present day; although Buswell, who is now Sir Peter Buswell, and has built himself a gorgeous marine residence in the town which owes so much to him, must be considered to have practically annihilated the opposing faction.

After dinner, Miss Huntley made a sign to Brian to approach, and, drawing away her dress, so that he might seat himself on the sofa beside her, said: "You appear to be in low spirits; may one ask what is the matter?"

"I don't think I much enjoy dinner-parties," answered Brian, who was unwilling as yet to tell her the true cause of his dejection.

"Not even such entertaining ones as this? Your tastes seem to be rather negative. You don't like dinners; you don't like balls; you are not particularly fond of shooting. Is there anything that you do like positively, except playing the organ?"

"I like talking to you—sometimes," replied Brian.

"Thank you. It is a comfort to know that I am found tolerable, though only occasionally. Your friend Mr. Monckton finds me intolerable, without qualification; he fled the premises immediately after dinner. And yet I did my best to entertain him. What do you think of my offering myself as a district-visitor?"

"I think I should like to be in your district."

"Thank you once more. Decidedly you are more polite than Mr. Monckton, though possibly less honest. I wanted to tell you how charmed I was with your service last night; but I won't say anything about it now, because I am in a very bad temper and all my nerves are on edge, and I had better get home to my dear, good old Joy, who is the only person who really understands me."

"Does she understand you?" Brian asked dubiously.

"Oh, there isn't much to understand. I am a spoilt child, that's all—which is odd, considering that nobody has ever spoilt me. Clementina, at any rate, can't accuse herself of that weakness. I wish I were somebody else! I wish I were Kitty Greenwood! That brother of yours is very good looking and agreeable."

"And very fortunate," Brian could not help adding.

"That is as may be. But let us call him so."

"If you were Miss Greenwood I am sure I should wish to be Gilbert," Brian pursued, trembling a little at his own audacity.

Miss Huntley glanced at him for a moment and then broke into a short laugh.

"That sentiment is rather too complicated to follow," said she. "Miss Greenwood is a solid fact, she wouldn't be altered if my identity became extinguished in hers. Consequently all you have to do is to go in and cut out Jacob. He has the face of a man who would be easily consoled; I imagine that he will forgive you and perhaps even live to thank you. I shall watch the struggle with interest as long as I remain here. In the meantime, will you go and ask whether my carriage has come?"

Brian obeyed, and shortly afterwards had the satisfaction of helping Miss Huntley to put on her wraps in the hall. It was not much of a satisfaction, nor was he any the happier for the brief conversation above recorded. Miss Huntley's hard flippancy hurt him; though she had said nothing to offend him personally. The impression left upon his mind was that she was tired of Kingscliff and its inhabitants, and that he might any day receive the news of her impending departure.

This surmise of his would have met with melancholy confirmation if he had been able to hear the first words that she addressed to her faithful companion on reaching home. "My good Matilda, I am sick of this. I have been bored to-night, and, what is much worse, I have been snubbed. Suppose we take flight for Cannes?"

CHAPTER XL.—"AS YOU WERE!"

THE two brothers drove home together in a dog-cart, Gilbert taking the reins. He was in excellent spirits; the humours of the evening had not been lost upon him; and the flood of gentle satire which he poured upon Lady Barbara, Sir John Pollington, and the rest, left Brian, who, as we have seen, was not in good spirits at all, free to pursue his own despondent meditations in silence.

"By the way," Gilbert said, after they had driven through Kingscliff and were mounting the hill towards Beckton, "I hope you are prepared to do a picnic to-morrow."

"I do so hate picnics!" sighed Brian.

"You won't hate this one. It isn't a big affair; only Mitchell is going to bring the Greenwoods round to the bathing-cove in his cutter, and I promised to have some lunch ready for them when they land. I suppose the Governor won't object, will he?"

"I should think not, so long as you don't ask him to join the party. Poor Mitchell!"

"Why poor Mitchell? He will have a very pleasant day; and to put his pleasure beyond a doubt, Miss Joy is to be invited to meet him. Miss Huntley is also to be invited—to meet you, I presume. Now will you come?"

"Oh, yes, if I'm wanted," answered Brian, with a laugh.

Gilbert laughed too.

"Ah, my dear old Brian," said he, "it's a thousand pities that Miss Huntley is Miss Huntley, and that she is bound to form a dazzling alliance. If she were only an ordinary heiress you might marry her, and then it wouldn't matter a bit whether you inherited Beckton or not, and we should all live happily ever afterwards."

To this Brian made no rejoinder for some little time; but at last he could not help asking,

"What is the difference between Miss Huntley and what you call an ordinary heiress, Gilbert?"

"Lady Clementina," answered Gilbert concisely.

"That doesn't enlighten me much."

"Lady Clementina Huntley, as everybody except you knows, is a daughter of the Duke of Devonport, and she would never have married her husband if he hadn't been so tremendously rich, and if she hadn't been rather advanced in life when he asked her. She is a woman of considerable strength of character; she takes a motherly interest in your friend; and you may safely lay ten to one that when Miss Huntley's career of liberty comes to an end she will be converted into a countess at the very least. It's a thousand pities, as I say, but so it is."

"Yet she is her own mistress," Brian remarked, after another pause.

"Nominally she is; and I have no doubt that we owe the honour and felicity of her presence among us at this moment to the fact that she thinks she can defy

Lady Clementina. Lady Clementina may be defied during the autumn and winter, but not for very long after the opening of the London season. Miss Joy, you see, is an utterly impossible chaperon; and when one is fond of anything to the extent of being unable to exist without it, which I imagine is Miss Huntley's case with regard to society, one often has to buy it at the price of certain concessions. She will make the concessions when the time comes."

"You seem to know all about it," remarked Brian a trifle resentfully.

"Really I believe I do. My dear old chap, you have got yourself into all manner of troubles because you will persist in seeing people at their best and taking them at their own valuation. It's a most absurd plan; and if experience can't warn you, I will, though I dare say you would like to kick me for doing it. I am not at all surprised at your being attracted by Miss Huntley, who is as charming as you please; only don't go and lay up affliction for yourself by falling in love with her. Young women of her temperament are capable of great acts of folly, I grant you; only the worst of it is that they always repent of them. Moreover, Miss Huntley, I suspect, is clever enough to know that and to keep her capabilities well in hand. There! I have spoken. Ponder these sayings; they are uttered for your good."

"Many thanks," said Brian briefly.

There really seemed to be a good deal of common sense and plausibility in Gilbert's admonition, which was given good-humouredly enough, and Brian was not so much angered as saddened by it. Of course it was in the last degree improbable that Miss Huntley cared two straws about him; and equally of course (though this was a point upon which Gilbert had omitted to touch) he, as a penniless man, could not offer himself to a great heiress. He said no more until he and his brother reached home, where they were both astonished to find their father, who was addicted to early hours, still up.

Sir Brian came out into the hall to meet them. His manner was nervous and absent; he paid little attention to Gilbert's humorous description of the Greenwoods' dinner-party, and even when he was informed of the astounding circumstance that Buswell had been one of the guests, only ejaculated, "Is it possible!—is it possible!" in a sort of awestruck whisper, instead of flying into a passion, as he might have been expected to do. By-and-by Brian said good night and retired

to smoke a pipe before going to bed ; and then the old gentleman took Gilbert by the arm, saying hurriedly : " I want to speak to you for a minute, please, Gilbert."

Often in after times—oftener, indeed, than was pleasant to him—the memory of that scene returned to Gilbert's mind : the great, dark library, lighted only by the bedroom candle which his father carried in a somewhat tremulous hand ; the curious, softened, eager expression on the old man's face, which can only be described as a mixture of pride and humiliation ; his own inward impatience and half-contempt, as he learnt that his prediction had been verified, and that he had only been promoted to the position of heir-apparent to be immediately ousted from it. Sir Brian told the whole truth, not sparing himself. He confessed that his abandonment of his purpose, which had every appearance of weakness and indecision, had been caused by nothing more nor less than a parson's sermon ; he admitted that by reverting to former dispositions he would in all likelihood bring about the catastrophe which he had always dreaded.

" But," he added in conclusion, not without a touch of pathos, " you see, Gilbert, I feel that I must take my chance—we must take our chance—of that. We can't insure what we wish without doing an injustice, that's the long and the short of it."

" I never supposed that you would persist in acting the Roman father," Gilbert answered, with a slight laugh, and in a voice which he could not for the life of him keep from sounding harsh, " I told you, as you may remember, that you would change your mind again before long."

Perhaps it was only natural that he should feel a little disappointed. No honest man would wish to be enriched by an act of injustice ; but it is not disagreeable to inherit a landed estate ; and who, on examining his heart, would be so hypocritically humble as to judge himself unworthy of that pleasant destiny ? Gilbert, excusably enough, thought that he would make a very good Squire of Beckton, and he had also, a shade less excusably, come to believe that Brian would make a very bad one. A man who backs bills for casual acquaintances, who never knows how much money he has in his pocket, and does not care how much he may owe to his tradesmen, is possibly no great sinner ; but surely he is a very great fool. It could not be denied that Brian had been something of a prodigal ; and to those whose habits are orderly, and whose lives have been free from

extravagance, the unconditional pardon of the prodigal must always seem a rather imprudent, if a magnanimous, act. Our sympathies are all with the poor prodigal ; we rejoice to think of his welcome by the father whom he still loved, to the home which he had too hastily deserted, and we turn away with a fine disdain from the immaculate and ungracious brother, who chose to sulk outside all by himself, instead of taking part in the general feasting and joy. But perhaps that may be in some measure because we do not ourselves happen to be in the position of the immaculate brother. Gilbert was sensible enough to know that he had no real grievance, and to refrain from reproaching his father in set terms ; but, remembering Brian's misdeeds and his own conspicuous virtues, he did feel a good deal inclined to sulk. To this it may be added that he had fallen in love with pretty Kitty Greenwood (the one touch of rashness in an otherwise circumspect career), and that the prospect of calling her his own—which an hour ago had seemed near enough to be counted upon—had now once more become remote.

But Sir Brian did not understand all this. In substituting the one son for the other he had meant neither to show favour nor to take vengeance, but simply to do what was best in the interest of that fetish of his, the integrity of the Beckton property. Having recognised that the worship of his fetish could not be reconciled with the discharge of higher duties, he had bravely resolved to abandon it ; and what preoccupied him just now was not pity for Gilbert, whom he saw no particular reason to pity, but shame at his own apparent inconsequence and half-heartedness.

" I acknowledge that you were right and that I was wrong," he said quite humbly. " I can only feel thankful that I have seen the wrong in time to repair it."

" Right and wrong are difficult things to define," observed Gilbert, and had to bite his tongue to keep himself from adding anything to that oracular dictum.

Presently he yawned, remarked that it was past twelve o'clock, and wishing his father good night, went up-stairs to bed.

Sir Brian lingered for a few moments, then stealthily crossed the hall and took his way down one of the long, dark corridors, a smile beginning to show itself about his mouth and eyes as he went.

In that large house there were rooms enough and to spare for its three inmates. On the ground-floor an apartment of spacious dimensions had been assigned to Brian and

contained all his worldly goods, including the grand piano which he had caused to be transported thither from Oxford. This den of his was shut off from the rest of the house by double swing-doors, because Sir Brian disliked the smell of smoke, and also because he was supposed—perhaps erroneously—to dislike the sound of music. Now, as the old gentleman passed through the swing-doors, and the soft, fantastic cadences of a prelude by Chopin caught his ear, he stood still for a moment to listen, and though he sighed presently, that was not because the melody displeased him, but because he could not divest his mind of the idea that a musician and a country gentleman are two distinct beings, and that a man who attempts to be both at the same time must needs fall short of excellence in one or other of his parts. He shook his head gently, sighed again, muttered "Ah, well!" and went into the room without knocking.

Brian stopped playing and started up from his music-stool. Such a visit at such an hour was so rare an event as to be portentous.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"Nothing is the matter," answered his father quietly, "except that I have made a fool of myself, and I couldn't go to sleep without telling you so. I have no right to disinherit you, Brian, and I dare say I have just as little right to bind you down to conditions which you might not be able to observe. The upshot of it is that I must go back to London and alter my will again; but this will be the last time."

Brian was so astonished that he hardly took in the meaning of the announcement and made no reply whatsoever.

Presently his father continued, "You may thank your friend Monckton for enlightening me. It was something he said in his sermon on Sunday evening that set me thinking, and afterwards we had a little talk together. He showed me, what I ought to have known without being told, that duty and expediency have very little to say to one another. He is a fine fellow that—a very fine fellow. I thought so when I heard him preach, and I was sure of it when we had our interview. Not that he said much then."

"I think there were two of you at that interview," said Brian gently, finding his tongue. He knew his father a great deal better than his father knew him, and there was no danger of his underestimating the sacrifice which was being made for his sake.

"Eh—two of us? Well, no, my boy, I

can't quite think that. I have undone—or, at least, I am about to undo—a great wrong. I don't feel very proud of having committed it." He paused for an instant, and, then, with one of those quaint mental reversions which were common with him, exclaimed, "The property ought not to fall to pieces, all the same—no, it ought not to fall to pieces."

"It never shall, if I can help it!" cried Brian warmly. "Father, I don't know what to say to you. You have every right to consider me a spendthrift, and I suppose that is what I have been, in a certain way, though I am not exactly what most people would call extravagant. Anyhow, I am going to make a change now. I'll back no more bills as long as I live, and you may make your mind easy about the property. I would have engaged long ago not to sell any part of it, only, for one thing, the prospect of my succeeding you has always seemed to me to be so far away in the future, and then again I don't quite agree with you about the matter. I can't help feeling it a pity that you should be bothered and embarrassed when you might so easily get rid of bother and embarrassment. But we won't discuss that. You have been most generous to me, and the least I can do is to obey you. I promise you now that not a single acre of the estate shall ever be sold by me."

Sir Brian shook his head. "I won't take the promise, my boy. I have a strong opinion upon the subject, which you will hardly expect me to surrender; but I distinctly desire that you should be free. Circumstances might arise under which it would be necessary for you to sell. All I ask is that you will bear in mind my wishes. It is right that they should weigh with you, and I believe that they will weigh with you. I said as much to your brother when I still thought that he would be the heir. Now I believe we have said all that need be said, and it only remains for me to go back to Potter and eat humble pie. How that man will crow, to be sure! I don't doubt that he means well; but really his impertinence is sometimes past all bearing. What my poor father would have done to old Mr. Dodder if he had permitted himself such liberties I can't imagine; but times are changed. Even the lawyers nowadays seem to think that one man is as good as another. It's flying clean in the face of Scripture, to my mind; but, for the matter of that, Radicalism is sure to lead to Atheism. Whatever you do, Brian, don't become a Radical."

"I think I am likely to lead a very conservative life," answered Brian, laughing a little; "but indeed I am not much of a politician. I leave all that to Gilbert."

"You can't do better—you can't do better; Gilbert is a sound Tory. Now I am going to bed." He took a few steps towards the door; then suddenly wheeled round and,

coming back, caught his son by the hand. "Brian, my dear boy," said he, "I thank God that I have been preserved from ruining you."

With that he quitted the room hastily, leaving Brian a good deal moved and surprised and very resolute to show himself worthy in the sequel of so kind a father.

SOMEWHERE.

SOMEWHERE the wind is blowing,

I thought as I toiled along
In the burning heat of the noontide,
And the fancy made me strong.
Yes, somewhere the wind is blowing,
Though here where I gasp and sigh,
Not a breath of air is stirring,
Not a cloud in the burning sky.

Somewhere the thing we long for
Exists on earth's wide bound,
Somewhere the sun is shining
When winter nips the ground,
Somewhere the flowers are springing,
Somewhere the corn is brown,
And ready unto the harvest
To feed the hungry town.

Somewhere the twilight gathers

And weary men lay by
The burden of the daytime,
And wrapped in slumber lie.
Somewhere the day is breaking,
And gloom and darkness flee;
Though storms our bark are tossing,
There's somewhere a placid sea.

And thus, I thought, 'tis always,
In this mysterious life,
There's always gladness somewhere
In spite of its pain and strife;
And somewhere the sin and sorrow
Of earth are known no more,
Somewhere our weary spirits
Shall find a peaceful shore.

Somewhere the things that try us
Shall all have passed away,
And doubt and fear no longer
Impede the perfect day.
O brother, though the darkness
Around thy soul be cast,
The earth is rolling sunward
And light shall come at last.

ALFRED CAPEL SHAW.

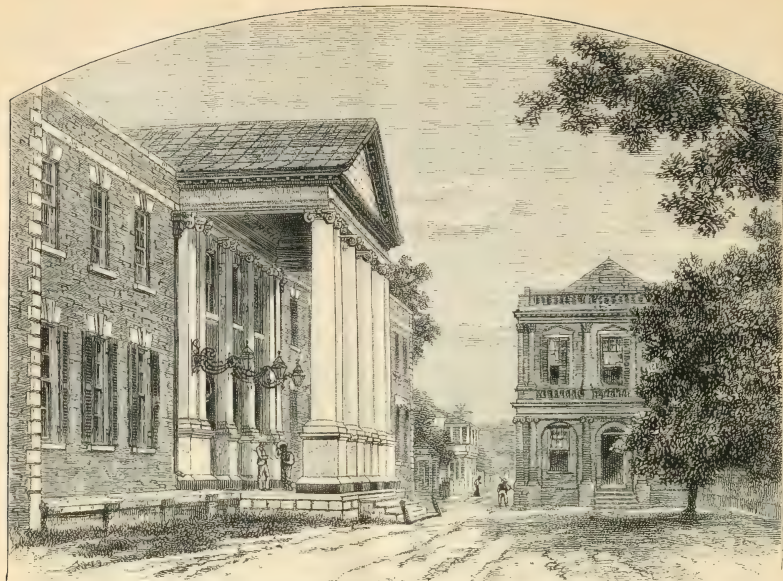
WINTER IN THE SLANT OF THE SUN.

BY THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

SECOND PAPER.

BEFORE leaving Barbados I would like to notice that one other matter, which, at least in one phase of it, baffled at home three of the greatest of English Prime Ministers (Mr.

Pitt, Lord John Russell, and Sir R. Peel), has been settled here, perhaps without consciousness of its being difficult. When the grant from the Consolidated Fund for the expense



King's House, Spanish Town, Jamaica.

of the Church Establishment was withdrawn, the Local Government was not disposed to leave the ministers and ministrations of religion to shift for themselves, but determined on re-endowing the various religious bodies who might consent to receive such aid in proportion to their respective numbers. This method, which goes by the name of concurrent endowment, has also, if I mistake not, been adopted in Trinidad, where, however, through the reversed condition of things, it works out very differently. The entire sum provided by the colony for the Anglican Bishop, forty parochial clergy, and two chaplains, amounts to about £10,800 a year. All funds, however, for church expenses have entirely ceased, and are met, more properly, by the congregations themselves. That this method is creditable to the Local Government and involves no injustice to the other religious bodies, Wesleyan, Moravian, and Roman, which are also assisted out of the public treasury, no one will deny. That it sets the ministers of religion free for their spiritual duties, and does not burden them with the onerous, and not always agreeable, duty of appealing to their flocks for their main-

tenance, is also evident. Let us hope that it may not benumb the spirit of sacrifice or independence, that it may help both clergy and laity to feel that it touches their honour, and even their spiritual life, now that they are freed from the burden of raising a local sustentation fund, to make a spirited and exemplary effort for mission work outside their borders, and that the island, which manifestly owes most of its population, and perhaps as much its prosperity, to the black people on the other side of the Atlantic, will pay them back for past wrongs and inherited difficulties, by willingly sending them the gospel. The Pongas mission needs support.

It is not, of course, to be supposed that because Barbados in so many respects has done so well for herself there is nothing left to do in the shape of material improvement or administrative progress. There is a lamentable want of water in the country districts, and from a debate in the House of Assembly, at which I was present, I was concerned to see that a matter so vital to the best interests of the population was in risk of being indefinitely deferred. There is any amount of water in the island, which

only needs getting at; and the open pools, of the colour and thickness of coffee, from which I observed the negro folk drawing their supplies of liquid for all purposes, made me shudder. It was far thicker even than the Mississippi at St. Louis, and by no means so abundant.

Then the Legislature has not yet made any arrangement for registering the births and deaths in the island. The only way of supplying the information is the parochial registration, which, of course, is cognisant

only of baptisms and funerals. As, however, it is the almost universal custom for the coloured parents to bring their infants to be baptized, the information at the disposal of the Government may be approximately accurate. A greater danger than this is in the want of any compulsory method of vaccination, with the awkward fact that barely one-sixth of the population is vaccinated. With a commendable munificence a Free Hospital is supported by the Government at an annual expense of £6,000; and



Newcastle Barracks, Jamaica.

it is easy to see the difficulties in the way of compelling vaccination in Barbados, when we have a growing opposition to it in England. But once let small-pox get its footing in the island, and the problem of dealing with a redundant population might find a prompt but melancholy solution.

I came away from Barbados charmed and instructed by a visit which unforeseen circumstances, greatly to my personal advantage, made much longer than I had originally intended; also quietly convinced that if Barbados is not on the whole contented

with her opportunities and circumstances it is only because she is smitten with that sublime discontent which philosophers declare to be the secret of important progress. I am glad to see that the Colonial Secretary, Mr. C. C. Knollys, a strong, clear-headed man, and by no means given to emotional writing, concurs with this view, and has recently published it in words with far more weight than mine.

There is, however, one thing I should like to see secured—of course it never will be; nay, secured by legislative enactment, which it hardly could be. Much I should like to see

it made a condition of election to a seat, whether in the Legislative Council or in the House of Assembly, that all members of either body should have paid at least one visit, of not less than six months, to the mother country, during the session of the Imperial Parliament. Barbados would still be Barbados, but there would be a place for England in the Barbadian mind. I have indeed heard of a native of the island who, after visiting England, said he preferred Barbados. Nothing can be more natural. On my return home, driving through Richmond Park and looking down on the famous view from Richmond Hill, I said to myself, "this beats Mexico." Even the question of taste apart, it is possible to regard it as a generous and even patriotic sentiment. It may also have been, to borrow a quaint proverb of our African fellow-subjects, that "he had not walked fur with Solomon."

II.—JAMAICA.

IF I were a civil servant, and had the pick of the colonial governorships, I should ask to be sent to Jamaica. Trinidad may be more prosperous, Barbados more salubrious, Martinique and St. Lucia more picturesque; but for wide scope, and for great experiments, and for the hope of doing something which should make a man missed when he is gone, though perhaps suspected and disliked while he is doing it, give me beautiful Jamaica, "the land of wood and waters." A governor of Jamaica at the present moment has, among others, these great problems to try to settle. Though he will not settle them all, he may put them in the way of settlement, and help those who follow him to complete what he has begun. He has to try to reconcile the continual multiplication of small holdings with the apparently antagonistic interests of the larger estates. He has to stimulate the growth of smaller industries, town as well as country. Why should St. Vincent be the only place where those delightful red baskets are made? And cannot the fruit supply, for which the American market has a throat deep as the Atlantic itself, be stimulated a hundred-fold? He has to make it plain to the black folk, whose great lack is that of ambition and enterprise, that there are yet better things for them, if they will only desire and deserve them, and also wisely to stir in them that generous discontent which is the only leverage of civilisation, and of all sorts of progress. "Without discontent nothing can be done." He has to foster the vast productive powers

of the island by developing in all directions the means of transit, both by roads and railways; by encouraging industrial exhibitions, and bringing its people into constant contact with each other. Now that the finances of the island are, under the recent alteration of the constitution, practically controlled and dispensed by the elected members of the Legislative Council, a good deal of enlightened and far-seeing courage may be required from those who have this matter in their hands, if the large part of this incredibly fertile island, still untilled and useless, is to be brought under cultivation and her immense resources developed as they ought to be. He has, with prudent dispatch, to foster education, both in the primary and higher schools. Last, but not least, he might try to redeem Kingston from the universal reproach of being the shabbiest and dirtiest of West Indian capitals, and to give it at least something of the dignity and cleanliness which her own citizens vainly desire, and which strangers are so perplexed to miss.

Nothing does Jamaica more injustice than the first impressions of Kingston. In fact, it is just as if on your entering the beautiful home of an opulent and prosperous friend he were to meet you at the door with clothes in rags, a hat without a brim to it, and a face that had not been washed for a month. No wonder that those who do not know better instinctively conceive it to be the permanent home of yellow fever, and calculate the prospects of the colony from the appearance of the capital. Yet, as a matter of fact, never in its palmiest days has it had the opportunity of showing much respect for itself so far as public buildings go, for the King's House, with its spacious and stately surroundings, was built at Spanish Town, a dozen miles away. The planters in the palmiest days of sugar-planting always lived in the suburbs; and when a fire came a few years ago, unluckily, it burnt the part of the town that least deserved to be destroyed, and left the part that every one would gladly have spared. Jamaica, as Mr. Eden tells us in his useful hand-book on the West Indies, was discovered by Columbus in 1594, and (to borrow a phrase of *Las Casas*) the Spaniards took possession of it in 1609 "with the accustomed cruelties." Forty-six years afterwards, under Oliver Cromwell, it became British soil, and it has remained so ever since. The negro slaves, afterwards called Maroons, from time to time gave their English masters immense trouble, and were punished with frightful barbarity. In the museum at King-

ston is exhibited a sort of iron skeleton with a gag in the mouth, in which one of these wretched creatures was publicly starved to death, while another at his side was slowly roasted. We need not stay to discuss the merits of the controversy. In 1692 a tremendous earthquake destroyed the town of Port Royal, and three thousand people perished. In 1833 the Slavery Emancipation Act was passed, and in 1838 the slaves, to the number of over three hundred and eleven thousand, were finally and completely set free.

The total and complex results of this magnificent venture of national righteousness are not even yet apparent, and those who expected an immediate material gain from such a great effort of virtue have been disappointed, as they deserved to be. But Almighty God has manifold ways of blessing, other than that of silver and gold, and He takes His own time about it, and chooses the instruments, to our eyes often the most unlikely, by which He gets it done. I had the advantage of hearing what may be called a triangular talk over the history and prospects of Jamaica, among three gentlemen, each typical of a separate class, each cognisant of a distinct set of conditions and circumstances in the island, and capable both from personal West Indian experience of knowing the facts, and from natural ability of intelligently using them. One of them was a Hebrew gentleman, in opulent circumstances, still interested by ties of property in the welfare of the island, and one whom Horace would certainly have described as "laudator temporis acti Me puero." He was one of the best talkers I ever came across, with an affluence of precise and almost classical English, and impatient, almost to resentment, of the present order of things. Another represented the commercial interests of the West Indies, being closely connected with its chief banking system. When I frankly asked him, "What is there that you think the English Government can be fairly expected to do to help West Indian interests?" he answered, "Nothing." The other was a ruling member of an important religious body, which has always shown great interest in the welfare of the negroes; had good authority for all he asserted, was exact, acute, and tenacious of his opinions. The upshot of all, so far as my own judgment was impressed by it, was this. Slave emancipation of course at once and most seriously diminished the profits of the planters. Labour henceforward had to be paid for, and the money which England paid as compensa-

tion for the loss of the slaves in most cases went out of the country to pay off mortgages. The traditional prosperity of the slave time, which no doubt had a good deal of splendid eating and drinking going along with it, was much of it very hollow. Few of the estates were free from encumbrances, most of the owners were absentees, and the rents were not spent in the island, but were sent home. The selection of St. Thomas as the central port of the Royal Mail Steam Company's steamers diverted much traffic from Jamaica, and induced many merchants to break up their establishments in the island, and to conduct their affairs in London. The competition of colonial sugar with the subsidised beet sugar of France and Germany is no doubt as serious here as elsewhere. One consolation is that our French and German neighbours are becoming embarrassed by over-production at home. In Jamaica, to be sure, the fall in sugar is not so severely felt as in Barbados and Guiana, since only 5 per cent. of the land under cultivation is now under sugar, and even this amount has a tendency steadily to decrease. In this island, however, another great difficulty is the price of labour, which is far higher than that in Barbados or in England; and it is hard to see how, without increased coolie emigration, the difficulty can be met. For the negro is either free or not free. If he is not free, we are all under a tremendous delusion. If he is, and as free as his English fellow-subject, where is the reasonableness of expecting him to work contrary to his inclination or interests, merely to help his white neighbour to make his money more easily and rapidly? What would his white neighbour say if such a request were made to him? Where, further, is the justice of expecting him to leave his own little allotment, where he grows fruit for the market, and (like his white brother again) spends not a few of the sunny hours in languidly thinking about nothing, merely because there may be employment waiting for him, which he does not wish to accept, and wages, for which his few and simple wants do not compel him to labour? This is no doubt a problem which it needs a real statesman to solve, and Sir Henry Norman is likely to be equal to the task. It is now a commonplace to say that the minor industries should be cultivated, especially that of fruit. Already £150,000 a year is in circulation through fruit production, and this, as observed before, is capable of almost indefinite expansion, with the United States as customers at the door.

When one gazes on the mountains and valleys of Jamaica, glittering as a garden of the Lord under that bright sun and azure sky, and reflects that at least two-thirds of it are still covered with forest, where perhaps the foot of man has not yet trod, nor the axe laid one tree low, what an unbounded prosperity there is in front if only labour and capital can be found! If the larger estates are gradually coming into the market, smaller ones are rapidly multiplying; and here, perhaps, the secret of a prosperous future is to be found. In 1884, holdings of less than an acre numbered 10,536; of between 1 and 5,

28,302; of between 5 and 10, 7,336; of between 10 and 20, 4,143; of between 20 and 50, 2,295. Jamaica can grow many other things besides sugar, and she is growing them, and instead of calling upon Hercules to help her (who is usually deaf when he is most wanted), she must respect and help herself. Bananas, oranges, cocoa (where it is moist and hot), cinchona, tea (lately introduced), and coffee, which, in the Blue Mountains, is about the finest in the world, are now recommended for production by competent judges. Cattle have long been bred in the island at a good profit; and Jamaica horses,



The Blue Mountains, Jamaica.

though small, are strong, sure, and hardy. How is it that no one thinks of starting a manufactory of orange marmalade? The materials are on the spot, and there is the English market for what every breakfast-table requires. But it is not resources Jamaica requires so much as brains, movement, and enterprise. No doubt just now it is a bad time for all the colonies, and very bad for England too. Notwithstanding, there is reason for believing that the material prosperity of Jamaica, if less showy and bibulous, is more solid and wide-spread and progressive than it ever has been yet. If the recent Report of the Education Commission, recommending

free elementary schools, should result in a wide and deep development of education among the black and coloured class, the next, if not the present generation, must feel the benefit of it. The first effect of education may or may not be to make men conceited (occasionally it does so in England as well as in Jamaica); the second must be to give intellectual impulse, and a wider intelligence, and a proper ambition. Jamaica can never be what she ought to be until the five-sixths of her population are more on a level with the one-sixth. To raise the African part of the population to a true ideal of Christian citizenship, the cheapest, the wisest, and the quickest way is



Bay Tree Walk, Jamaica.

in educating all of them for both worlds. Two plain statistical facts will, at any rate, let some light on the present condition of the labouring classes and the colony at large. In the years 1883-84, 4,827 accounts in the Savings Bank were opened, the largest number since the Bank was started in 1870. In the same year the sum of £196,913 was deposited, also the largest sum in the same period. The withdrawals, it ought to be added, amounted almost to an equivalent sum. In 1872-73 the total revenue of the island was £480,954; in 1883-84 it was £561,286. This does not look like going back.

But now it is time to look about us a little, and I shall be only glad if my jejune and rapid survey may tempt any one to visit this charming island, and explore its beauties for themselves.

The extreme length of the island is 144 miles, and its greatest width 49 miles. With the exception of a few square miles just round Kingston, the whole island is supremely beautiful. But there are many varieties of scenery, wood, water, vegetation, mountain, and sea, lending their charms in turn. No

one should expect to have even a tolerable notion of what Jamaica scenery is, who cannot give at least three months to diligently exploring it. I had hardly as many weeks. The coast scenery is said to be finest on the north side of the island; and a coasting steamer, which leaves Kingston periodically and makes the entire circuit in ten days, is a convenient way of seeing it. The boat is small, but said to be quite comfortable. The Blue Mountains at the back of Kingston are the highest in the island, and the loftiest peak is 7,360 feet, a little lower than the basin of the City of Mexico. Much excitement was caused throughout the island by the discovery of a piece of ice on the summit of the peak, in the course of the last winter. It was an unworthy and much resented explanation, that it was only the relic of a luncheon party. These mountains are only partially opened out, but roads are being developed. The summit of the peak is often hidden in cloud, as Anthony Trollope found to his cost, with others. Bath, at the foot of the mountains, is reported to be very beautiful. Trelawny is a lovely district, and so is Hanover. Archdeacon Douet griev-

ously tantalised me by telling me of a charming drive to be taken along the high ridge above. Newcastle, the summer residence of the troops, is 3,800 feet above the sea, and commands a beautiful prospect. The latter part of the climb must be done on horseback. The Black River abounds in alligators, a reptile best observed at a distance.

The places of which I can speak from personal observation are fairly typical of the scenery of the island, and certainly worth a visit. It is a lovely drive from Kingston to the public garden at Castleton by way of Stony Hill, commanding extensive views, rich in almost every kind of tropical vegetation, from the tree-fern to the bread-fruit; and I do not know what higher praise can be given it, than to say that it constantly reminded me of the wonderful drive from Rio to the Organ Mountains. But it is liable, as I have reason for knowing, to copious showers. The Bay Tree Walk, in the neighbourhood of Spanish Town, is just a Derbyshire or Welsh river, with tropical vegetation, overhanging cliffs, and a capital road: Mandeville, in the parish of Manchester, is a picturesque village, 2,000 feet above the sea, 50 or 60 miles from Kingston. There is a very comfortable boarding-house here, kept by a Miss Roye, at the charge of eight shillings a day. The place is reached by way of railway to Porus, from which conveyances can be procured for the remainder of the exquisite drive. Mandeville is itself the centre for many delightful excursions. It is a short but lovely drive to Battersea, which reminds me, as I look back at it, of the Lune valley, between Kirkby Lonsdale and Barbon.

Bel Retiro, the most beautiful prospect I saw in Jamaica, looks down on a magnificent confusion of wood and hill and valley, and a vast plain at the foot, made hideous by a straight line of railway bisecting it, with the Palisades and the sea in the distance, and the Blue Mountains, hazy but magnificent, 60 miles away.

The Mile Gully is a beautiful ravine, and a newly erected parsonage house at Ware Pen commands an exquisite view. But one of the most famous prospects in Jamaica—though I cannot say that it impressed me as much as some others—is that from Spur Tree Hill, which commands the sea, the fine range of the Santa Cruz Mountains, said to be one of the most salubrious in the island, and the Great Pedro Bluff, the home of the primitive Caribbeans, and famed for the longevity of its inhabitants. An old man died here lately at the age of one hundred and twenty years,

having gratuitously accelerated his departure by a fall in riding a horse-race, whereby he broke three ribs, and failed to rally. The great drawback to the enjoyment of this exquisite scenery is the insects, and especially the ticks, minute and hungry, which swarm in the grass and on the shrubs, fasten themselves on the flesh, where they instantly bury themselves, and then make themselves very much at home at your expense. They are numerous, irritating, and sometimes venomous. They are said to have been introduced into the island with a breed of Spanish cattle, and infest some places to such a degree that even the most luxuriant Guinea grass will not tempt the cattle to face them. It is to be hoped that some day nature will remedy the evil by introducing some species of bird which will feed on them. But this takes time; meanwhile the enjoyment of nature is indefinitely suspended, and the ticks increase and multiply.

About the coloured population, and especially the Africans, I must say one word, hampered by the consciousness of the imperfect opportunity I have enjoyed of really studying the question, assured, moreover, that those who had a long familiarity with it, and take quite another view, may not unreasonably order me out of court. That they profoundly interested me is what most travellers, especially if Christian teachers, would readily affirm and sincerely; but it was something more than that, they attracted me. Many elements may have been combined to bring this about, but whether I met them in the road, merry and overflowing with the simple joy of life, or preached to them in church, or talked to them at a temperance meeting, or observed them hard at work, giving their gratuitous services to the building of a mission chapel in a country parish, or looked at the happy little children, black, grinning, and very scantily clothed, and with teeth of ivory, my heart seemed full of hope for them, and I continually felt how they too had something to teach us, who think ourselves so vastly their superiors, though indeed in many things, and for years to come, they must be content to sit at our feet. Perhaps the place where I least appreciated them, for they never remember anything, and in some things are incapable of improvement, is in household service. They come, and when, after much trouble, they have learnt something, they go. But so, however, do servants at home. The metallic chatter of the black women is simply intolerable; and it might be an excellent discipline

for fidgety housewives at home to have a year's experience of black servants. They are kindly and pleasant mannered, as a whole not addicted to intemperance; when won to the cause of sobriety, satisfied with nothing short of the blue ribbon. If addicted in many cases to theft and untruthfulness, we white folk are the very last persons to throw it in their faces. It was our cruelty and selfishness that hurried them from their homes and taught them in self-defence these stratagems of helplessness. If our fathers are guilty of the tragedy of their past misery, let us abstain from the hypocrisy of scourging them for sins which may some day be charged on ourselves. A clergyman's wife, in emphatic corroboration of the statement that not all Africans were born thieves and liars, told me that once her father, a resident in the island, was invited by the government to take a number of slaves rescued from a Spanish slaver, to train and employ on his estate. These people, from the very beginning, were as truthful and honest as they could be, though not in other respects unstained. One day a theft was committed by one of their number, though not of their tribe, and it was discovered. They seized him, beat him, brought him before their employer, told him (what he had not yet discovered) of the theft which had been committed, deplored it, disowned the culprit, and asked that he might be expelled.

To see how the black women hold themselves when walking is a lesson in calisthenics. The erect head, the bust thrown out, the elastic gait, best of all the bright, and often interesting, face I was never tired of looking at. If parents anxious about the high shoulders of their growing daughters would learn a lesson from African parents, better than lying on boards, or than incessant and petulant reproofs, let them habituate their girls to carry a pitcher on their heads for an hour a day, and the transformation will be complete. I know some one who means to begin it with his own when he returns home. Not that we can expect to emulate the negro for thickness of skull. With abundant muscle, they have hardly any nerve. They are liberal and open-handed, readily contributing their share to Church maintenance, and the Bishop told me of one village where the black folk had already built a church entirely of stone, also a schoolroom, and hoped soon to maintain their clergyman. In the matter of their gifts, some of their white brethren might do well to take a leaf out of their books. In manner they are very punctilious,

often to an absurd exaggeration. Mr. Besant, by the way, in his delightful book, "All Sorts and Conditions of Men," writes of the London poor, "No duchess sweeps into a milliner's show-room with more dignity than her humble sister at Clare Market on a Saturday evening displays, when she receives the invitation of the butcher to rally up, and selects her Sunday's piece of beef." This punctiliousness, however, sometimes degenerates into rudeness. A Scotch travelling companion, who told me the story himself, was walking in Kingston in search of a tortoiseshell shop and came on two black folk, one of whom was busy with some carpenter's work, the other, with a brimless hat, and his other garments ventilated with abundant fissures, was in occasional conversation with him. My friend in the politest manner, and marked by calling him Sir, asked for the information he required. The black gentleman made no reply, but stared over his head. The Scotchman, amused, but, Scotchlike, not dismayed, with bared head and augmented politeness and many apologies, repeated his question. The African replied, "Where are your manners, sarr, that you interrupt two gentlemen in conversation?" and then, directing his finger over his head, shouted, "Dare!" No doubt odious vices still linger among them. The clergy know what it is to have confession made to them of child murder by practised women of the worst type. The Obeah worship still lingers in the rural districts; and if they were to be left to themselves to be their own masters they would soon and fatally degenerate. The danger with all West Indian life, but especially with the negro, is what Mr. Drummond in his brilliant book calls "semi-parasitism." "Any new set of conditions," writes Dr. Ray Lankester, "occurring to an animal which renders its food and safety very easily attained, seems to lead, as a rule, to degeneration." It would, however, be fatal not to train them for full responsibility by gradually using and trusting them in the management of their Church affairs. And this is the wise policy that is being pursued. There are those who will always, in greater or less degree, dislike and distrust them, and there are others who wish to make the best of them, and are constantly baffled. It is, it must be, up-hill work for many years to come to repair the moral damage of two centuries: and if we expect more of an African, with so many chances against him, than we succeed in getting from each other with so many circumstances in our favour, we shall win



Creighton Church, Jamaica.

the disappointment we deserve. But so far as I could gather from those who have at least as good an opportunity of forming a judgment as others, and who take the best methods for justifying it, a quiet but strong hope for the elevation of the negroes in all which affects their real welfare is felt by the great bulk of the ministers of religion. If hopes are sometimes deferred, and prosperity clouded, and vows broken, and careers spoiled among the negroes by shame and sin, we at home have enough to do to heal evils of our own, about which there may be far less excuse, and may receive a much sterner judgment. One last word, and a brief one, on a subject which will not be quite uninteresting to at least some readers of *Good Words*, also with a certain appropriateness, from the pen of a clergyman. The Christian religion in Jamaica is faithfully proclaimed by the various religious bodies in the island, not least so by that apostolic Church of which the writer had naturally more opportunity of forming a careful judgment, and which, after having been suddenly cut adrift from the State some sixteen years ago, is yearly increasing in numbers and influence, perhaps also in material support. Only one opinion

is held of the sagacity and resolution with which during the last few anxious years Bishop Nuttall has administered the affairs of his diocese, and won the respect and esteem of his neighbours.

The Moravians, whose buildings, as a city set on a hill, crown so many of the loveliest eminences in the island, have long laboured here. The Wesleyans and the Baptists and the Presbyterians have also their ample organization and their attached members. The negroes are a religiously disposed people, and, as I have already observed, are at least quite as willing as their white fellow-subjects to make sacrifices for the religion they profess. One gain at least from extensive travel is the abundant verification to be found on all sides—if only there is a willingness to find it—of the supreme necessity in the human soul for a religion of some kind to satisfy its aspirations and console its afflictions, and direct its energies and inspire its hopes. Another, perhaps even a greater, is an ever-deepening conviction that nothing short of the Christian faith will meet the deepest need of man. Yet a third is the ever-widening and grateful sympathy of any one who sees the vast harvest-field to be reaped, and who remembers the great saying, “He that is not against us is on our side,” with the aspirations and efforts and victories of all who in every place fear God, and serve the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in truth and charity.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

BY WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RIVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.—FAREWELLS.

THE confirmation of Balmaine's appointment came sooner than he expected. The proprietors of the *Helvetic News* informed him that, owing to the illness of one of the sub-editors, they were short-handed, and offered, if he would enter on his duties before the end of the month, to pay his travelling expenses to Geneva. That meant in a fortnight, and he resolved to profit by the opportunity. Mr. Grindleton made no difficulty about releasing him, and a week later he had engaged a new editor.

Before this was done Balmaine had informed Lizzie of his approaching departure. In doing so he laid particular stress on the fact of their engagement, and the necessity thereby laid on him of trying to better himself. While he remained at Calder, he said, there was not the least prospect of his being able to marry, and until he was in a position to keep her as she would like to be kept, without troubling anybody, he could not ask her to be his wife.

This drew from Miss Hardy a letter, in which she said that, although his going away would almost break her heart, she could not deny that he seemed to be acting for the best. She wished him good speed, vowed that she should think of him every minute and pray for him every night, implored him to write to her very, very often, and said so many tender and gracious things that Alfred's heart was touched: he accused himself of misjudging her, and regretted that he could not return her affection with a more ardent love.

An evening or two before he went away he was invited to take tea at Waterfall House. It was a somewhat extensive establishment, about a mile from the town, which Sainly Sam had got as a great bargain, but the outlay in furniture and repairs made it, as he observed to his wife, "a very dear do." It was considered at Calder that Mrs. Hardy had not risen with her husband. This meant that she made no attempt to be other than she ever had been, preferred living in a plain way to inhabiting a grand house, and never looked or felt comfortable either in her carriage or her drawing-room. She was not a little afraid, poor woman, of her stylish daughter, and sometimes wondered how she had come to have such a child, for they did not seem to possess an idea in com-

mon. Lizzie detested the kitchen as much as Mrs. Hardy detested the drawing-room, delighted in fine clothes and fine company, and often used language that her mother only half understood. Miss Hardy, on the other hand, found her mother a sore trouble. She would do servants' work—bake and cook and make beds—and sometimes when visitors called, Lizzie found her "throng" in the wash-house. And then her language! She spoke with a strong Yorkshire twang, and scattered her aitches about in lavish profusion. Mr. Hardy was at least consistent—he had never used the aspirate in his life—but his wife used it indiscriminately; she could not be brought to see the difference between an H and any other letter. When they made calls or received visitors the daughter passed many a "bad quarter of an hour," and sometimes almost wished that her mother would stay in the kitchen altogether.

Sainly Sam, as usual, was very patronising. "I hope as you'll prosper in your new undertaking, Balmaine," he observed, as they sat at tea, "and be a credit to your native place. Everybody thinks highly of you here. You have edited the *Mercury* uncommon well, and your articles have been extensively read. Some folks thought you were too young; but I did not, and I was never deceived in a man yet. You were the right man in the right place, and I am sorry, for th' sake of th' town and th' cause of loyalty and religion, as you are going away. That leader of yours, last Saturday, agen th' Government was a nipper—it was nowt else. It spoke my mind to a T, and I am seldom wrong about them things. I hope as th' paper as you are going to be connected with is on the right side."

"The *Helvetic News* tries to be neutral in politics, I think. At any rate, it does not seem to take strong views either way."

"That's a pity, that's a pity. I like folks to be summat—either fish, flesh, fowl, or good red herring. You know what they're made on then. Everybody knows I am a Conservative. I belonged to th' tother side once, it's true; but what could you expect? I was brought up Liberal, and most folks sticks to the faith of their fathers, both in politics and religion. There's very few as thinks for themselves, but I did; and I am of opinion as I came to a right conclusion."

"You were a long time about it, though," thought Balmaine, who was no great admirer of the "prop of his party," as Mr. Hardy was designated at Calder.

"And it's pretty generally known now what my sentiments is," continued Saintly Sam, with much complacency, "they're them of loyalty and religion—our beloved Bible and our revered Queen, as Mr. Pyke said last Sunday—and I command eighty votes in this 'ere borough. You uphold 'em, Mr. Balmaine, and keep the Sabbath, and you'll prosper. It is to keeping the Sabbath as I owe my success in life more than to owt else, I do believe. And we shall always take a warm interest in your welfare wherever you are; shall not we, Jane?"

"That we shall," said Mrs. Hardy heartily. "I always thinks well of young men as is good to their mothers. You'll ten to one be living in lodgings where you're going to, Mr. Balmaine."

"Certainly," answered Alfred with a smile, "and a pretty cheap lodging, too. An hotel would be quite beyond my means."

"Lodgings or hothels, they're all the same. You'll have to see as your bed sheets is not damp, or you'll be getting your death. Many a one has got their death by sleeping in a damp bed. My poor brother Tom did. He took a rheumatic fever, was in a hagony three weeks and died skrying."

"Screaming, mother," put in Lizzie indignantly, "why will you use that horrid word?"

"Mr. Balmaine knows what I mean, and I never could talk fine. I mun ayther talk my own way or howd my tongue. Mind what I say about damp beds, Mr. Balmaine, and take warning by my brother Tom. And always count your shirts and things when they comen home fro' th' wash, or else you'll be losing summat. Some o' them strange washerwomen is most terrible rogues, not to speyk of knocking your things i' pieces and burning 'em into rags wi' chemic."

Lizzie looked daggers, but fearing that if she spoke she might make matters worse, she averted her gaze from Alfred and, as her mother would have said, "held her noise."

"Here's a bit of a present as I've bought for you, if you'll kindly accept it," Mrs. Hardy went on; "it is a housewife, and you'll happen find it useful o'er yon. There's needles int', and there's pins int', and a thimble and a bit o' cotton and a twothy shirt buttons. There'll ten to one be nobody to mend you where you're going to, and you'll find it handy if you want to stitch

a button on your shirt or mend a rent i' your trousers."

"Mother!" shrieked Lizzie, her face aflame, and almost choking with shame and vexation.

"Well, what is it child?" said Mrs. Hardy looking innocently at her daughter. "What have I said wrong this time?"

"Nothing at all, I am sure," interposed Alfred. "Thank you very much, Mrs. Hardy. You are very kind, and I have no doubt I shall find the housewife exceedingly useful."

"You'll be getting a wife yourself one of these days," said Saintly Sam, with a laugh at his own joke. "I like young fellows to get wed—it steadies 'em. You look out for a wife, Balmaine."

"I must first make my fortune, Mr. Hardy, or, at any rate, an income sufficient to keep a wife."

"You must marry a girl with an income, that's what you must do—not with an income to come, but an income as has come. Marrying a fortin is th' finest way of making money I know—you make so much in one day. And that reminds me of th' fortin as us Hardys is after. It looks decidedly hopeful. I really begin to believe we shall get it, after all."

"I thought you believed that already, Mr. Hardy?"

"So I did, so I did," replied Saintly Sam rather confusedly; "but there is degrees, you know, there is degrees, and I believe in it now more than ever. All the shares is taken up, and we have got power to issue another thousand, so we shall not want for powder and shot. And that is not all. Ferret has heard of an old fellow at Halifax—he left this country thirty years since—as saw John Hardy in London about ten or fifteen years after he left Calder, saw him and spoke to him. He was then partner in the firm of Birkdale, Bickerdyke, and Hardy, of which he afterwards became the head."

"How is it that old fellow you speak of did not mention the fact sooner?"

"Hardy asked him not, and the thing passed out of his mind till t' other day, when somebody here as he is akin to sent him word about the meeting at the Cock. Ferret thinks it very important, and he is going over to Halifax express to see Murgatroyd—that's the old fellow's name. He's very full of it, Ferret is."

"Very important evidence, I should say," observed Alfred carelessly; "supposing Philip Hardy and his daughter are really dead."

"Dead! why they are as dead as door-nails; they must be dead," returned Sainly Sam, almost angrily. The suggestion that either the missing heir or heiress might possibly still be living made him quite angry.

"No, no, my lad, that would never do, to go and spend a mint of money and then one of 'em to turn up and bag the lot. Them two millions must come to Calder, Mr. Belmaine—and will. I mean to go on with this job and I never yet failed in owt as I undertook."

Alfred wondered what his host would say if he knew that Warton and himself were engaged in an attempt to find either Philip Hardy or Vera, and how a revelation of the fact would affect his relations with Lizzie.

Shortly afterwards he took his leave. When he shook hands with Lizzie she gave him a significant look. It had been arranged that they should meet for a farewell interview in a sequestered part of the grounds, and Alfred, instead of passing out by the lodge gates, turned aside and went by a devious path to keep his tryst.

He had not been there long when Lizzie came running.

"I have not many minutes to spare," she said breathlessly, and then she threw her arms round Alfred's neck and fell a-weeping, for albeit she consciously posed as an afflicted heroine, and rather overdid the part, she cared so much for Balmaine just then, or thought she did, that his departure was a real grief to her. "You will write to me very often," she whispered as they were about to separate; "and—and I hope you will excuse my mother. It is her way; she means no harm."

The remark was indiscreet; it undid all the effect of her weeping, which so touched Alfred's heart that he had felt for a moment as if he really loved her.

She is ashamed of her mother, he thought. She has a good deal more reason to be ashamed of her father.

The interview lasted only a few minutes, for Lizzie feared that her absence might be remarked. After a few more words and a farewell embrace she ran towards the house, and Alfred leaped over the garden wall into the road.

"Hallo!" cried a voice he knew; "do you always come out of Mr. Hardy's garden that way, Balmaine?"

The speaker was Warton.

"I have done so to-night," said Alfred coolly; "it is rather nearer than round by the lodge gates."

"And less likely to attract attention, I suppose—unless you happen to jump on some unfortunate passer-by, as you nearly did on me just now. However, I have no wish to pry into secrets. A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse, you know. Has the Saint anything fresh about the fortune?"

Alfred told what had passed.

"I don't think much of that tale," observed the lawyer's clerk. "It's a case of the wish being father to the thought, I expect. And if we cannot find either the girl or her father it makes no odds to us who gets the fortune. But there's no doubt that Hardy is getting hotter. When a man lets his mind dwell on a thing of that sort, he ends by losing his judgment altogether, and becoming as credulous as a gambler. Sam is an uncommonly smart man of business in his own line, but fortune hunting is not in his line, and I should not be a bit surprised if he sacrificed the substance to the shadow—lost one fortune in trying to get another."

"But you said he did not more than half believe in the Hardy fortune."

"I don't think he did at first; but the hope of pocketing forty thousand pounds is getting the upper hand of his judgment. The gambling spirit in him is roused, and the more money he spends the harder it will be for him to draw back. But never mind Sam, now. Did you get that paper I sent you this morning—your brief in the matter of Philip and Vera Hardy, you know?"

"I did; but I have not had time to read it."

"Read it at your leisure. It contains nothing I have not told you before; and is merely to refresh your memory and serve as a reference when you are over yon. You will see Artful and Higginbottom, of course."

"Of course; I am too much interested in the case to omit so essential a point."

"All right. And if you keep your wits about you we shall find our heiress before Sam finds the forty thousand he is after. But I must be off: Mary will be wondering what has become of me." And after an exchange of "good nights," the clerk went one way and Balmaine another.

Alfred walked thoughtfully homeward. The conclusion to which Warton had evidently come, that he and Lizzie were courting, did not trouble him much; the clerk could be trusted to keep his surmises to himself. Alfred's chief present concern referred to his mother and his cousin. Mrs. Balmaine's health was slowly improving, and that was so far satisfactory; but her mind

had not recovered its balance, and her temper was as querulous as ever. A little while ago she had reproached him with want of energy, and told him to follow the example of his brother George, and seek his fortune in a foreign land. She looked upon his connection with the local press as a sort of degradation, and wondered that he should have so little spirit as to accept the wages of a vulgar tradesman like Grindleton; yet now, when he was actually going away, she said he was deserting her in her old age, and that she should have to end her days in the work-house. This was hard to bear, but Cora's sympathy and counsel, and his conviction that he was acting for the best, enabled him to bear it with patience; yet he felt sorry to leave his cousin to sustain the heat and burden of the day alone, and he proposed, in order that she might be free from anxiety as to money, to remit her half his salary. This she positively refused.

"That would leave you only £75 a year," she said; "and you cannot live at Geneva on £75 a year. We shall manage very well. One hundred and fifty pounds and my literary earnings (proudly) will be quite enough for two women."

Alfred smiled.

"Your literary earnings! You talk as if you were a swell author with a princely income. It will be quite time enough to reckon your literary earnings when they are realised. In the meanwhile you must consent to share my literary earnings."

So it was agreed that he should send them £50 a year.

"That will be a fair division," observed Cora. "If you were to send us more it would be unfair, and I will not have anything unfair if I can help it."

CHAPTER XIII.—ARTFUL AND HIGGINBOTTOM.

MR. ARTFUL, senior member of the firm of Artful and Higginbottom, was a gentleman of sixty, with white silky hair, a complexion like a piece of crumpled brown paper, little keen grey eyes, and a wonderfully urbane manner; almost too urbane, in fact, for it was hardly in human nature to take the very close personal interest in his clients and their affairs, which he made it an invariable rule to display. He could scarcely have manifested greater delight at seeing Balmaine if the latter had been a son of his own, upon whom he had not set eyes for many years. He probably saw in him a possible client; and when he learnt the nature of his visitor's business his smiling face

was clouded for a moment—but only for a moment—by a slight shade of disappointment.

"Ah, that is it! You want information about the Hardy trust. Well, I shall be most happy to tell you anything I know, and if you can help us to find a clue to the fate of Mr. Philip Hardy or his daughter we shall be very much obliged to you. It is a troublesome affair, and the executors, both gentlemen of high position in the city of London, would be only too glad to get rid of it. It is solely from a sense of duty and a strong conviction that the heir will sooner or later appear, or be heard of, that they refrain from washing their hands of the matter, and asking the Court of Chancery to relieve them of their responsibility, under the Relief of Trustees Act of 1851; and unless we have news of Mr. Hardy before very long, say, within a twelvemonth, this is the course we shall advise our clients to follow, and then the estate would probably escheat to the Crown. A great pity, but what can we do?"

"Unless some heir-at-law were to turn up?"

"Of course; but so far as we know the late Mr. Hardy had no relations except his son Philip. Those who knew him best think that he was an illegitimate son, and for that reason kept silence about his origin. If that be so nobody save his son, or other issue, could inherit. Still, nothing certain is known, and it will, I think, be very difficult for any of the claimants of whom we have heard to prove their relationship to the late John Hardy. As you come from Calder, you, of course, know all about the Hardy Fortune Company (Limited). Very ingenious, I am sure; and the story of Mr. Hardy's supposed flight from Calder is romantic in the extreme, and does Mr. Ferret great credit. But we shall throw no impediments in the way. Let him prove that Philip is dead without issue, and that his father was the veritable John Hardy who ran away from Calder fifty years ago, and the estate will—subject to the sanction of the Court of Chancery—be handed over to his clients. But we are a long way from that yet, Mr. Balmaine."

Alfred thought it best to tell Mr. Artful frankly how he came to be interested in the matter, and why he sought for information.

The lawyer smiled until his little eyes almost disappeared.

"I am very glad to hear it," he exclaimed warmly. "I fancied you might be an



"Mr. Arthur smiled a gracious smile, and bowed a courtly bow."

emissary from those fortune-hunting people. I know what they say—they say that we want to keep the estate in our own hands, (*qui s'excuse s'accuse*, thought Balmaine). It is false, we want to do nothing of the sort. You may depend on our hearty co-operation. I am glad you have taken the matter up. Your connection with the Press will count greatly in your favour. Yes, Philip Hardy was frequently in Switzerland. You may find some trace of him. You will doubtless travel about a good deal, and if you should be successful you may depend on being handsomely remunerated. I do not mean merely in finding Philip Hardy, but in finding a clue to his fate and that of his daughter."

"Do not mistake me, Mr. Artful," said Balmaine, slightly colouring. "I am not an amateur detective. Consider that I take an interest in the case—that is all. I am poor, as I have said, and if I incur expense in my search I will ask you to recoup me. But for myself, I do not ask reward; if, however, anybody should aid me I might ask—"

"Yes, I understand. By-the-bye, you know our theory, that Philip Hardy is immured in some Austrian dungeon, probably in the North of Italy. If you can throw any light on the mystery we shall be glad, very glad. And now I must pass you on to Mr. Baggs. You will find him in the next room. Good-day, sir, good-day. I hope you will have a pleasant journey, and return with Mr. Hardy and his daughter."

And Mr. Artful smiled a gracious smile, and bowed a courtly bow.

"Chivalrous young fool," he muttered, as the door closed behind Balmaine. "Pretends not to care for money!"

Baggs was a very pleasant old fellow, and, if possible, more affable than his master; but he had little to tell Balmaine that the latter did not already know. He showed him copies of Philip Hardy's letters to his father, written out fair in a book which had evidently been frequently consulted. They all referred to business, and contained little more than formal advice of drafts which Philip had passed on his father's firm; but, as in one or two of them he mentioned having written fully a few days previously it was evident that their correspondence had not been limited to business communications, and the last of all, dated from Lugano, said that he had just had Vera's photo taken, and would send it in a subsequent letter.

"Have you got this photo of Miss Hardy?" asked Balmaine.

"I am sorry to say we have not, sir. I

question if it ever came. The letter from Lugano, as you will perceive, was written only a few weeks before the old man died, which, as we think, was about the time his son fell into the hands of the Austrians."

"Can you show me the originals of these letters?"

"Certainly," answered the old clerk, looking somewhat surprised; "but I assure you they are faithful copies, not a word has been altered or added."

"I am quite sure of that. I should like to see the originals nevertheless, if only to acquaint myself with the character of Philip Hardy's handwriting."

"By all means, I will get them."

As he spoke, Mr. Baggs went to a big japanned tin box, marked, "John Hardy's Trustees, No. 2," and after fumbling a few minutes among a mass of papers, produced a bundle of dusty letters. They were tied together and carefully docketed, generally with the words: "Philip Hardy, advising draft for £——." All were written on foreign post, and having been folded in the old-fashioned way, the direction and post marks were on the outer sheet. They had been posted at sundry places, and showed what a wanderer the man was, and that he had never remained long in the same locality. Although most of them were written in Italy, many were dated from Switzerland, but only two from France; from which Alfred naturally concluded that Philip Hardy's wanderings had been almost altogether limited to the two former countries. One, dated from the Baths of Lucca, mentioned briefly, and in a postscript, the birth of Vera. It was probably written at the time when father and son were estranged, owing to the latter's marriage. The last letter of all, though dated from Pallanza, bore the post-mark of Lugano, and the half-erased imprint of an hotel at Locarno, the Hotel Martino.

Of all these things Balmaine took careful note, especially of the dates of the letters, the places from which they were written, and the names of the bankers or others to whose order Philip Hardy had made his drafts.

"Is there anything more I can do for you?" asked Baggs, as Alfred closed his memorandum book.

"Yes; tell me what like a man was Philip Hardy when you last saw him."

"That was the last time he was in England, thirteen years ago. Dear me, how time flies! Let me see; yes, I remember him very well. He did not stay very long;

he said he must hurry back to his wife and child, whom he had left at—where was it? Let me see.”

“Somewhere in Italy?” suggested Alfred.

“No, not Italy, Switzerland; near some lake, I think. There are lakes in Switzerland, I suppose?”

“Only about a thousand,” returned Balmaine gravely.

“Bless me! what a country for water it must be. Well, I cannot for the life of me remember the name of the lake, but I can tell you what Mr. Philip was like. Height about five feet ten, long-limbed and slim; but strong, I should say, very strong; laughing blue eyes with long lashes—I remember telling my wife what beautiful eyes he had. Light-complexioned, chestnut hair and beard, and a pleasant manner. We used to say that everybody liked him but his father. Did not seem to care much about money, as different from the old man as chalk from cheese, and no more idea of business than a child. Quite a gipsy sort of man. The father must have wondered—I am sure other people did—how he came to have such a son. He had out-of-the-way ideas too, and was always doing out-of-the-way things. That’s why I sometimes think he may still be living in some out-of-the-way place, if not in Europe, then in Asia, Africa, or America.”

“I should think that is very likely,” observed Balmaine, amused by this rather comprehensive suggestion.

“Anyhow, sir, I hope you will find either him or the little girl, or ascertain what has become of them.”

“I mean to try,” said the young fellow, and with that he took his leave.

CHAPTER XIV.—A SUCCESSFUL JOURNALIST.

“WHY am I giving myself so much trouble about this affair?” was the question Alfred asked himself as he strolled through Lincoln’s Inn Fields; “and why should I take so much interest in the business of people I never saw, probably never shall see?”

A very pertinent question, to which there was more than one answer.

First of all, from a desire to oblige Warton, who had behaved so well at the time of his father’s death, and who, though rather a rough diamond, was a very good fellow. If there was any chance of doing the clerk a good turn—and the finding of the missing Hardys might conceivably put money in his

pocket—it was his duty to do it. Warton, moreover, had contrived to communicate to Balmaine some of his own eagerness and enthusiasm, and the latter’s curiosity was thoroughly roused. What could have become of Philip Hardy and his daughter? Had the former, as was surmised, been immured in some Austrian dungeon, or, as was equally possible, if not more probable, shot by order of a drum-head court-martial? In that case what had become of his child? Perhaps some good soul had adopted her, perhaps her mother’s relations (who were her mother’s relations?) had found her out, and were bringing her up. It might even be that she was working for her living, or begging her bread, or (horrible thought!) trudging through England or France as the companion of some villainous Italian organ-grinder. It was conceivable, too, that she might be living near the fortress in which her father was confined, waiting patiently for his release. Hardly probable, however. In that event Philip Hardy would surely have communicated with his friends; he would want money, and he would not let his child waste her life in the wretched monotony of some Austrian garrison town, away from all the advantages of education. There were other and darker possibilities. Italy was not the most secure of countries, and it was quite conceivable that Hardy and his daughter might have been murdered by brigands, drowned in crossing a lake, or destroyed by an avalanche in some Alpine pass.

All these suppositions added piquancy to the mystery, about which there was enough of romance to fire his imagination and suggest a great variety of possible solutions. And what were his chances of success? He could not think they were very brilliant, yet he did not despair, and the more he thought the stronger grew the conviction that, sooner or later, and somehow or other, he should find Miss Vera Hardy—if she were alive.

As Balmaine reached this conclusion he arrived at the office of Mr. Furbey, the newspaper correspondent, to whose influence he was indebted for his appointment on the editorial staff of the *Helvetic News*. Furbey was a middle-aged man with long sandy whiskers tipped with white, a big face, and a complexion which suggested that he had a weakness for good living. He dined Alfred at his club and gave him some good advice.

“It is a queer sort of paper, the *Helvetic News*,” he said; “it has had some ups and

downs already, and will have more before it has done, I expect."

"Before it has done!" exclaimed Balmaine, looking rather unpleasantly surprised. "I hope you don't think it is near its latter end."

"No, not quite so bad as that. Before its prosperity is really assured, I ought to have said; for I have seen so many papers start up and go down that I am never quite sure about anything that has not three or four years behind it, and not always then. But just now the *Helvetic* seems to be in very good feather. I get my cheque every month, and I used to be glad to get it every three. It is by no means a bad opening, if you want to acquire experience in your profession."

"That I do, most decidedly. But there is one thing that has rather been weighing on my mind—do you think I shall be able to do the work?"

"Of subediting the *Helvetic News*?" said Furbey with an amused laugh. "Of course, you will. You are too modest, Mr. Balmaine. Why, I do not think there is a pressman in Fleet Street who would not undertake to edit the *Times* at a minute's notice, with the full belief that he could do it better than Delane himself. But you will mend of that—modesty and journalism are a contradiction in terms. If you want to get on you must assert yourself. It did not use to be so, but the most important qualifications of a journalist now-a-days are impudence and push."

"In that case I am afraid I shall not become an ornament of my profession, for I fear that I am sadly lacking in both these qualifications."

"Most men are at starting, and you have not had much chance of developing either impudence or push down there at Calder. You will find your work at Geneva a good deal more interesting, I fancy, than chronicling small beer at Calder."

Alfred winced. He did not like this belittling of the paper he had edited and the place where he was born.

"Don't be vexed," continued Furbey, who had detected the young fellow's annoyance. "You will be of the same opinion yourself before we meet again. I have gone through the same thing myself. I received my first training in the office of a Catholic paper in the south of Ireland."

"You are an Irishman then?"

"I am, or as I once heard a countryman of mine say, who had been a long time settled in England, I was originally. Well, when I

was about twenty I went north, and got a berth on a Tory Protestant paper in Belfast, and one of the first jobs I had was reporting the speeches of a lot of Presbyterian parsons at a religious meeting. You may imagine my feelings. But it was a useful experience. It taught me a lesson in tolerance I shall never forget. I learnt for the first time in my life that there are two sides even to a religious question, and now I have no religious opinion left worth mentioning."

"And does your indifferentism extend to politics?"

"I am a Liberal if anything; most pressmen are I fancy. But I cannot afford to let my political opinions interfere with my professional duties."

"You mean that you are for the side that pays the best?" said Alfred with a slight touch of scorn in his voice.

"I mean that if I was offered a berth—and wanted one—on the staff of a Tory paper I should take it, and write what I was told to write. You are shocked, I dare say; but that is a feeling you will get over by-and-by. Do you think the fellows who do the leaders in the big dailies believe one half they write? They are not such fools."

"They are not high-principled journalists, then," was Balmaine's thought, but not wanting to offend his host he said, "Perhaps you are right as to your facts—though I confess I am very much surprised—but can a man heartily and effectively advocate a cause in which he does not believe?"

"Certainly. You know the *True Blue*?"

Alfred knew it very well. The *True Blue* had been his father's favourite weekly paper, and he used often to call attention to the vigour of its literary style, and the soundness of its political views.

"Well, I know the editor of it, and a very clever fellow he is, but a Radical and Free-Thinker."

"Am I to understand, then, that London journalists as a class are ready to prostitute their pens to the highest bidder?"

"You put the case too strongly. All that I say is, that most pressmen, being dependent on their pens for their daily bread, cannot be choosers; they must take such situations as they can get, and write—if it be their function to do original articles—what they are ordered to write. I get my living by writing London letters for country papers. I work with the advertising agent whose name is over the door. You know the arrangement. We give a letter a week for a column of space, which my colleague fills

with advertisements, and we make a very fair thing of it. The letters I write are, of course, pretty much alike as regards gossip, but when I touch on politics or political personages I must, of course, adapt my remarks to my audience."

"Which means, I suppose," laughed Balmaine, "that when you write for the *Calder Mercury* you praise up Disraeli as a heaven-born statesman, while in the *Bradford Blazer* you denounce him as an unscrupulous charlatan."

"No, no; I never use unparliamentary language. I don't think it pays. But don't you think that promiscuous advocacy is far worse than mercenary journalism? Whether this or that government is the better; whether this or that measure is wise or expedient, is merely a matter of opinion; whether you are right or wrong nobody is much the worse; and whatever you may yourself think, your paper, at least, has the courage of its convictions, and, as a rule, sticks to the side in which it professes to believe. But a barrister is always ready, for a certain number of guineas, to plead for a murderer or defend an oppressor of the poor. Advocacy is the most immoral of professions. Nothing would persuade me to become a barrister, yet barristers are esteemed honourable men, and the one who most successfully perverts justice and prostitutes his talents becomes the keeper of the Queen's conscience and a great peer."

"You forget," said Balmaine, surprised alike by Furbey's views and by the bitterness with which he expressed them; "you forget that unless both sides of a contested case are effectually stated essential facts may be forgotten, important considerations overlooked. And how is a barrister to know beforehand that a cheat is in the wrong—how, until he has heard what the other side has to say, know the weakness of his own?"

"To such cases as that my remarks do not apply; but there are cases in which counsel must know that they are pleading for an unrighteous cause, and that they can win only by imputing baseness to their opponents and practically bearing false witness against their neighbours, and yet if they do win they get high praise and more business."

"But don't you see that if the law be right in regarding an accused person as innocent until he is proved to be guilty, advocates cannot be wrong in acting on the same principle? There is something in what you say—the system has its drawbacks; there are unscrupulous barristers, as well as unscrupulous journalists, but taking it all round

you must admit that it does not work badly."

"I admit nothing of the sort," said Furbey, thumping his fist on the table; "I would abolish it utterly. English law is an ungodly tangle, and lawyers are unconscionable blood-suckers. If you knew as much of them as I know you would say the same. But let us drop the subject; it always puts me out of temper. I think I did not tell you that the editor of the *Helvetic News* is a connection of mine, a half-cousin in fact."

"No, I was not aware. Mr. Gibson, you mean. I have had a letter from him."

"Yes, I mean Mr. Gibson; Ned Gibson, we generally call him. I will write and ask him to do for you what he can. He is a very decent fellow, Ned, as you will find; but he has his fads, as you will also find. He fancies he has an awful lot of work to do, and it is to that idea, I imagine, that your engagement is partly due. He pretends to want more help. Why, I could edit that paper on my head. I do almost as much work in a day as he does in a week. But you keep in with him; he may be very useful to you. Another thing: if you keep your eyes open you may fake up a letter now and again for one of the London papers."

"Yes," said Balmaine, to whom the idea was by no means new, "I intend to do so. Which of them would you recommend me to try?"

"I really cannot tell you. One is about as good as another, I fancy, for your purpose. Try one, and if that is no go, try another. You should not have much difficulty in writing something worth printing. Accounts of Alpine accidents, especially if the victims happen to be English travellers, always make good copy. I should think you might easily pick up fifty or sixty pounds a year in that way."

"I am afraid that is too good to be true," said Alfred; "but I shall do my best, and you may be sure that if I fail it will not be for want of perseverance."

Fifty pounds, or even half of it, would make a nice addition to his slender income, and without some such help it would be impossible for him to do much towards solving the Hardy mystery. He felt encouraged by Furbey's opinion that he should be able to do so well, but for the rest, the conversation had been rather an unpleasant surprise. He was disillusioned. He had thought that London journalists were a class apart; that the men who every morning weigh statesmen in the balance and instruct the nation

in its duties—who write as if their judgment was faultless and their knowledge unlimited—were of a morality beyond reproach, and would rather perish than express opinions which they did not entertain or advocate a cause in which they did not believe. But if Furbey was right their knowledge was empiricism, their morality a fraud, and their opinions a pretence. He could not credit it. Furbey was a cynic, and thought that others were as destitute of professional honour as himself. At any rate, if journalists were no better than their kind they were no worse, and there must be among them men who would scorn to say what they did not think, and rather starve than prostitute their pens for money and place.

CHAPTER XV.—THE “HELVETIC NEWS.”

A LARGE room on the first floor of a house in a leading street of Geneva, known as “La Rue de la Montagne.” Though lofty and well lighted, this room is of somewhat barn-like aspect and barely furnished. There is neither carpet on the floor nor paper on the walls. In the centre is a big table, littered with unopened journals in various tongues. In the neighbourhood of the windows are three small writing-tables and as many chairs. What the original colour of them may have been it would be hard to say, but they are now black with ink stains and polished with much usage.

At one of the tables sits a man busily writing; as it would seem from frequent references to a foreign journal before him, translating. At another table sits another man; with a big pair of scissors he makes cuttings from an English newspaper and with a big brush pastes them on a sheet of foolscap. When he has done with the newspaper he drops it on the floor, and as there are about fifty papers there already he looks as if he were being gradually engulfed in a sea of news, or preparing to make a holocaust of himself, for a spark from the cigar he is smoking would almost certainly set the pile in a blaze.

The room is the sub-editor’s den of the *Helvetic News*, and the two men are the sub-editors. For some time neither of them looks up, the only sounds heard being the scratching of the pen and the click of the scissors. They are “making copy” with an industry begotten of the consciousness that it is wanted, and that they are rather behind with their work.

A knock at the door.

“That will be Lud,” says the scissors-and-

paste man. “Have you any copy ready, Milnthorpe? *Entrez!*”

Whereupon there enters a stout, good-looking young fellow in a drab blouse. He has a pleasant smile and holds in his hand a number of printed slips.

“*Bonjour, messieurs,*” says Lud, as he goes briskly up to the scissors-and-paste man’s desk.

“This is what I have over, Mr. Delane,” he says in very fair English, at the same time showing his slips.

“Why, what a lot you have! Chauncy’s letter, too, that Mr. Gibson said had to go in anyhow. My eye, won’t there be a row!”

Another knock at the door, followed by the entrance of the knocker, a tall, well set-up man, with a game leg and a walking-stick.

After casting an angry glance at Lud, as the latter withdraws, he greets the sub-editors with easy familiarity and seats himself unceremoniously on the big table.

The new-comer may be twenty-eight or thirty years old; he has well-cut features and a healthy complexion, albeit the squareness of his jaws and the thinness of his lips, which are unadorned by beard or moustache, give him a somewhat hard, and, at times, a cynical expression. His brown hair is closely cropped, and his general appearance that of a man who has undergone military training.

“Any news?” he says, drawing a cigar-case from his pocket. “I’ll thank you for a light, Delane.”

“Nothing very important, I think. Have you brought any copy with you?”

“Of course I have; that is what I came for. Here it is. Give it to Lud yourself. If he mauls any more of my copy, as he did last week, I’ll wring his neck for him.”

“I would not try anything of that sort on if I were you, Corfe. Lud is a sturdy fellow and not so much to blame as you think. His compositors don’t know a word of English, remember.”

“I know that; but you forget that I both corrected the proof and looked over the revise. If the mistake had occurred in the text I should not have cared; but to see an article you have taken pains with headed ‘A Remarkable Rope,’ instead of ‘A Remarkable Pope,’ is more than flesh and blood can stand. I cannot go to the *Café du Roi* without somebody asking me if I have not got a bit of that remarkable rope in my pocket. Nothing will persuade me that Lud did not do it on purpose, and, by gad, I’ll be even with him. Has the new boy come?”

"You mean Balmaine. He was to come last night, but I have not seen him yet. I suppose he would first pay his respects to Leyland and Mayo in the office below."

"Do you know anything of him?"

"Nothing; except that he has been on a country paper."

"They should have given me that place."

"You don't know German, and they want somebody who does."

"German is not so necessary as they make out, and I would have undertaken to learn it, and I know Italian. But Mayo is no friend of mine, nor Gibson either."

"Hush! that is Gibson's step on the stairs."

Whereupon Delane betakes himself to his scissors and paste, Corfe becomes absorbed in a copy of the *Journal de Lacustrie*, and silence reigns once more. The next moment the door opens again and the editor-in-chief, followed by Balmaine, advances into the room.

"Let me introduce you to your new colleague—Mr. Balmaine," he says, after an exchange of greetings.

Whereupon Alfred is presented in form to Delane and Milnthorpe and to Mr. Corfe, "one of our contributors."

"Any letters for me?" asks the editor.

"You will find several in your room," says Delane.

"Has Lud plenty of copy?"

"Enough for the present, and we are making more. What time will your leader be ready, Mr. Gibson?"

"I have not thought of a subject yet. About six o'clock, I hope. Will you step this way, Balmaine?"

As the editor spoke he opened an inner door, which led into his own sanctum. It was much better furnished than the sub-editors' apartment. The chairs, as well as Mr. Gibson's desk, were of mahogany; there was a well-filled bookcase, and, ranged in a long rack, were files of the *Helvetic News* and of several English and other journals.

"I am glad you called on me first," said the editor, a big-boned middle-aged man, with an intelligent and kindly, though not very well favoured face, as he glanced through his letters. "It is always pleasanter to be introduced than to introduce yourself. You were not aware, I suppose, that we had got a second sub-editor?"

"No; the last I heard was that you were shorthanded."

"So we were. Delane and I had to do all the work, and at the best I have my hands quite full. This is a very arduous position,

Mr. Balmaine—a very arduous position, full of anxiety; and the worst of it is that I hardly ever get a moment's leisure,—so very much to do." (Alfred thought of Furbey.)

"Now you have come I shall not be so tied. But I have not told you about Milnthorpe. He came here a fortnight since, poor devil, begging for something to do. I felt really sorry for him and persuaded Leyland and Mayo to let me try him as second sub-editor, at thirty francs a week—that is all he gets—thirty francs a week. And he is really working very well, translates with facility, and seems to have that journalistic instinct without which nobody can become a pressman worth his salt, let his other qualifications be what they may. And now about your own work. You will look through the German and the German-Swiss papers and turn into English whatever you may find suitable, boiling down or padding out at your discretion. You have studied the paper, of course?"

"Of course, Mr. Gibson."

"Well, you will see the style of thing we want. The details—the make-up of the paper and so forth—you had better leave to Mr. Delane; he is a very clever young fellow and I want you to work with him. You understand?"

"Perfectly."

"And do you think you will be able to do me an occasional leader or leaderet?"

"I think so. I will do my best."

"Thank you. It would be a great relief. You have no idea how much I have to do. When you see your way to a subject let me know. As to politics, we ought to be neutral, but at present our proclivities are Liberal."

"At present?" said Balmaine with a smile.

"Yes," returned the editor gravely. "I said it advisedly, for a short time ago our proclivities were Conservative, and for aught I know they may be Conservative again. Leyland and Mayo, our proprietor and his manager, are sometimes hardish up—this is, of course, in confidence, though you will probably find it out soon enough for yourself—and require financial help. In plain English, they have to raise the wind and we trim our political sails so as to catch, or shall I say encourage, the favouring breeze. We are trimming just now. Our financial ally—I ought almost to say our co-proprietor, for I am by no means sure that he has not bought a share—is an American banker, who lately opened an office here and is carrying all before him—a man of immense energy. He is a Liberal—all Americans are, I think—and

for that reason we are rather patting Liberalism on the back. Three months ago we were doing the other thing."

"I understand," said Alfred gravely, though inwardly much amused.

"I think that is about all I have to say at present," resumed the editor, wetting his pen and shuffling his "copy" paper, as if he had hit upon a suitable subject for a leader and was anxious to begin. "There is no hurry about seeing Leyland and Mayo to-day; I will introduce you to them to-morrow. Why, bless me, what is that?"

"That" was a tremendous uproar in the next room, whither the editor, followed by Balmaine, excitedly rushed. Delane had set his newspapers in a blaze, and he and Milnthorpe were trying to stamp the fire out, looking, as they danced among the flames, like a couple of lunatics. Corfe was making play with his stick, but taking care, as Alfred noticed, not to go near enough to hurt himself. Gibson trampled among the burning embers like a hero, and his feet being of abnormal size, the fire was soon got under, but not until the pile of journals had been reduced to charred morsels.

"Now look here, Delane," said Gibson, as soon as he had recovered his wind, "no more smoking, if you please; at any rate, when you are making copy. It is a wonder you were not burnt to death. Send for the boy to clear up the mess."

Delane looked very wild and a good deal scared. He could hardly be more than twenty, and was decidedly good-looking—curly black hair, and a silky moustache, a dark oval face, and deep blue eyes with long lashes. Milnthorpe was at least ten years older, light complexioned and lantern-jawed, and his long, serious face was so rarely relaxed by a smile that Delane, who, like so many journalists, was an Irishman, had christened him the "Knight of the Rueful Countenance."

"A dear smoke that," said Delane, looking sadly at his foot gear as Gibson withdrew to his own room. "Spoiled me a new pair of boots. They cost me eighteen francs only last week. That would keep me in *Vevey fins* for a twelvemonth—four a penny, aren't they, Corfe?"

"You ought to know better than I," returned Corfe rather sneeringly. "I never smoke them."

"I beg your pardon. I was forgetting you were a swell and smoked nothing under a penny. I hope your cane is no worse. I saw you pottering about with it," said Delane with a smile.

"Pottering about with it! Why, if I had not scattered the paper with my stick you would not have been able to put the fire out with your feet. But you look thirsty, and I feel half stifled. Come and have a drink."

"Won't I just! Will you bear us company, Balmaine? All right; come along. I shall be back in ten minutes, Milnthorpe, and there is plenty of copy for the present."

CHAPTER XVI.—CORFE.

CORFE ordered absinthe. Balmaine and his colleague drank beer.

"How do you like Geneva?" Delane asked.

Alfred said he liked it very well; and well he might. The café garden in which they sat commanded a magnificent prospect. On one side of them, far away, towered the storm-swept peaks of the Pennine Alps, on the other rose the wood-crowned heights of the purple Jura, while, almost at their feet, flowed swiftly the arrowy and amethystine Rhone, bearing on its bosom the tribute of a thousand glaciers. Hard by was a broad boulevard, fringed with trees and lined with handsome shops, the windows of most of them resplendent with gold and precious stones. People were sitting under awnings outside the cafés, sipping coffee and absorbing ices, and the streets, though sufficiently thronged to be lively, were not unpleasantly crowded. What a change from Calder! Balmaine could hardly believe that a week had not yet elapsed since he left home. And a corresponding change had been wrought in his spirits; never since his father's death had he felt so free from care and so full of hope.

"Is this your first visit to Switzerland?" asked Corfe, as he carelessly sipped his absinthe.

"Not only that; it is my first visit to the Continent."

"You are like me, I think, not much of a traveller," put in Delane. "I had never been on the Continent before I landed at Calais on my way here. I suppose you have spent half your life on the Continent, Corfe?"

"A good deal of it, at any rate," said Corfe complacently, as if to spend half one's life in foreign countries were something to be proud of.

"Do you prefer it to England?"

"That depends on circumstances. If I had ten thousand a year I should probably prefer England; but as I have a good deal less than ten thousand shillings, I prefer the Continent. You can get far more enjoyment out of life on a little abroad than you can at

home. I wonder poor people don't emigrate from England *en masse*, by gad !”

“That would be a bad job for the rich, though,” observed Delane, “they would have neither servants nor tenants.”

“Serve 'em right !”

“Why, Corfe, I thought you were a Conservative.”

“If I were rich I probably should be, but being poor I am naturally a Rad,” returned Corfe, with a pleasant, almost gay laugh, which showed a set of strong white teeth. “But, really, I have been so long abroad that I have ceased to take any interest in home politics.”

At this moment a white-faced little man, with little black eyes, came up and, after making a profound salute, exchanged a few words with Corfe in Italian.

“You know Italian, then,” said Balmaine when the new-comer was gone.

“I should do,” replied Corfe. “I received half my education in Italy. Yes, I think I know Italy and the Italians better than I know England and the English. And I like the life there. Geneva is all very well, but give me Florence or Milan, Naples or the Baths of Lucca.”

“The Baths of Lucca ?” said Balmaine. “What are they like ?”

The mention of the place made him think of the lost Hardys. It was at Lucca that Philip Hardy had negotiated several of his largest drafts.

“Lucca is an awfully nice place, I can tell you. We used always to go there for the season ; my father goes there still.”

“How long is that ago, Mr. Corfe ?”

“Why, were you ever there ?”

“Have I not just said that this is my first visit to the Continent ? I take a great interest in Italy, and long intensely to see it, though.”

“I almost forget how long it is since I was last at Lucca—perhaps eight years. But we used to live there part of every year. *Per Bacco !* I wish I was there now.”

“If you like Italy so much, why don't you go back there ?” Delane asked.

“For a very good reason ; because I am under the necessity of living, though, 'pon my word, I often think it is not worth the trouble. And if life is easy in Italy, it is far from easy to make a living there. Greece is not a bad country, but it has the same fault.”

“You have been in Greece, then ?” said Balmaine.

“Yes ; Hellas is one of the countries I have lived in. Egypt is another. I am a rolling stone, Mr. Balmaine, a fact which

probably accounts for my having gathered so little moss. It is your stop-at-homes who make money.”

“I must not stop here any longer, though,” exclaimed Delane, rising from his seat, “or I shall make no copy. I suppose we shall have nothing from you for a few days, Balmaine ?”

“Mr. Gibson said there was no hurry, that I might take a day or two before buckling to ; and I must look out for lodgings. But I don't like being idle, and as Mr. Gibson has so much to do I must do my best to help him.”

“He said so, did he ?” asked the sub-editor, with a significant smile. “I wish—however, you will see for yourself. As for lodgings, I think I can put you in the way of finding a pension that will suit you. Can you look in at the office about nine o'clock to-night and I will take you to my place ? Madame Guichard will find you quarters on reasonable terms.”

Alfred thanked Delane for his offer and agreed to meet him as proposed, whereupon the latter, who had outstayed his ten minutes by half an hour, ran back to his work.

“I live quite alone,” said Corfe. “I have a room for which I pay fifteen francs a week, and I cook my own breakfast. My other meals I get first at one place, then at another. It is quite as cheap, and I don't like pensions. You have to pay for your dinner whether you eat it or not, and you get the same dishes and meet the same people every day. But you may perhaps prefer it ; *chacun à son goût*, you know. If Madame Guichard asks you too much, try my plan. I know where you can get a good room for fifteen francs, perhaps less, if economy is an object with you ?”

Alfred said that economy was very much an object with him. He thought it best to make no disguise on that score, but he observed that, before trying Corfe's plan, he would like to see what Madame Guichard could do for him.

“I guessed as much,” went on Corfe, “economy is an object to everybody on the *Helvetic*, I think, except the swells—Leyland, Mayo, and Gibson. But as for us moneyless folks, we are beggars ; we are even worse—we are slaves. For what is a man, placed between the alternatives of work which he detests and starvation, but a slave ?”

“At that rate,” replied Alfred with a laugh, “we are all slaves, and slavery is a condition of life. But, for my part, I see no hardship in work.”

“You misunderstand me. I said work which you detest. There are some sorts of

work I like—writing for the *Helvetic*, for instance—though they do give me so little for it. But I hate giving lessons. I can make my copy when and where it pleases me; but teaching must be done at the time appointed, whether you are in the humour or not; and it is always the same infernal round. Pupils are so awfully stupid, too, and mine being mostly grown up, I cannot relieve my feelings by telling them so.”

“Oh, I did not know you gave lessons.”

“I am obliged, or you may be sure I would not. It is a case of *force majeure*, Mr. Balmaine. Won't you have another glass of beer? No! Well, then, if you have nothing particular to do, I will show you a few of our principal buildings and streets, so that you may know your way about.”

The offer was accepted, and the two walked about for an hour or more, Corfe talking pleasantly about the countries he had visited and the people he had met. Before they separated Balmaine accepted an invitation to “take a bit of supper” with him on the following Saturday evening.

Alfred did not quite know what to make of Corfe. Gibson and Delane he liked, and felt sure that he should find in them agreeable colleagues; but Corfe was less easily read, and his cynical remarks, an occasional hardness of tone, and an indefinable something in his manner, made Balmaine suspect that he was selfish, and might be insincere. But he could be extremely pleasant when he liked, and it was possible that he might improve on further acquaintance. He was a likely man, too, having been so much in Italy, to ask about the missing Hardys. But that would come later; it was too soon yet to begin making inquiries.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE PENSION GUICHARD.

AFTER dining at his hotel—a very modest one, near the station—Balmaine strolled over the Pont du Mont Blanc to the Jardin Anglais and listened to the martial music of a band while the sun went down behind the Jura and the crescent moon rose above the Savoyard hills. The scene was lovely, the time bewitching and propitious for thought; and if it had not been for a neighbouring clock striking nine his appointment with Delane might have been forgotten.

A few minutes later he was at the office of the *Helvetic News*. He found the sub-editor all by himself reading proofs.

“All right,” said Delane, when he saw Alfred, “I have just finished. Here comes

the boy for the last proofs. Gibson went away an hour ago. He always hooks it when he has seen a pull of his leader—sometimes before—and Milnthorpe is let off evening duty in consideration of coming so soon in the morning.”

The Pension Guichard was on the edge of a green on the outskirts of the town, a low, old-fashioned house, in a little, old-fashioned garden, which for some not very obvious reason was below the level of the road. You had to go down to it by steps. In the middle of the garden was a large mulberry-tree, and the stuccoed front of the house was covered with a trailing grape-vine. When Balmaine returned to the pension on the following day he saw that the garden stood in sore need of weeding, and the woodwork of paint.

As Delane opened the door their noses were greeted with an odoriferous smell of roast meat and onions, with a dash of garlic and old clothes.

“We are just in time for supper,” said the sub-editor.

As they take their seats in the little *salle à manger* half-a-dozen *pensionnaires* file into the room. One, as Delane whispers to Balmaine, is a Polish prince; another an Italian count; a third a German baron. Alfred had never been in such aristocratic company before. There are also three ladies—one youthful and not ill-looking, one moustached and middle-aged, one very old, with painted cheeks, false teeth, and a most palpable wig. The conversation was, naturally, in French, and Balmaine had a difficulty in following it; for though he read it with ease, and wrote it fairly, his ear had not yet become attuned to the music of the language, and he expressed himself with difficulty. But the three men talked so loudly and incessantly that even if he could have spoken with facility he would not have found it very easy to make himself heard.

“They are a queer lot,” whispered Delane; “they carry on like that every night, and sometimes they make such an infernal noise that anybody outside might think they were Irishmen waking a corpse. There are two or three others, but they are out, and there are changes pretty nearly every week. It is no use telling you their names—you would forget them in five minutes; but if you decide to come I'll introduce you in form. It is not a first-class pension, by any means, but it is cheap and clean, and that's more than you can say of some pensions that are the reverse of cheap.”

The supper, though composed of several courses, was very simple and quickly despatched. A vegetable soup, some boiled meat, which neither Delane nor Alfred could christen, and baked veal made three dishes, *spinach à la beurre* made a fourth, and for sweets they had stewed prunes. Everybody drank wine; but this, as the sub-editor informed Balmaine, was an extra, and not included in the pension price.

When the prunes appeared and the men began to smoke, Delane introduced Alfred to the landlady. Madame Guichard was a stalwart, rosy-checked, middle-aged Vaudoise. She did nearly all the household work with her own hands, and had both cooked the supper and served it; that was the reason why she could not see Alfred sooner. Delane inquired if she could give his friend a bedroom. Perfectly; she would do anything to oblige a friend of M. Delane. She had a pretty little chamber, overlooking the garden, altogether at the disposition of Monsieur. Would they give themselves the trouble to mount on high and look at it? So up they went, Madame leading the way and discoursing with much animation on the manifold advantages offered by her pension—its salubrious situation, vast garden, and its contiguity to the common. And then its quietness for men of letters, like Monsieur Delane and his friend, could not be too highly extolled. They might write all day long without being disturbed by a single discordant sound. As for the bedroom, it was simply delightful—there was hardly such another *chambre de garçon* in all Geneva. The bed in so charming a little alcove, the window so nicely draped, the floor so brightly waxed, the little *secrétaire*, which would be so convenient for the writing of Monsieur. What could one wish for better? It was a bedroom and a workroom rolled into one.

"The room will do, though it might be bigger," observes Balmaine, "but how about the terms?"

Madame, with Swiss keenness, guesses what Balmaine is saying, and smiles pleasantly.

"I will make Monsieur very favourable conditions," she says. "For the sleeping chamber, which is good enough for his Highness the Prince of Wales, and the pension of two repasts daily, the use of the salon and the enjoyment of the garden—everything comprised save wine and candles, I ask Monsieur only the insignificant sum of four francs. If Monsieur had not been intro-

duced by M. Delane, for whom I have a perfect esteem, I should be obliged to charge five francs or, at any rate, four francs fifty."

Delane opens his eyes in astonishment.

"Four francs a day, without second breakfast! You forget that M. Balmaine will get his second breakfast in town. Four francs is much too much."

"But it is such a charming bedroom," pleads Madame. "It is really the best chamber in the pension, and Monsieur will have the enjoyment of the garden (it was about thirty feet square), and though nourishment is so frightfully dear, I keep a good table, as Monsieur has seen. No, M. Delane, I cannot accept Monsieur for less than four francs."

"I shall not let him pay a centime more than I pay, Madame Guichard," answers Delane resolutely, "and that is three francs fifty."

"But your chamber is *au troisième*; that makes a great difference."

"Well, give me a room on the third floor also," puts in Balmaine. "I think I would rather be a little higher up; it will be ever so much pleasanter."

"But, sirs, unfortunately I have not a chamber *au troisième* free."

"In that case Monsieur must look for lodgings elsewhere, Madame Guichard. I am very sorry, but it is impossible for him to pay so much as four francs."

"Oh, but he must not go elsewhere," exclaims Madame eagerly. "I do not like to separate friends; and though it is a great sacrifice I will make a little diminution. I will consent to take three francs fifty if Monsieur, on his part, will consent to pay a franc a week for services."

"I think that will do, Balmaine," says Delane, "twenty two francs a week, all comprised, except wine and candles, is not bad. You will not do better, I am sure."

"All right," replies Alfred, "I agree."

"We are in accord then?" asks the landlady with a smile of satisfaction. "It is a thing agreed."

"It is a thing agreed," answers Balmaine, and it was arranged that he should take possession of his room on the following morning.

"I don't think I should come to the office this week if I were you," said Delane as he walked with Alfred across La Plaine. "This is Thursday; on Saturday there is nothing going on, and we might make the tour of the lake. I can get a *permis*, so that

it will cost us nothing but our grub. What do you say?"

"I should be delighted, and I think I might. Gibson said there was no need for me to begin work for a day or two. But then he is so busy."

"I know he is fond of saying so, but—well then, look here, I have a happy thought. He does nothing on Saturdays, of course, and likes to take it easy on Sundays. You write a leader to-morrow, and let him have the copy when he drops in during the afternoon. He will be delighted, and you will be secure in his good graces for ever."

"As you say, a happy thought, and I will try to profit by it; but what on earth must I write about? I am forbidden to touch on politics; and if I were not, my political opinions are not those of the *Helvetic News*."

"What does that matter?" said Delane in a tone which implied that he did not quite see the relevancy of Balmaine's observation. "You can easily fake up something. If you do not look in at the office to-morrow we shall, at any rate, meet at Madame Guichard's. Meanwhile I will get the *permis*."

As Alfred wended his way homeward he entered into a mental calculation about ways and means. His salary was to be seventy-five francs a week, equal to three pounds, so after deducting the pound he had to send

home he would have just two to live upon. His lodgings would cost him twenty-two francs; as he had to provide fire and lights, and there might be other extras, it would not be safe to call it less than twenty-five. Dinners in town and odds and ends would run away with at least ten francs more, so that for clothing, travelling, and the unforeseen, he could not reckon on more than fifteen francs—twelve shillings and sixpence a week—enough for his own personal wants perhaps, and he must cut his coat according to his cloth, but not enough to make any long journeys in search of Vera Hardy. Still, as he had a fairly stocked wardrobe to start with, and three or four pounds in his pocket, he might, by practising a rigid economy, possibly do something, when he had got to know people better and ascertained which way the land lay. For the moment he could only watch and wait: later in the season, if he could obtain a holiday, he would cross the Helvetic Alps—if need be on foot—and make inquiries at every place about the Italian lakes, and in Upper Italy, which Philip Hardy's letters to his father showed he had visited, provided he had the wherewithal. In the meantime he would work very hard at Italian, the study of which he had already begun, and try to turn an honest penny by doing something for one or other of the London papers.

THE POWERS OF LOVE.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR MARCH.

By GEORGE MATHESON, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Psalm xv. ; 1 Peter vi. 1—8.

"THE power of love" has become a proverbial expression, and it is well that it should be so. The test of any object's beauty is its power, its influence, its effect; we measure it by what it can do. Paul speaks not of the power, but of the powers of love. To him love is not only the most powerful thing in the universe but the most powerfully varied thing; its influence is not merely intense, it is intensely diversified. He declares that love has four great powers. It has a power of intellectual charity: "love believeth all things." It has a power of passive strength: "love beareth all things." It has a power of sanguine expectation: "love hopeth all things." It has a power of persis-

tent continuance: "love endureth all things."

I propose in these readings to take up in turn each of these. I have slightly altered the order in which they appear in the text, but I have placed them in that order in which they appear in the heart. Let us try to unfold one by one the blossoms of this sacred flower.

The first blossom of the flower of love is intellectual charity—the power to believe all things. Surely there is something very strange here! I am living in a world of rampant wickedness, of open sin, of unconcealed transgression; am I to believe that all this is good? Am I to say, "It looks very bad, but Christian love tells me not to trust my eyes; it bids me believe that under the surface all is fair and pure?" Whatever St. Paul means, he cannot mean this. Is it not a fact of everyday experience that love is of all things the

quickest to detect a flaw? When the step begins to lose its fleetness, when the eye begins to lack its lustre, when the spirit begins to abate from the elasticity of its earlier days, who is it that first sees the change? Is it the eye of the stranger? He may come in and out a hundred times and behold no decline. It is the eye of love that first catches the premonition, and it catches it because it *is* love. Who, think you, had the deepest vision of the sins of humanity? Was it not the Incarnate Love, and was it not *because* He was Love Incarnate? Had He been less loving, had He been less tender, had He been less enthusiastically interested in the objects on which He gazed, they would have appeared to Him more spotless and more fair. But His love was so deep that He was unable to pass the blemishes by; they jarred upon His sight, they weighed upon His heart. The penalty of His love was the necessity of clear-seeing; it forced Him against His will to believe that there was something wrong.

How then could Paul say that it is the office of Christian love to "believe all things"? If love intensifies my vision of reality, how can I in the presence of love see things as they are not? How can I, with the spirit of Christ in my heart, and the forms of wickedness before my sight, believe that the forms of wickedness are a delusion and that the spirit of Christ reigns alone? How can I, when there is put into my hand an optical instrument whose express design is to magnify those forms of danger which hover round my brother man, insist on seeing through that instrument only the absence of all danger and the vanishing of all fear?

But I find I have altogether mistaken St. Paul; I find that he has a totally different meaning when he says "love believeth all things." Consider, what are the things in whose goodness charity is to believe? Not actions which are seen, but actions which are not seen. The sphere for charity of belief is not the world of observation, but the world of non-observation—the world which as yet is dark to us. There are times in the life of my brother-man in which his character is in shadow. It is not blasted, it is not condemned, it is not proved wicked; it is simply in the twilight. Men speak of it with bated breath. They do not lay their hand upon a crime, but they talk in innuendoes. They point down into the twilight and exclaim, "If one dared speak he might say something, but the least said the better"—and there is more said in the unspoken utterance than in a thousand accusations. Into this twilight Paul comes

and cries: Christian men and women, ye who have been touched with the live coal of my Lord's love, I appeal to you not to take up this reproach against your neighbour. I appeal to you by that Divine Love which has imputed to you its own righteousness, to impute your righteousness to the life of your brother. Have you proved your brother's sins? Can you put your hand on that special deed which has isolated him from the lives of his fellow men? Can you point to anything beyond the rumours of the night which has a right to place him in the twilight? If not, then believe him to be pure. Go down to him in the twilight and cast your shield around him. Cover with your charity the multitude of transgressions that are alleged against him. Spread over him the wings of your protective love until the calamity be overpast. By-and-by the sun will rise and we shall see all things clearly; meantime impute to him that light which is in thee.

Son of Man, Who hast revealed to me the beauty of my own nature, help me to believe in Thee that I may believe in the possibilities of my brother. Help me to see my brother in the light of that life which has been lived by Thee. Help me to feel in the vision of Thy manhood an exalted sense of the possibilities of all manhood. It is because my eyes are bent downward that I take up a reproach against my brother; lift upon me the light of *Thy* countenance, and in *Thy* light I shall see light. In *Thy* light it shall no longer seem natural to me that things should be base and mean. I shall see them reflected in *Thy* beauty, I shall look up and expect them to rise. Shine out, Thou divinely human, Thou humanly divine glory, that in *Thy* shining I may behold the naturalness of man's elevation; when Thou hast taught me to expect all things, I shall learn to believe all things.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Luke vii. 36, to the end; Romans xii. 9, to the end.

In our last reading we unfolded the first blossom of the flower of love—its power to believe all things. We went down into the twilight and found our brother there under the shadow of reproach. No one had aught to say against him except that there *was* a shadow. No sin had been brought to light, but suspicion said it was there. We unfolded the first blossom of the flower, and it said, "Believe all things." It bade us repudiate the shadow of our brother until it was proved to be more than a shadow. It

called upon us to cast the shield of our love around him over whom the world had thrown the cloak of its calumny. It told us to impute to him our own light until his light should dawn.

But now let us suppose that his light *has* dawned. Let us suppose that the twilight has passed from around him, and that the life of the man is revealed as it is. What if it should prove that the passing of the twilight into day is the passing of suspicion into certainty? What if it should prove that the dissipation of the shadows has simply dissipated all doubt of my brother's guilt, and revealed beyond the possibility of gainsaying that he has indeed been the author of the sins laid to his charge? What under the circumstances will become of my first blossom? Can it live any longer amid the cold and the frost of certainty? Can I any longer retain possession of the charity that believeth all things after it has been demonstrated beyond doubt that my brother is guilty of sin? No, you cannot. Remember, the first blossom of love is only for the twilight. The charity that believeth all things is only meant to continue as long as the actions of my brother are unknown. The moment they cease to be unknown this charity must die. The moment the sun has risen there will be no longer any need of the charity that believeth all things; the day will declare all things whether they be good or bad. If the day shall declare that my brother was calumniated there shall no more be any place for charity; my brother shall be proved not to need it. If the day shall declare that my brother was indeed guilty, charity shall no longer have any right to believe that he is innocent. It cannot put the false for the true, for it comes from the heart of Him who is the centre of truth; the moment the sin shall be established the first blossom of love must die.

What then, is there no other blossom? Is there no part of the flower which is fitted for the special circumstance of a man overtaken in a fault? Yes, there is a second, and a yet more glorious blossom. It is something to believe that my brother is innocent ere yet he has been proved to be guilty, but it is something more divine still to extend my sustenance to him *after* he has been proved to be guilty. The charity that believeth all things must die, but in its room there shall bud forth a charity more resplendent still—the love that *bear*eth all things. It can no longer believe that my brother is good when he is bad, but it can recognise

him to be bad and forgive him still. It can no longer deny that the woman who touches it is a sinner, but, admitting the fact of her sin, it can receive her touch and pronounce her pardon. It can no longer cherish the hope that the rumours of the crowd are but the voices of calumny, but, receiving their rumours as the voice of truth, it can utter the words of complete emancipation: "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee."

"Love beareth all things." The words in the original are very suggestive; they signify, "Love suffereth all things silently." Only in Christ do we see the fulfilment of that promise—the union of suffering and silence. Nowhere else in the world of the past were the suffering and the silence combined. The Jew suffered in the presence of sin, but he was not silent; he called on the heavens and the earth to avenge the deeds of the sinner. The Greek was silent in the presence of sin, but he did not suffer. It was the absence of suffering which made him silent; he was too indifferent about transgression to cry out for vengeance. But down in that lowly valley of Gethsemane there was enacted at one and the same hour the most perfect judgment on sin, and the most complete forgiveness of the sinner—the suffering and the silence. The heart of the Son of Man was crowded with the sins of the sons of men. He bore all things—the malice, the hatred, the envy, the all-uncharitableness, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life—He bore them all. He bore them without avenging but not without dying; they could not break His love, but they broke His heart. It was because His love was unbroken that His heart *was* broken. Had He been less loving, had He been less devoted, had He been less absorbed in the interest of His brothers, the reproach of them would not have broken His heart. But His judgment came from His love, His anguish came from His devotion. In one great throb of pardon the strings of His heart snapped in twain, and in a mighty gush of pity He yielded up His life. Mercy and truth met together; silence and suffering embraced each other. Mercy kept the love unbroken, truth compelled the heart to break. The judgment of sin fell upon the spirit of Him who saw it; the thunders were turned inward upon Himself. In one act of death, in one hour of anguish, in one throb of infinite pity the sins of the sons of men were at once condemned and forgiven.

O Thou great sin-bearer, Thou Who hast worn upon Thy breast the second blossom of

the flower of love, I fly to Thee. Unto whom can I go but unto Thee to receive the second blossom of the flower? There are many of my brother-men who overlook my sin simply because they do not see it; they believe in my integrity because my iniquity is covered from their view. But Thou hast seen my sins as never man saw it. Thou hast searched the innermost depths of my heart. Thou hast descended into the lowest parts of my earthly nature. Thou hast tried my reins even in those seasons of the night which conceal my deeds from my brother-man. Thine is not charity which can *believe* all things; Thou hast no choice but to believe me bad. And yet Thou hast pitied, and yet Thou hast pardoned. Thou hast taken me into thy bosom just as I am—unhealed, unwashed, unsanctified; Thou hast lifted me into thy heart when there was no strength in me, no health in me, no promise in me. Thou hast worn me on Thy breast next to the blossom of Thy flower of love, side by side with the charity of forgiveness. It is because Thou wearest the second blossom that Thou art able to wear me; it is because Thou canst bear all things that Thou canst bear the vision of my sin. O suffering silence! O broken-hearted unbroken love! O pardoning pity that has grown out of unblemished purity, let me hide myself in Thee. Let me hide myself behind the flower until I am able myself to wear the flower; let me lay my sins on Thee till Thou shalt teach me also to bear all things.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Luke xiii. 6—9; Hebrews xii. 1—7.

Have we now exhausted the possibilities of the flower of Christian love? We have seen two blossoms unfolded. We have seen a power to believe all things while yet the acts of the man are in shadow. We have seen a higher blossom still—a power to bear all things when the acts of the man have ceased to be in shadow and have proved themselves to be sin. Can love go further than this? Is there a goal of glory more perfect than pardon, more fair than forgiveness, more beatific than bearing? Is there a blossom more full of summer warmth than the power to say, "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee"? Would it not seem as if now we had reached the climax, as if the power of love itself could go no further in its efforts to save?

Yes, but it can. The possibilities of the flower are not yet exhausted; there is a third and more glorious blossom yet to come. Your love may bear all things and may be still

only a passive thing. You may refuse to punish, you may consent to pardon, you may decide to make no outward difference in your conduct to the offender, and still he may not be to you what he was before. How often do we use the words, "I will forgive it, but I can't forget it!" How often do we cry out even in the act of pardon that our ideal is broken, that our image is shattered in fragments, that our brother can never again be to us what he was in the days of yore! That is because our love wants a blossom; it has learned to bear all things, but it has not yet learned to hope all things. Bearing is merely tolerance; it is in itself a joyless thing. To translate it into joy you must translate it into hope. Hope is the third blossom of the flower of love. It is not enough that I forgive my brother; I must restore my brother. It is not enough that I abstain from cutting down the barren fig-tree; I must dig round about it that I may grant it room for the fruit that is to be. Come, and let us reason together. You say that you can never behold your brother clothed in his old ideal. But the ideal was never his; it was yours, the painting of your own brush, the creature of your own imagining. It is not his to-day, it was not his yesterday, but it may still be his to-morrow. Impute to him to-morrow; ring in for him the Christ that is to be; hope all things for him; let your love be lit with joy. Often have I been struck with these words which the writer to the Hebrews has spoken of the Master: "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." It was no mere passive love, no mere disconsolate waiting, no mere forgiveness of despair. His love was on fire with expectation, on wings with hope, on flight with the ecstasy of prospective joy. He looked upon His brother not as a cold, dead thing which must be forgiven and tolerated, but as a life rich in possibilities, radiant with promises, golden with the forecast light of coming suns, and His love ran out to meet him unto the very borders of the far country of his sins, looking forward and hastening unto the glorious appearing of the child of God.

And yet, you say, did He not include all men in a common degradation—the deepest degradation, death? Did He not come to this world as a world dead in trespasses and in sin? Did He not look upon the form of His brother-man as one looks upon the form from which the soul has fled, and weep those tears over it which one weeps over the lifeless clay? Yes, but, strange to say, I

have often felt that this is just the most hopeful feature in all His Gospel. I know of nothing which holds out such a prospect of sunrise for humanity as just that common degradation in which the Bible finds all. I look around on the spirits of the just made perfect, on the glorious company of the Apostles, on the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, on the noble army of Martyrs, on the Church throughout all the world. I look above upon the soul-stars which shine in the kingdom of their Father, on the Peters who have completed their courage, and the Johns who have perfected their love, and the Nathaniels who have intensified their guilelessness, and the Pauls who have been emancipated from their thorn. I look and ask whence have these come that are clothed in such white apparel, that are radiant with such transfigured glory? And from the calm heaven the answer descends: They have all come from death. These phoenix-birds have risen out of their own ashes; they have ascended from the same grave where others lie. They were all once dead, and there can be no degrees in death; no man can lie lower than the grave. As I hear these words I begin to understand why the Gospel of Christ is a Gospel of hope. I begin to see how the secret of the universal hope is just the universal degradation. If the phoenix-birds have risen from their ashes, why may not I? If the soul-stars have shone out of darkness, why may not I? If the white-robed have emerged out of great tribulation, why may not I? These were once all dead, and I am now no more than dead; if *one* could rise from death there is no limit to my hope. O Magdalene, why sittest thou in ashes of despair, looking up at the beautiful plumage of the phoenix-birds? These phoenix-birds were yesterday part of thine own ashes, dark and cold and dead as thou. Thou too mayest be a phoenix-bird, poor Magdalene; infinite love has infinite hope for thee. Finite love despairs of thee, but finite love has no experience of the dead. It can love only the lovely; it has never been down in the valley of the shadow, never touched the spots of the leper, never made trial of the possibilities of dust and ashes. But infinite love has been in the depths, and in the lowest depth it has seen the shadow of a star. It has seen the ashes of the urn yield life, and it can never again say that death is incurable. It has seen the winged spirit of a Paul spring from the caterpillar of a Saul of Tarsus, and thereby it knows assuredly that there is hope for thee.

I appeal then unto Cæsar; unto Cæsar shall I go. I appeal from love finite to love infinite, from the imperfect to the perfect, from the judgment of the creature to the bar of the Highest. I throw myself upon the steps of the altar of divine sacrifice. Thou infinite love, out of the depths I cry to Thee! Thou alone canst hear me in the depths. I do not merely ask that Thou wouldst hope for me; I know that Thou hopest for me always. I ask that Thou wouldst inspire me with *Thy* hope, that Thou wouldst create within me the third blossom of the flower. Help me to see my brother as Thou seest me. Help me to transform my forgiveness into forgetfulness; help me to change my pardon into promise; help me to put on the garment of praise in exchange for that spirit of heaviness which I was wont to wear. When I shall say of my offending brother, "It doth not yet appear what he shall be," the charity which bears shall become the charity of hope.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Song of Solomon viii. 5, 6, and 7; John xiii. 1-10.

We have seen three blossoms of the flower of love. One yet remains, to attain the noonday of the soul. My love may believe all things, may bear all things, may even hope all things, and yet it may fall short of its perfect bloom. To give it its perfect bloom, to make it the flower of life in the midst of the garden, there is wanted one blossom more—persistence unto the end. I want a power to bear without being weary; I want a power to hope in everlasting spring. When I have reached the love that can endure all things, I have been planted anew in the garden of the Lord.

Have you ever asked yourself, what is that point of difference which distinguishes the love of the sense from the love of the spirit? What is that which marks the contrast between the affection of the animal and the affection of the man? Is it degree of intensity? I am not sure that it is. There are some who tell us that the beast of the field has been known to die through grief; greater intensity than this can scarcely be conceived. But I will tell you wherein lies the eternal boundary-line between the affection of the animal and the affection of the man; it is not in love's intensity but in love's endurance. The beast of the field may die through grief for its master, but if it survive the grief its *love* will die. But my love can survive its grief and live; as the poet-laureate says, it can love more even when it sorrows

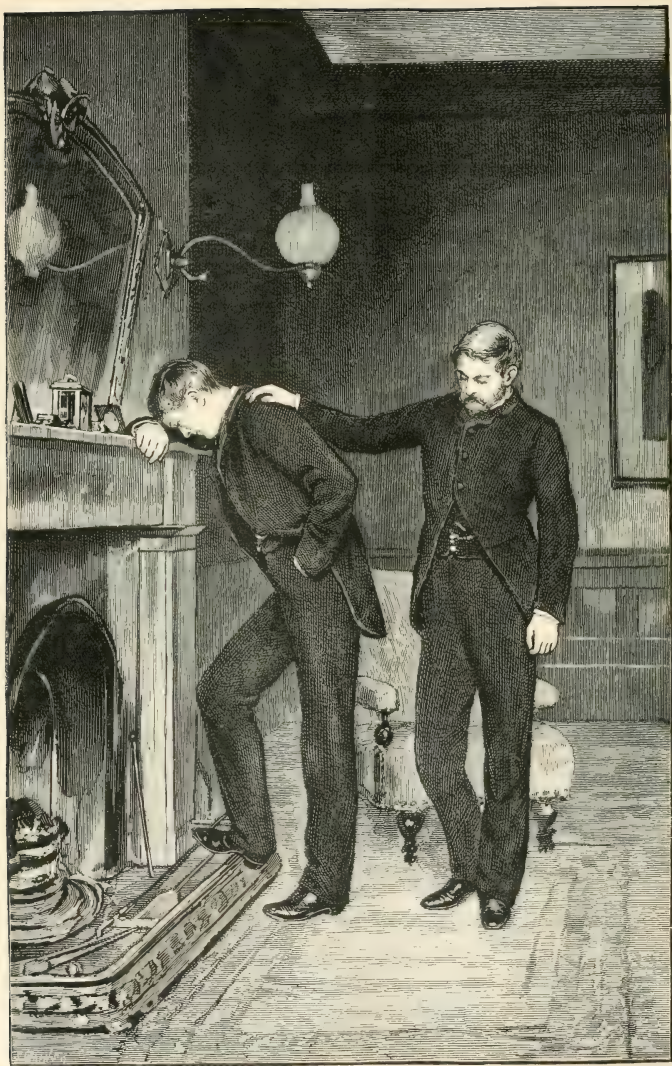
less. The higher we ascend in the scale of creation the more indestructible is love. The animal cherishes her offspring for a day, a week, a month—and then the attraction of the heart is broken evermore. But the love of the spirit is a love that loves always. It is the love of Solomon's Song; fire cannot burn it, water cannot drown it, cold cannot freeze it, absence cannot bury it. It annihilates space, it defies time, it outlasts change, it overleaps death, it carries in its own bosom the promise of immortality—it endureth all things.

The test of love's endurance to the end is its sacrifice at the beginning. So says St. John in that marvellous passage which we have placed at the heading of this section:—"When Jesus knew that His hour was come, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Let me try to paraphrase His meaning. He says: You are asking for a test that the Master will love you to the end. You ask, What if time should press heavy upon me, what if the years should steal my beauty, what if the winds should beat upon my house and leave it in ruins; could His love survive that? Be still, thou trembling one; that is the very state in which His love first found you. He loved you when you were "in the world"—loved you before you loved Him. Do you know how bankrupt you must have been at that hour? Do you know what it is not to love Him? I may be unable to fix my heart upon a special fellow-being, and yet I may not be poor. There is a love whose presence does not mean riches, and whose absence does not mean poverty—it is the love of the form, the feature, the voice, the gesture, the person of the man. But *He* is more than a person; He is a character; He is beauty personified; He is love incarnate. Not to love Him is not to love loveliness; not to love Him is to be dead to the very aspiration after goodness; not to love Him is to be blind even to the *beauties* of holiness, to have the light shining in darkness, and the darkness comprehending it not. This was thy depth of ruin, O my soul; this was the far country into which His love followed thee. He came to thee when thou wert yet "in the world"—the world of materialism, the world which cannot receive the Spirit because it knoweth Him not. He came to thee in thy bankruptcy, in thy squalor, in thy desertedness. He came to thee when the lights were low, when the rooms were unfurnished, when the garniture was paltry and mean; and He laid

a coronet at thy feet, and He placed a diadem on thy brow, and He promised thee a mansion of glory, where thou shouldst hunger and thirst no more.

And now perhaps you can understand the majestic sweep of St. John's argument—having loved His own when they were in the world, He loved them unto the end. He means that, having loved them *at the lowest*, no possible circumstance can ever alter that love. He cries in effect with the great Paul: Who can now *separate* us from the love of Christ? Tribulation? Distress? Persecution? Famine? Pestilence? Sword? In all these things we are already conquerors; already has every one of these proved powerless to intercept the torrent of His love. No chasm can ever be so wide as the first chasm, no gulf can ever be so broad as the earliest gulf, no distance can ever be so vast as the expanse of that primitive firmament which divided the waters of my tribulation from the healing waters of eternal life. The love that could say to my chaos, "Let there be light," has proved its power to endure all things.

Strong Son of God, Immortal Love, from the fleeting favours of men, from the perishable partialities of time, I fly to Thee. Rock of Ages, in whose cleft the heart that once repositeth is enclosed for ever, I hide myself in Thee. I hide myself from myself—from the changefulness of my own nature, from the capriciousness of my own fancy, from the fugitiveness of my own feeling. The goodness of my natural love is but as the flower of the field; it blooms in summer, but it withers in the wintry hour. Preserve my flower in winter, Thou Infinite Love. Kindle it with the sunbeam of Thine own immortality. Grant it the power to bloom amid the cold, to blossom in the snow, to yield its fragrance in the unfriendly air. Grant it the strength to live amid the ruins of the garden, to cheer the frost-bound soil, to shed its perfume over leafless boughs. My love has been the rose of Sharon, but it has not yet been the lily of the valley. Reveal its immortality amid the shadows of death. Plant it where the sunbeams come latest, where the fruits lie lowest, where the shades linger longest. Inspire it with Thine own deathlessness, Thine own exhaustlessness, Thine own everlastingness. Thou hast bloomed as an evergreen upon the grave of dead humanity; plant my love side by side with Thine. Thou wilt show me the power of an endless life when my love shall endure all things.



"I'm afraid this matter of my father's will is something of a trouble to you."

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MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.—UNDER THE CLIFF.

COMMANDERS in the navy do not, as a rule, seek for coastguard employment unless they are getting on in life, and have to face the imminence of that dread shelving process whereby the slow flow of promotion is kept moving; but it was owing neither to advanced years nor to fear of being superseded that that smart officer, Captain Mitchell, happened to be where he was in the year of grace with which this history deals. Long before, when he had been a young lieutenant studying gunnery at Portsmouth, and Admiral Greenwood had been upon active service, and Kitty had been still in the schoolroom, he had made up his mind that if ever he could afford to marry, Kitty Greenwood, and no other, should be his wife. It was a bold determination, for his prospects of possessing means sufficient to maintain a family might at that time have been represented by a simple zero, nor could it be said that he received any encouragement from the youthful object of his affections. However, he was very sanguine by nature, and it is true that in those callow days of thoughtless merriment Miss Kitty made a great friend of him, and delighted in his society. She was grateful to him for taking so much notice of her; she admired his physical strength; she participated in his somewhat uproarious notions of fun; and when cruel fate decreed that Admiral Greenwood should retire to a life of dignified leisure, and that Lieutenant Mitchell should proceed to the Persian Gulf for his country's good, she gave him her photograph at parting, and dropped a tear upon it.

Thus it came to pass that for a matter of two years there was a happy man in the Persian Gulf, and very likely he was the only one within that torrid region of whom as much could be said. To be sure, it did not take a great deal to make him happy. He returned to his native shores to find that a benevolent uncle was dead, leaving him a fortune of a few hundreds a year; and when, almost simultaneously with this news, he was given the refusal of an appointment which would involve his residence at Kingscliff, what could he do but jump at the offer and jump for joy, like the simpleton that he was?

His joy was short-lived. Alas! it is not with impunity that a lover can betake himself to the Persian Gulf, nor is there any known means of preventing time from moving on, or schoolgirls from developing into young ladies during his absence. Poor Mitchell found his old playfellow as charming as ever, indeed, and vastly improved in respect of form and feature; but she had quite given up romping; she had adopted serious, though of course highly commendable, ideas about woman's mission, and she showed a very distinct dislike to being reminded of bygone pranks. This was rather disheartening; but what was a thousandfold worse was that, among the many admirers who beset her, there was one for whom she displayed a predilection which was only too unmistakable. From the very first Mitchell perceived that there could be little hope for him so long as Gilbert Segrave remained in the field. Of that popular young man he conceived an opinion so low that he very wisely refrained from giving utterance to it, and only evidenced his dislike and contempt in indirect fashions, which rather amused than annoyed his rival. If he did not propose to Miss Greenwood it was because such a proceeding would have been entirely superfluous. She (and, for that matter, the whole neighbourhood) was perfectly well acquainted with his sentiments, and he judged it better to await events patiently than to court rejection. The principal event which he awaited was nothing less than the disgrace and discomfiture of Gilbert Segrave. Upon grounds which would hardly have borne examination, he had decided that Gilbert was "a bad lot," and with a fine faith in eternal justice, he took it for granted that any one who could be so described must eventually show himself in his true colours, and meet with his deserts.

Meanwhile, he was thankful if he could obtain an occasional half-hour with Kitty when Gilbert was not present, and all the more thankful for such brief intervals of happiness because their occurrence was of the utmost rarity. It was he who, when Miss Greenwood at last consented to fulfil an oft-deferred engagement, and allow him to take her out for a sail in his twenty-ton cutter, the *Zephyr*, had proposed that they should make the bathing-cove at Beckton their goal—a most wily suggestion, since it

not only insured the support of the enemy (without which no suggestion would have had a chance of success), but rendered it almost imperative upon the enemy that he should await the party on shore with luncheon, instead of accompanying them on their short cruise.

Miss Huntley and Miss Joy having consented to take part in the expedition, Admiral and Mrs. Greenwood promptly cried off from it. They said that Miss Joy would be a sufficient chaperon for their daughter, and added, with some plausibility, that it was a great deal too late in the year for old people to eat their meals out of doors, and loiter about in the shade.

However, the day, when it came, proved to be one of those rare and delicious ones on which the inhabitants of Kingscliff were accustomed to wear an air of modest triumph, assuring the credulous stranger that he now knew what their winter climate was like. The wind blew lightly from the north-west, the sun shone down from an unclouded sky, the frost, which a few miles inland had silvered the grass and hardened the surface of the earth, could not penetrate beyond those sheltering heights; and even Miss Joy, who had her own reasons for preferring dry land to salt water, was compelled to admit, as she scrambled on to the deck of the *Zephyr*, that it would be impossible for any one to feel squeamish in such weather.

"Can't you take us for a long sail, Captain Mitchell?" the excellent woman asked. "An opportunity like this may never recur, and it seems hardly worth while to have come on board only to round that point and disembark again. Why, we shall be there in less than a quarter of an hour!"

"Not quite so soon as that," answered Mitchell, who, for his part, would have asked for nothing better than to remain all day at sea, without food or drink. "We shall have to take a good long reach out, and then beat back against the wind. I dare say it will take us the best part of an hour and a half."

Now it certainly need not have taken them anything like so long; and of that Miss Greenwood, who was a sailor's daughter, was perhaps aware; but perhaps also her kindness of heart may have prompted her to keep her suspicions to herself; for women when in love are seldom so selfish as men in a like predicament. Mitchell placed a wicker chair for her close to the tiller, which he held, and so they moved swiftly and smoothly out before the breeze, while Miss Huntley, who

had seated herself a short distance farther forward, leant over the bulwarks and contemplated the sunny expanse of blue water, with her stout companion by her side.

"Beatrice, dear," said the latter, "do you really think that Cannes would be so much better than this?"

"I have not the most distant intention of going to Cannes," was the unexpected reply; "how could you think such a thing of me! Don't you know that we should meet all London there?—possibly even Clementina herself. No, Matilda; in spite of all foreign inducements, I think we will remain where we are, and where nobody that we ever saw or heard of before is the least likely to turn up. Besides, I have always understood that the air of the Riviera is too dry for people who suffer from bronchitis."

Miss Joy gave a little sigh of satisfaction. She was one of those happy and amiable persons who are always satisfied when those about them are so; and this naturally made her the very worst chaperon in the world. She turned her broad back now upon the young lady who had been committed to her charge; and it may be hoped that poor Mitchell spent an hour in which pleasure was a little less neutralised by pain than was usually the case when his Kitty deigned to talk to him. Pleasant or not, it could not be indefinitely prolonged, and he was obliged at length to get about and make for the shore below Beckton, whence Brian and Gilbert had been for some time watching his manœuvres with interest and amusement.

The bathing-cove where Gilbert was waiting to receive his guests was a warm little nook beneath overhanging red cliffs, blocks of which were continually crumbling away and becoming worn in due course by the waves into admirable natural tables. Upon one of these Gilbert had spread his cloth and made ready his feast; and soon after his preparations had been completed his elder brother sauntered down from the house and joined him.

"What on earth are they about!" exclaimed Brian, pointing to the white sail in the offing. "They seem to be going upon the same principle as the governor, who always travels up to town and down again when he wants to get into the next county."

Gilbert laughed. He had no difficulty in guessing what the steersman's reasons were for allowing himself such an exaggerated share of sea-room, and he was philosophical enough to feel quite unconcerned with regard to them.

"Mitchell is taking advantage of a fair wind," said he. "Perhaps he thinks it will chop round and bring him back if he waits long enough. The wind very often does change in these parts, you know. I think it was only yesterday that I was directing your attention to that circumstance."

The speaker's tone was good-humoured, but there was a certain subacid flavour in it which Brian noticed, not without surprise. He had not chanced to be alone with his brother since their drive home together on the previous evening, nor had anything passed between them with reference to their father's sudden recantation. That Gilbert would be in any degree disappointed thereby Brian had not for one moment supposed. Had their cases been reversed, he himself would undoubtedly have rejoiced with all his heart at the thought that he would not now be obliged to profit by an act of injustice; and it may be that he was somewhat unreasonable in expecting a thoroughly prudent and clear-sighted man to feel as he would have done.

"All's well that ends well," he remarked rather doubtfully.

"I didn't know that we had come to the end yet," said Gilbert. "However, I congratulate you, so far. As for myself, I can only regret that, as I said, Miss Huntley is not the woman to espouse the younger son of a country squire. If she were, I should feel it my duty to make myself very agreeable in that quarter."

Brian strolled away without replying. He did not like jokes of that kind. Gilbert was evidently and undisguisedly in love with Kitty Greenwood, and although, to be sure, there was no immediate likelihood of his being in a position to marry her, he ought not to talk as if he could possibly marry any one else. Then, as was only natural, he fell to thinking about Beatrice Huntley and her alleged matrimonial destiny and forgot all about his brother. He was still plunged in meditation when the cutter brought up in the bay, and was only just in time to run down and help the ladies out of the small boat into which they had been transferred.

Miss Huntley's first words were very welcome to him; for he judged by them, and even more by the voice in which they were spoken, that her mood was no longer what it had been the night before.

"What a glorious day! and what a perfect place for a picnic!" she said, as she stepped lightly ashore. "Do you often have days like this in winter?"

"Very seldom," answered the truthful Brian; "still, every now and again they do come when one least expects them. I have known it quite as warm in January and February as it is now."

"You don't say so? Really I am very much tempted to buy a house in Kings-cliff."

"I wish you would!" exclaimed Brian fervently.

"Thanks; but why should you wish me to do a foolish thing? The house would be locked up from year's end to year's end most likely. Just now I feel as if I should very much like to have a little city of refuge which I could make for when the world became oppressive; but in reality it isn't easy to run away, and it is even less easy to run far. Besides, all you people whom I am interested in here are sure to disperse before long, and then I shan't care to come back."

"I, at all events, am a fixture," remarked Brian.

"That would be a powerful attraction, if one could feel as confident of the fact as you do; but I suspect you will find yourself drawn up to London eventually, like everybody else who has talent—or ought I, perhaps, to say genius? To be such a musician as you are, and to be satisfied with sometimes playing the organ on Sundays in a country church, is an altogether impossible state of things. You will have to compose; and you will have to make your compositions known, and so I venture to predict that you will be breathing the air of South Kensington shortly."

"Do you think so?" asked Brian. He had very little—indeed, far too little—ambition; but at that moment an absurd idea came into his head that a famous musician might have claims upon the hand of a lady of fortune to which the mere son of a country gentleman could not pretend.

"Of course I think so," replied Miss Huntley. "It is true, too, which is more to the purpose. What a happy thing it would be for certain other people whom I could name if their future were as clearly marked out for them as yours is!"

They had wandered away a short distance from the others, and Miss Huntley, as she spoke, was gazing pensively at the little group gathered round Gilbert's improvised table.

"I don't mean your brother," she added explanatorily; "I think I could tell his fortune with something like accuracy. But what is to become of that poor, pretty little

girl and that great foolish sailor I haven't an idea. I haven't an idea of what is to become of me either."

"Won't that depend very much upon your-selves?" Brian suggested.

"I don't think so. Do you suppose Captain Mitchell can help being so comically miserable, or that Kitty Greenwood can help being made ridiculously happy by the attentions of a man who, in the nature of things, will end by throwing her over? We won't discuss the future, though. Let us make the most of a smiling present and a luncheon which looks attractive. I am now going to be cheerful and 'scatter mirth around.'"

She was as good as her word. It may be that her high spirits were, as she implied, assumed; but it is much more likely that they were spontaneous, for the perspicuous reader will doubtless have discovered by this time that Miss Huntley had little power of self-control, and seldom cared to exercise the little that she possessed. Be that as it may, her behaviour during the *al fresco* meal was very much like that of a schoolgirl out for a holiday, nor was it long before her neighbours became infected by her humour. She roused the melancholy Mitchell from his gloom, persuaded him to exhibit some of those feats of legerdemain in which, like most naval men, he was a proficient, and finally to oblige the company with a song of an exquisitely comic character. Then, later in the afternoon, when the party had broken up into twos and had separated and met again, nothing would satisfy her but that Miss Joy should dance the sailor's hornpipe.

"You know you can do it, Matilda, you have told me so over and over again, and now is the time to prove that you are no vain boaster."

"Indeed I shall do nothing of the sort!" cried Miss Joy. "A likely story, at my time of life, and with no music either! Not but what the sailor's hornpipe is one of the prettiest dances that ever was invented."

"So it is, Miss Joy," agreed Mitchell heartily; "and I'll dance it with you and whistle you a tune at the same time. Come along!"

Miss Joy declined energetically; but the general chorus of entreaty was too much for her good-nature.

"Very well, then," she said at length, "I'll just show you the step. There is nothing to laugh at. I don't suppose one of you could learn it under a month of hard practice."

So Mitchell led her out to a space of hard sand, and before he had whistled half-a-dozen bars, enthusiasm and professional instinct had swept all self-consciousness out of her; insomuch that if Mr. Buswell had witnessed her performance he would without any doubt have offered her then and there a lucrative engagement at the music-hall which it was his fixed intention to open in the course of the ensuing year.

Mr. Buswell was not so far favoured, but somebody else was, for at this juncture Sir Brian Segrave came slowly down from the heights and stood for a moment, leaning on his stick and surveying the group.

Gilbert, who was the first to catch sight of his father, whisked round on his heels, thrust his hands deep into his pockets and stared out to sea, with his lips pursed up. "Now we shall have a row!" he whispered to Kitty, who was standing beside him. "The chances are that he will order us all off as trespassers."

But the old gentleman was guilty of no such discourtesy. He approached softly and seated himself on a rock beside Miss Huntley, who, for her part, was in no wise disconcerted, but merely held up her hand as a warning to him not to betray his presence. Miss Joy, having her back turned towards the land, went on capering with the utmost agility; but Mitchell, who was facing her, faltered, stopped whistling, and broke into a loud, though somewhat embarrassed laugh. Then poor Miss Joy executed a swift turning movement and her cheeks, which were already flushed with exercise, assumed a rich sunset glow.

"Oh, Sir Brian," she gasped, "what must you think of me!"

"My dear lady," answered Sir Brian, "I think you deserve all the applause we can give you for reminding us of a forgotten art. In my young days dancing was one of the fine arts. I am old enough to remember Taglioni and Fanny Ellsler, and that makes me a great deal too old to join a picnic of young people nowadays, does it not? I was watching the workmen who are making a new path at the top of the cliff, and I thought I would just come down and have a look at you; but I shall take myself off now. I don't want to be a wet blanket."

"He has managed to be a kill-joy, at all events," muttered Gilbert to his neighbour, with a side glance at the unfortunate dancer, who was fanning herself with her pocket-handkerchief, and looking the picture of misery.

The others, however, declared that Sir Brian must not be allowed to go away until the water had been boiled and he had been given a cup of tea, and, after protesting a little for form's sake, he let them over-persuade him. The truth was that the sight of their merriment had made him feel a little lonely, and he was pleased that they should wish to admit him to a share in it.

But, of course, with all the good-will in the world, they could not do that. Age must needs be lonely, and Miss Huntley, for one, became instantly serious after Sir Brian's advent, though she took some pains to be pleasant to him, admiring the stately old pile which towered above them, dark and massive against the evening sky, and leading him on to talk of the improvements that he had effected in the property during his tenure of it. He remained chatting with her until Gilbert and Kitty, who had been lighting a fire in a cleft just under the cliff, called out that the kettle was boiling.

"Do you know that you have chosen rather a dangerous place?" said the old gentleman, as he rose to obey their summons. "The men are working at the new path exactly over our heads and they may send a shower of stones down upon us. Brian, will you, like a good fellow, go up and tell them that they may as well knock off for to-day? The light won't last much longer."

"All right," answered Brian, and ran quickly up the zigzag track which led to the heights above.

When he had nearly reached the top he paused for an instant to take breath and looked down at the little knot of people below him. A thin column of blue smoke rose perpendicularly from the fire, round which they were congregated; they seemed to be very merry together, the sound of their laughter being distinctly audible in that still atmosphere; Sir Brian, bending forward, with his elbows on his knees, was saying something to Miss Huntley, whose clear-cut profile was turned towards him, and Miss Joy was pouring out the tea, Mitchell standing up with the kettle in his hand beside her. The whole scene—the party round the fire, the yellow sand, the red cliffs, the dark blue expanse of water, imprinted itself upon Brian's mind like an instantaneous photograph and will scarcely lose its distinctness while he lives. What struck him at the moment was his father's somewhat unwonted geniality and apparent enjoyment of the conversation of his neighbour. Sir Brian had once spoken in a disparaging tone

of "the contractor's daughter," but that prejudice had evidently been surmounted, and the young man thought that, in view of certain wild and delightful possibilities, it would be well that his father and Miss Huntley should be friends.

Thinking of these things, he turned with a smile to resume the ascent, when suddenly his heart gave a bound, the colour fled from his cheeks, and craning over the edge he raised both hands to his mouth and shouted to those below him, "Run!—run for your lives!"

The warning did not come a second too soon. He saw them start up and disperse, and immediately afterwards the mass of earth and rocks of which he had caught sight in the very instant of its separation from the face of the cliff swept past him, the dust of it filling his eyes, and hurled itself with a roar as of thunder into the narrow cleft beneath. No slip of such magnitude had taken place for years, and, but for the narrowness of the chasm which confined its path, it is hardly possible that a single one of the party whom Brian had been contemplating the minute before could have escaped alive.

He did not wait to see what the effects of the catastrophe were, but rushed at the top of his speed down the path by which he had ascended, and the first person whom he met was Miss Huntley, looking pale and scared, but unhurt.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, no!—no!" she gasped, wringing her hands. "Your father—he could not get up in time, and we all ran away; we did not think of him. Oh, can't anything be done?"

What could be done was done without delay. The labourers, to whose work on the summit of the cliff the landslip may have been in some degree due, hurried down as quickly as they could, and set to work manfully with picks and shovels; Brian, Gilbert, and Mitchell took off their coats and helped them; but though they encouraged one another by saying that men had been dug out of as great a depth as that alive before then, they knew in their hearts that the task was a hopeless one; and indeed it was not until long after nightfall that they came upon what had once been Sir Brian Segrave, lying buried beneath a block of sandstone which must have crushed the life out of him instantaneously.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE READING OF THE WILL.

THAT large and seemingly increasing class of persons who attribute the government of

mundane affairs to certain inexorable laws of unknown origin must sometimes, one would think, find the world a curiously provoking place of abode. To have emancipated one's self from all degrading trammels of faith in the supernatural, possibly even (though this would appear to be more rare) from every lingering taint of superstition, to stand erect in all one's ineffable dignity as a vertebrate biped with reasoning faculties of the grandest order, and after all to be reminded at every turn that one's knowledge of the reign of law avails nothing, and that one's best laid schemes of life, together with one's very life itself, are at the mercy of a mere stupid accident—this, surely, should be enough to make the clear-sighted philosopher grind his teeth in impotent indignation. Is it worth while to have shaken off the bondage of revealed religion only to fall under the dominion of blind chance? And certainly, upon the blind chance theory, few better instances of the absurdity of existence could be adduced than that poor old Sir Brian Segrave's death should have occurred when it did. It is true that some people might see in that catastrophe an argument against the intervention of Providence, and might urge that an event so apparently uncalled-for, so purposeless, and so likely to be productive of evil results, ought not to be attributed to anything but the disintegration of the soil caused by heavy rains and subsequent night-frosts. Everything depends upon the point of view; and as very few theories are susceptible of proof, we shall probably all continue to enjoy the satisfaction of calling our neighbours fools until the end of the chapter.

Brian, happily for himself, indulged in no such speculations and moralisings upon the misfortune which had deprived him of his dear old man; nor, so far as that goes, was he for some time provided with the requisite grounds upon which to base them. All that he realised was that his father was dead, and if he went somewhat beyond the truth in declaring to himself that he had lost his best friend, so much of exaggeration may very well be pardoned to his grief. It is not certain that Sir Brian had been a very good friend to his elder son. He might, if he had taken more trouble to understand the lad, have made him happier, and educated him into a less helpless member of society than he now seemed likely to prove; he might have, and indeed ought to have, trained him either to become a country squire or to become something else; yet he had loved him and had been loved by him; and that, when

all is said and done, may be taken as tolerably exhaustive of the question of friendship.

Brian's sorrow was far more profound than Gilbert's, as was also his loss. The old man had admired Gilbert and been proud of him; but there had never been much sympathy between them; they had never had foolish tiffs, followed by speedy reconciliations, and the removal of the one left little or nothing of a blank in the life of the other. But to Brian it seemed as if, with his father's death, the world had come to an end. He knew now, as he had never known before, for how much that hasty, irascible, warm-hearted old fellow had counted in all his pleasures and pursuits; he had felt for him that tender sort of affection which one man feels for another whom he thoroughly understands, but by whom he is himself imperfectly understood; and although so much had been said of late about his ultimate succession to the property, he had always regarded that as something that might come to pass years hence, not as an imminent contingency. So during those dark days when the blinds at Becton were drawn down and the servants went about on creaking tiptoe, whispering hoarsely to one another after the manner of their kind, he shut himself up and would not see anybody—not even Monckton, who called and was received by Gilbert.

Gilbert it was who, having his wits about him, undertook the painful duties which ought to have been discharged by his elder brother. It was necessary that an inquest should be held and that Brian should give evidence at it; it was necessary, too, that preparations should be made for a funeral of old-fashioned pomp and ghastliness, and that letters should be written to relatives and friends inviting them to attend the ceremony. All these things Gilbert saw to, and some people thought it odd that he should take so much upon him.

Brian, if he could have had his way, would have dispensed with all the dismal panoply of mutes and plumes, and would have asked only a few intimate friends to follow his father's body to the grave; but Gilbert, when this was suggested to him, shook his head and said he was afraid it wouldn't do. One must conform to prescribed customs, whatever one's private opinion might be as to their desirability, and although it was true that his brother and he had now no near relations left, they had a certain number of cousins in different parts of England to whom some intimation of their kinsman's demise ought to be conveyed, and who very

likely would not feel bound to come to Beckton on this melancholy occasion.

However, a good many of them did come. They arrived the day before that fixed for the funeral, wearing an air of conventional concern which some of them had obvious difficulty in maintaining after dinner, and with them came sundry of Sir Brian's old cronies and comrades in arms, Sir Hector Buckle among the rest. Brian took rather a fancy to Sir Hector, whose regret he perceived to be genuine, and who said some laudatory things of his deceased friend in a curiously apologetic tone.

"A smart officer in his day, and as upright and good-hearted a fellow as I've ever known—I don't care who asserts anything else. We all have our faults, and he had his; but I'll answer for it that he always meant to do the straight thing and the right thing. Confound it all!"

Brian did not see the relevance of the last ejaculation, nor could he understand why Sir Hector showed so much kindness and commiseration to him, and was so abrupt, not to say rude, in his manner towards Gilbert; but he supposed that this might be partly accounted for by a candid observation which fell from that veteran in the course of the evening, and which made him smile for the first time since his loss.

"That brother of yours," Sir Hector said, "hasn't much of the Segrave about him. You Segraves are mostly fools and mostly men whom one would die for at a pinch. Your poor dear father was both, as I've told him often enough, and so, I should think, are you, by the look of you. Now your brother, I take it, is no fool, and I'm blessed if I can imagine anybody wanting to die for him!"

On the following day, which was wild, grey, and gloomy, with occasional splashes of rain, the funeral procession took its slow way to the little church beneath which so many generations of Brians and Gilberts lie buried, and was really imposing after a fashion, despite all the undertaker's desperate efforts to render it ridiculous. The tenantry preceded the hearse; behind it walked the two brothers, side by side and bareheaded; a large gathering of their relatives, friends, and acquaintances followed them on foot; then came six empty mourning coaches and then a line of carriages, representing every magnate and semi-magnate in the county. In Kingscliff flags were flying at half-mast, and most of the shops were closed. Their owners lined the roadside from the mansion to the

churchyard, and not a few of them seemed to be unaffectedly distressed. In these days a man can hardly hope to be popular unless he spends money freely, and Sir Brian had never had much money to spend; but Kingscliff, notwithstanding Buswellian influences and innovations, still maintained something of an old-world character, and mourned its autocratic, obstinate, but not ungenerous lord of the manor, without perhaps very well knowing why. Monckton, a shrewd observer, attributes this phenomenon (which is not likely to recur) to the fact that Sir Brian Segrave was a gentleman, but declines to explain his meaning more fully on being pressed.

When all was over, when the neighbours, high and low, had dispersed, and the blinds at Beckton had once more been drawn up, those who had spent the previous night there assembled in the library to hear the will of the late owner read by Mr. Potter. As they knew that none of their names would be mentioned in it, they took but a languid interest in the proceedings, only three of the persons present—Gilbert Segrave, Sir Hector Buckle, and Mr. Potter himself—betraying a certain amount of uneasiness. As for Brian, it will perhaps hardly be believed, but it is nevertheless the case, that he regarded this formality as simply tedious and unnecessary.

The lawyer began to say that it was not for him to offer any remarks upon the disposition which his late client had thought fit to make of his property. His duty was merely to make known the provisions of the will, which were few in number and of very recent date. He then read out a list of legacies to various servants, and concluded with, "And the residue of my estate both real and personal (here followed a dense cloud of legal phraseology) I give and bequeath to my son Gilbert for his sole use and behoof." And then came further high-sounding words, designed to avert any misconception of the above plain declaration.

A subdued, inarticulate murmur arose from the audience, succeeded by a hush. Then one old gentleman raised his hand to his ear and asked, very slowly and distinctly, "Do I understand that my late kinsman has constituted his second son sole heir to his property, and that the name of the elder son does not even appear in the will to which we have been listening?"

Mr. Potter replied that that was so.

"Oh, indeed!" said the old gentleman. "Oh, indeed!"

Sir Hector Buckle rose hastily, crossed the room, and sat down beside Brian, whom he patted on the shoulder. He was going to say "Never mind;" but reflected upon the utter imbecility of such an exhortation, and so held his tongue.

Brian, after glancing at Gilbert, who stared straight before him, with no expression whatever upon his face, jumped up. "I think," said he, "I ought to tell you that this will doesn't really mean anything. My dear father made it hastily in consequence of a— a difference between us, for which I was entirely to blame. He thought better of it immediately afterwards, and was upon the point of going up to London to revoke it when—when our misfortune happened."

To this no one made any rejoinder, and Brian was a little chilled by the general silence. "I don't know," he went on presently, "how far strangers may be disposed to accept my word for the fact; but those who know me are not very likely to disbelieve me."

"My dear fellow, nobody disbelieves you," Sir Hector Buckle said in his ear, "and I'm very glad to hear that my poor old friend altered his mind at the last. But unhappy he couldn't alter his will, you see."

"It is the same thing," Brian answered, with a slightly troubled look. "Gilbert knows what his intentions were; he told us both."

These words, although uttered in a low voice, were audible all over the room; yet they elicited no response. Gilbert continued to stare impassively at nothing; and by-and-by the old gentleman who had refused to believe his ears in the first instance remarked solemnly, "A will is a will."

There was no gainsaying that statement: the voice of the law, speaking through Mr. Potter, confirmed it by a murmur of "Just so—just so;" and then there was a general pushing back of chairs and consultation of watches. The persons assembled were anxious to get back to London by the afternoon express, and it was high time for them to start. They took leave of the brothers with countenances expressive of benevolent concern, and a strong desire to be off before any unseemly wrangle should occur. They were sorry for Brian, but their not unnatural impression was that he must have done something very queer to be so treated; they were scarcely convinced that Sir Brian had only been prevented by death from undoing what he had apparently been determined to do ten days back; and upon the whole they were

inclined to echo the opinion of their self-constituted spokesman that a will is a will.

Brian mechanically shook hands with each of them in turn, as they filed past him towards the door and made their escape. Sir Hector Buckle retained his hand in a firm grasp for a moment, saying, "Keep a good heart, my lad, and drop me a line to the Senior when you begin to see your way a little. If I can do anything to serve your father's son, it will be done with real good will; you may be sure of that."

"Thank you, Sir Hector," Brian answered a little wonderingly, for the situation was by no means clear to him as yet.

When only Gilbert and Mr. Potter were left, he turned towards them and opened his lips, as if to speak; but, changing his mind, hastily left the room and the house. Outside it was damp and murky, with low mists stealing over the hill-tops and darkness coming on fast; but there was a moist freshness in the air which was at least better than the choking atmosphere of the closed library. Brian filled his lungs with it and strode on across the park until he reached a point whence he could distinguish Kingscliff and the calm bay, with the Manor House in the foreground, looming large through the haze. The Manor House, as he realised all at once, was his property now; strictly speaking, it was the only property that he possessed. He stood still and pushed his hat back from his forehead, trying to think. That his father had intended him to be the heir was absolutely certain; could it be, then, that his brother intended to take advantage of the suddenness of their common loss to juggle him out of what was morally his right? He reddened with shame at himself for admitting such thoughts into his mind; yet what interpretation was he to put upon Gilbert's strange and ominous silence? Men of Brian's age and character have immense difficulty in understanding the baser side of human nature, and in making excuses for its various manifestations. They see the path of honour with young, unclouded eyes; they are aware that knaves exist who stray from it; but they have not perhaps met a great many of them, and it is not without serious danger that they can be brought to the conviction that those whom they love may be guilty of dishonourable conduct. If that be so, they are apt to conclude in their haste, this world is but little better than hell, and the only true wisdom is to believe in nobody. In later life one's point of view changes. One grows accustomed to little acts of meanness

which men and women of average probity are continually committing; one discovers that the vast majority of mankind are for ever deceiving themselves and others, some wilfully, some almost blamelessly; one's own conscience, it may be, is not quite clear, and so toleration—or, as most of us prefer to call it, charity—becomes possible.

Now, as Brian stood there with his hands in his pockets, gazing out at the blurred prospect of cliff and sea, the devil was not far from his elbow; and perhaps some very witty persons might say that, under the circumstances, the arrival of an attorney upon the scene was in strict accordance with the fitness of things. But the witty persons would be wrong, for Mr. Potter was as honest a little lawyer as ever pocketed an easily-earned thirteen and fourpence, and he had walked out now, at the risk of getting his feet wet and catching cold, with intentions which were not evil, but entirely good.

He began in that half-soothing, half-chiding tone which he so often found it necessary to employ in addressing his clients. "Now, my dear sir, what is the good of brooding? I grant you that you have had a stroke of bad luck, shocking bad luck; but it must be faced—it must be faced. Things might be worse. There is this Manor House property, for instance. I really think—and you know that I am not given to offering hasty opinions about such matters—I really do think that, by exercising proper care and selling at the right moment, you might make it realise a sum which would at least render you independent. Now that is something, isn't it?"

Brian turned to his comforter with a rather bitter smile. "You don't lose time, Mr. Potter," said he. "My father has hardly been dead a week and already you suggest that I should do the thing which of all others would have grieved him most."

"That is all very fine," returned Mr. Potter; "but what do you propose to live upon, my young friend? Upon your brother's charity?"

The question stung Brian, as it was perhaps intended to do. "Most certainly not," he answered almost fiercely. Then, after a short pause: "Mr. Potter, you heard what I said to them all just now. It was the simple truth. My father meant to cancel the will that you read; he told me so, and he told Gilbert so. Yet every one of you behaved as though that were to count for nothing. I don't understand it, and I don't believe that Gilbert would condescend to rob me. Tell me frankly: do you think that any

honest man could do what you seem to assume that he will do?"

"When you put that question, do you address me in my capacity as a lawyer or as a private individual?" inquired Mr. Potter.

"Really," answered Brian impatiently, "I don't see what the law has to say to the matter. The law doesn't make a man honest or dishonest, I suppose."

"Oh, pardon me; that is just what it does. As a private individual, I may fix my own standard of honesty; the law, on the other hand, establishes a standard for me. Supposing, for example, that you were foolish enough to bring an action against your brother for the recovery of the property which he now holds. You wouldn't have the shadow of a case; you couldn't even bring evidence in support of your allegation; and the law would tell your brother that he left the court without a stain upon his character. I assure you that there are two kinds of honest men, if not more."

"That means that if Gilbert retained possession of the property, he wouldn't be an honest man in the ordinary acceptance of the term."

"I did not say that. I don't know that he intends to retain possession of the property. Should he decide to do so, I must respectfully decline to be his judge. What I can tell you is that he has a clear legal title to it, that you have none, and in short, that it could only pass into your hands by means of a deed of gift."

"Mr. Potter," said Brian, "does he or does he not mean to take advantage of his legal title?"

"I tell you I don't know. All he said to me was that he must take time to consider his position, which, in my opinion, was a very sensible speech to make. Come, come, my dear boy; your brother is not a Don Quixote; but he is a very decent sort of person, so far as I know—about as decent as they make them. Were I in your place, I should expect little and say less. If he makes up his mind to keep what he has got, he will be able to give you excellent reasons for his decision, you may be sure. They generally can."

Brian took the old lawyer's arm and broke into a laugh. "You are trying to be cynical and to prepare me for the worst," said he; "but do you know, I think you are rather overdoing your part. I know very well that you think just as I do. I don't really distrust Gilbert, and I'm sorry that I spoke as if I did. The truth is that he is a cautious fellow, and it wouldn't be a bit like him to

settle everything upon the spur of the moment, as I should. Come back into the house, and let us leave the subject alone until he introduces it."

"We can't do better," agreed Mr. Potter; but he thought to himself, "I hope to heaven the subject won't be introduced before I leave to-morrow morning! This is a nice young man; but he hasn't a scintilla of common sense, and when he finds out, as he most assuredly will, that his brother is not going to make room for him, there will be a scene at which I should prefer not to be present."

CHAP. XIV. GILBERT CONSIDERS HIS POSITION.

WHEN a man has to decide upon an abstract question of right or wrong, justice or injustice, he is doubtless wise to claim a little time for consideration, and the outcome thereof is, upon the whole, rather more likely than not to be favourable to the interests of right and justice; but where self-interest has any share in the issue a decision can hardly be pronounced too soon. In such a case argument is dangerous, *advocatus diaboli* takes up strong ground, and if the debate results in a victory for justice at the expense of self, it may be safely concluded that the debater is no very ordinary mortal. Of this Mr. Potter, a man of wide experience, was well aware; and although he had been pleased to applaud Gilbert's cautious words, he was fully persuaded, the moment that he heard them, that the question was already as good as settled.

Such, however, was by no means Gilbert's own belief. He did not at the outset feel at all certain that he could keep both Beckton and his self-respect, and he was exceedingly unwilling to part with either. Therefore, when he retired for the night and seated himself before the fire which he had ordered to be lighted in his bedroom, he set to work to see whether a calm survey of all the circumstances might not justify him in doing as he wished. It was honest of him to admit to himself what his wishes were; but unfortunately his honesty did not get much beyond that initial stage. First he took the chapter of general desirability, and had very little hesitation about scoring one for himself there. No impartial person, acquainted with himself and with his brother, could doubt which of them would make the better squire. Of his brother's business capacities he had the lowest possible opinion. That Brian, if put in possession of Beckton, would be involved in a maze of difficulties before two years were out was next door to a certainty;

whereas he himself had ideas with regard to the estate which, to be sure, were not those of his father, but which were none the worse for that, and which, should they ever be carried into execution, would prove of unquestionable benefit to quite a large number of deserving persons. Next he asked himself, candidly and disinterestedly, whether it would indeed be for Brian's own good that he should be placed in a position for which he was manifestly unfit? Now, how can it be for any man's good that he should be placed in a position for which he is unfit? The question will hardly bear discussion. No; for a man of Brian's dreamy, indolent nature and desultory musical tastes it was surely better far that he should be relieved from the worries and responsibilities of everyday life, placed upon an allowance—a handsome allowance—by a kindly younger-elder brother, and made welcome either to go on living in his old home, or, should he prefer it, to settle down in the Manor House, which was now his own. However, in view of certain contingencies, it would perhaps be a wiser plan that he should sell the Manor House; and Gilbert resolved that he would pay him a good price for it.

It will be perceived that the mind of this dispassionate reasoner was pretty well made up when he got as far as that; but he did not think so. On the contrary, he unflinchingly faced a third question, that, namely, of the true wishes of the testator, whose will had been made known some hours before; and really this was rather a hard nut to crack. Nevertheless, he managed to crack it without quite breaking his teeth. He persuaded himself that it was open to very serious doubt whether, if his father had lived, that will would ever have been revoked at all. A man who turns his back upon himself twice in a week may very well do so three times in a fortnight, and if poor Sir Brian's reasons for disinheriting his elder son in the first instance had seemed a trifle inadequate, his reasons for reinstating him had undoubtedly been even more so. It was hardly too much to assume that a little further thought, a little more consideration of future probabilities, would have led to the maintenance of the *status quo*.

This closed Gilbert's soliloquy, which in truth had lasted somewhat too long for enjoyment. He meant to keep Beckton; he told himself also that he would be able to keep his self-respect. But, fortunately or unfortunately, it is not by means of casuistry that that intangible possession is to be

grasped, and for all his dialectic skill, the new owner of Beckton and its appurtenances went down to breakfast the next morning looking and feeling very much like a dog with his tail between his legs.

He disposed of that meal with such appetite as he could command, which was not much, and, Brian having retired, requested Mr. Potter, who was to leave for London presently, to give him a few minutes in the library. He fancied that he saw the ghost of a demure, satirical smile upon the lips of the lawyer as he complied, and this made him inwardly determine that he would tolerate no liberties from Mr. Potter. Taking up his stand upon the hearthrug, he proceeded straight to the point.

"I wish you to know," said he, "that, after giving the matter careful thought, I have concluded that I ought not to set aside my father's will in deference to any supposed change of intention on his part."

"I was sure you would arrive at that conclusion," remarked Mr. Potter blandly.

Gilbert frowned. "I hardly see," returned he, with some sharpness of intonation, "how you can have been sure of what was so full of doubt to me; but probably you have very great prescience. I have decided in the sense that I have named for reasons which seem to me sufficient, but which it is perhaps hardly necessary that I should enumerate."

"Quite unnecessary," agreed Mr. Potter, more blandly than ever. "You have, as you say, decided, and that is all that your lawyer—if I am to have the privilege of so calling myself—requires to be told. There are a few matters of business connected with the estate which you may like to go into with me before I leave."

"Presently, Mr. Potter, I shall be glad to do so, but first I should like to ask your opinion, as a friend, about Brian, and what is to become of him. I am most anxious——"

"Pardon me, Mr. Segrave," interrupted Mr. Potter. "Business is business, and it will give me much satisfaction to continue to act as your family lawyer, and to serve you to the best of my humble ability, but as for my private friendship, that is what I have never been accustomed to bestow in a hurry, and I trust that so reasonable a man as you are will not be offended with me for saying that you don't possess it as yet."

Gilbert started and reddened. "I accept the rebuke," said he. "I gather—and I am sorry for it—that you disapprove of my action with regard to my brother. I suppose I must be prepared for some disapproval,

and I shall certainly make no attempt to lessen it. I was about to mention that I propose to provide for Brian as liberally as my means will allow me."

"As your lawyer," replied Mr. Potter, "I shall be very happy to tell you, if you do not know, exactly what your means are."

"If you please," said Gilbert, raging inwardly, but preserving a calm exterior.

The conversation which followed was exceedingly unpleasant to him—unpleasant not so much because he found that the Beckton rent-roll was a good deal less than he had always imagined it to be, as because Mr. Potter, while answering questions and giving information quite politely and even deferentially, continued to make it as clear as could be that his client did not stand high in his esteem.

"I see," said Gilbert at the close of the interview, "that I shall have to live carefully, and I am afraid it will hardly be in my power to make Brian as large an allowance as I should wish."

"Possibly," remarked the lawyer, "you may not have to make him an allowance at all. Possibly he will decline to accept any from you."

"As he possesses absolutely nothing in the world except an empty house, a grand piano, and his clothes, I take it that he will be compelled to do so," returned Gilbert, with a little display of temper.

To this Mr. Potter made no rejoinder, and shortly afterwards took his leave, begging Gilbert to say good-bye to Brian for him. His host was unfeignedly glad to get rid of him, and he was not less glad to get away.

To most people the ordeal which Gilbert had now to face would have seemed infinitely more formidable than that through which he had just passed; but it did not so present itself to his mind. He had a good-humoured, affectionate contempt for his brother; he knew that Brian's way was to accept accomplished facts, and he by no means despaired of convincing him that things were best as they were, though, of course, there might be an awkward moment at the outset. So he repaired to the sanctum before alluded to, and there found the object of his search, seated at the piano, pipe in mouth, and trying over sundry variations of a composition of his own.

Brian looked up and said, "One ought to be taught counterpoint as a boy. The nuisance of technicalities is that unless they have become a second nature by the time one reaches man's estate one gets impatient

and forgetful of them. I shall have to tear up this score."

"I don't know what counterpoint is; but I'm glad to see you at the piano again," answered Gilbert. "Depend upon it, there is nothing like having regular occupations to fall back upon when one is in trouble."

Brian rose, sighed, and walked slowly towards the fireplace. "Yes," said he, "that's the stock consolation, isn't it? All consolation amounts to advice to forget your trouble as soon as you can."

"Well, there might be worse advice," Gilbert observed. He was silent for a moment, then laying his hand on his brother's shoulder, "I'm afraid this matter of my father's will is something of a trouble to you too, old man," said he.

"How do you mean?" asked Brian quickly.

"I mean that every one—even you, who are about as indifferent to this world's goods as anybody I ever met—must rather dislike the sensation of being passed over in favour of his junior. However, in the present instance there are compensations, and——"

"Gilbert," exclaimed Brian, "you can't be going to play this dirty trick! I won't believe it of you!"

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders and spread out his hands with the air of a patient man, prepared to bear with human unreasonableness.

"My dear fellow," said he, "will you for one moment try to place yourself in my position? Do you suppose by any chance that this inheritance will bring me wealth or ease, or any other particularly pleasant thing? Don't you see that it condemns me to obscurity, and deprives me of a career in which I might fairly have hoped to gain money and distinction? And can't you understand that I should scarcely have accepted it from anything except a sense of—of duty?"

It was a pity that the last word should have stuck in his throat; but that he could not help. By-and-by, as Brian only looked wonderingly at him, without saying a word, he resumed:

"I have thought it all out, and I am persuaded that I ought not to make any change in the present state of affairs. What our father's real wishes were we can never know——"

"But we do know!" interrupted Brian. "You know them as well as I do."

"Exactly so, my dear fellow; just about as well. The fact of the matter is that he

himself did not know them. One day he wished one thing, the next something else. It seems to me that he was less under the influence of impulse and excitement when he made that will than he was afterwards; and I fancy that if he had lived he would have maintained it. Naturally he did not like to disinherit you, and naturally you do not like to be disinherited; but in his calmer moments he saw that you were not fitted to manage a property which requires constant and careful looking after, and really, my dear Brian, I don't think it is any disparagement of you to say that he was right."

Brian took two steps forward and stood looking straight into his brother's eyes, who, to his chagrin, found himself unable to return that steady gaze.

"Gilbert," said he, "do you know you make me feel sick. You can't really suppose that you deceive me by talking like that. I would a great deal rather have heard you say that you wanted the place, and that, as the law had given it to you, you meant to hold on to it."

"I will not quarrel with you, Brian. Out of respect for our father's memory," began Gilbert.

"For Heaven's sake," interrupted his brother, "let our father's memory alone! I never knew you take up this canting tone before, and I hope you'll never do it with me again. I wish you would go away! I don't want to say anything more to you at present."

"A good deal more will have to be said, however," returned Gilbert, flushing slightly; "but of course there is no hurry. Perhaps when we next meet you may be in a rather less unfair and unjust temper, and perhaps you will then condescend to listen to the plans which I have been thinking of for your own future. You will most likely find that you will have more ready money to spend than I shall; for I need hardly say that I recognise your claim to be provided for."

Thereupon he retired, taking with him a most uncomfortable sensation of having been kicked out of the room.

CHAPTER XV.—BRIAN REFUSES TO BE COMFORTED.

THE fishermen who dwell on the east side of Kingscliff formed a little race apart. They were looked down upon and ostracised by their brethren of the west, as if Kingscliff had been London, and its inhabitants subject to divisions of the same topographical and social kind. That the Kings-

cliff east-enders were fine seamen was admitted; but this was held to exhaust the list of their virtues. They had always been a drunken, brawling, thriftless lot, to whom the wise and good allowed a wide berth at sea and on land (for they were both muscular and pugnacious); nor were they suffered to haul up their boats on any part of the long, curved shore, save that which adjoined their own quarter. However, for the reason parenthetically mentioned, this prohibition was probably not capable of enforcement, and if the east-end men kept strictly to the strip of beach assigned to them, it was no doubt owing to the fact that that strip enjoyed the shelter of a small natural breakwater, and was a safer place in a spring-tide than could be found elsewhere in the bay. It has already been said that John Monckton had managed to effect a great change for the better in the habits of these disreputable mariners. Many of them had forsworn strong drink; a still larger number had taken to attending church regularly; they had even, for the most part, given up beating their wives—a concession made to the parson's prejudices rather than an acknowledgment of any moral obligation; for they could not but think that a little cuffing every now and then was needful and salutary, and they were sure that the women really liked it. Yet they were willing to yield the point, because Monckton's influence over them was practically unbounded.

Indeed, a large proportion of his rough converts were amenable to his persuasions and to nobody else's. There was old Daniel Puttick, for example, who would not so much as answer when the curates spoke to him, and out of whose way Miss Kitty Greenwood was in the habit of skipping with terrified agility if she encountered him on her rounds. Daniel Puttick was what his friends called a "cur'ous-tempered man," by which they meant that he was subject to fits of capricious fury, during which his hand did not fail to fall heavily upon any member of his family who was unlucky enough to cross his path. So when Mrs. Puttick came to the Vicarage one morning, with her apron up to her eyes, to say that Dan had been "at it agin," that he had flung two plates at her head "and shevered 'm both to hatoms, sir," after which he had "locked up the gal and took the key with him, so she can't get down for to do her work at Mrs. Beer's—and this a washin' day too—and I'm afraid she'll lose the place you got her, sir—and, oh dear, oh dear! whatever shall we do!"—

when the above incoherent tale of woe was poured into his ears, it was clearly incumbent upon Monckton to set off and bring the offender to a better state of mind as soon as might be.

The Vicar undertook the task without any misgivings as to results, and, having sent the sorrowing wife home, betook himself to the beach, where Mr. Puttick was discovered hammering viciously at an overturned boat. He touched his hat and grunted on recognising his spiritual adviser, while Monckton seated himself upon the bottom of the boat, drew his knees up to his chin and, resting his elbows upon them, began to talk unconcernedly about herring-driving, whence he gradually led up to the peculiarities of coast navigation and of the currents of Kingscliff Bay, upon which Puttick was an acknowledged authority.

After a time, the old man, who at first had been silent and sullen, fell into the trap. He dropped his hammer, leant back against the boat, folded his arms, and embarked upon a leisurely yarn which was far from being new to his hearer. This related to the famous victory achieved by the schooner-yacht *Bucentaur* over her rival the *Fredegonde* at Kingscliff regatta some years before, a victory due wholly and solely to the exceeding acuteness of Daniel Puttick. Monckton was told how Mr. Puttick had gone out in his own boat to see the race, and how the two yachts had sailed slowly past him, "beatin' up for the mark-boat, as it might be a mile and a 'arf from 'ome, agin' a very light easterly breeze, and the *Freddygone* she had all the best of it. But Lor' bless you, sir, I knowed that breeze wouldn't 'old, and I seed what was comin' too, and there was his lordship on deck, and thinks I to myself, 'I could win this race for you, my lord, if I chose to it, but I ain't agoin' to.' For why? 'Cause he had a Plymouth pilot aboard, sir. What do them Plymouth pilots want in our bay, I should like to know! But the *Blue-centre* she had a mate o' mine—Willyam Lee his name was—drownded about a twelvemonth ago, as you remember, sir. Well, I just 'olds up my 'and to Willyam and I whistles very soft, and he seed in a moment what I meant. So he slacks out his main-sheet, and d'rectly arter there comes a puff from the west'ard, and away goes the *Blue-centre*, and the *Freddygone* she never caught her agin'. 'Ah,' says I, 'that's what you gets by havin' of a Plymouth pilot, my lord.' Now I could tell you another thing about one o' them Plymouth pilots, sir, as 'd

make you laugh, if it wasn't for keepin' of you."

"Go on, Mr. Puttick," said Monckton, "I'm in no hurry. Let's have the story."

All this time poor Miss Puttick was languishing under lock and key, but Monckton knew his man and was aware that nothing would be gained by precipitating matters. However, as it chanced, that capital story about the Plymouth pilot was never told, for hardly had the prefatory matter been entered upon when Monckton felt a touch on his shoulder and, turning round, saw Brian Segrave standing behind him.

"I want to speak to you, Monckton," Brian said; "they told me I should find you here."

A glance at his face showed the other that something was seriously amiss. "One moment," he answered, and springing to his feet, he joined Mr. Puttick, who had sheered off a little out of respect to the young squire's recent affliction.

"She's a sarcy young hussy, that's what she is, sir," Brian heard the old man say presently, "and she hadn't no call for to interfere with me when I was chas-tisin' of her mother. You didn't ought to take her part, sir—no, that you didn't."

But apparently Monckton's representations ended by prevailing; for, after some further exchange of words, Mr. Puttick was seen to take his way slowly up the beach in a homeward direction, grumbling as he went.

"Well, Brian," said Monckton, as he returned. Except for a moment at the funeral, the two men had not met since Sir Brian's death, and it seemed natural to expect that the younger would make some allusion to his loss. However, he did not do so.

"I know that man Puttick," he remarked meditatively. "It was he who first taught me to swim, ages ago; but I was forbidden to have any more to do with him, because he was said to be such a blackguard. Certainly he used to be pretty constantly drunk, and his language was worse than anything that I have ever heard since. How do you manage to tame these people, Monckton?"

"I'm afraid I haven't tamed Mr. Puttick," answered Monckton. "He is a difficult subject, not altogether a blackguard, though. As for bad language, of course he has been accustomed to hear it and use it all his life long, and he means no more harm by it than you do when you say 'God bless my soul!' or 'Confound the thing!' It isn't among sailors and fishermen that one finds genuine blackguardism. They have their code, such

as it is, and upon the whole, I think they act up to it better than we act up to ours. Some of them are rascals; but then so are some of us."

"Most of us, I expect," said Brian morosely; "it seems to me only a question of inducement. Monckton, I don't feel as if I could ever believe in anybody again—except you."

Monckton stared for a moment; then suddenly it flashed across his mind that Sir Brian had had no time to alter his will. He had not remembered that before.

"My dear boy," he exclaimed, "I hope you are not thinking of your father!"

"Of my father? Hardly! I am thinking of my brother, though, which is nearly as bad, perhaps. Is it, I wonder? Can one help thinking one's brother a rascal, if he is one? I wouldn't call him so to anybody but you; but that is just what I do think him."

Monckton took the young fellow by the arm, made him sit down on the overturned boat, and seated himself close beside him.

"Now go on and explain yourself," said he; "you wouldn't speak like that without good cause, I know."

So Brian explained himself; and when he had told his tale Monckton found that he was in the awkward position of being quite unable to say that he did not think Gilbert a rascal. Understanding perfectly well that nothing short of that assurance would give Brian much comfort, he did what he conceived to be the next best thing by abstaining from comment of any kind.

"What do you intend to do with regard to the future?" he asked.

"I haven't an idea," answered Brian. "Or rather, I have an idea, only it's a vague one. Of course I'm an absolute pauper. The Manor House is mine; but it is worth nothing to me as it stands, and, as you know, I can't sell the place. Nor could I let it without putting it into repair, which would cost a lot of money. In short, it comes to this, that I must set about making my living immediately."

"Your brother would make some provision for you, no doubt."

Brian laughed.

"He was good enough to hint at that; but I would rather sweep a crossing than take his money."

"So I suppose. How will you earn your bread, then?"

"There is really only one way in which I can. Organists at London churches are pretty well paid, aren't they?"

Monckton shook his head.

"Some of them are ; but they are more or less of celebrities and, at any rate, have had great experience in managing choirs. I am afraid you would have to consider yourself lucky with a hundred a year."

"But then I could give private lessons."

"Yes ; you might do that. But even if you were quite fortunate and successful, you would be poor—very poor ; and you are not accustomed to poverty, Brian."

"I shall have to become accustomed to it. After all, I don't know that I care very much, except for—for one or two reasons ; and I'm glad you haven't drowned my scheme in a shower of cold water. I was half afraid you would say that it isn't an occupation for a gentleman."

"No ; I shouldn't say that, because I don't think it ; but very likely others will think so and say so."

There was a short pause, after which Monckton resumed :

"It makes me very sorry to think that I am the cause of your being left destitute. It was I who dissuaded your father from tearing up his will at once. He came to consult me in an impulsive way, and I distrust impulse ; so I advised him to wait for a day or two."

"My dear fellow, don't trouble your head about that," answered Brian. "I suppose it was fated that things should fall out like this."

"Well, it was the will of God. I don't know whether you believe that ; but if you do, you will find it easier to forgive your brother."

"Because he couldn't help himself, do you mean ?"

"No ; of course he could help himself, and we mustn't be scared by the old paradox. What I mean is that, this having happened to you independently of your will and, so far as one can see, without any fault of your own, you can accept your destiny cheerfully, which is more than he will be able to do. Does that strike you as very cold comfort ?"

"To tell you the truth, it is no comfort at all," answered Brian candidly. "I know I am a gentleman ; I knew that beforehand. What exasperates me is to think that he is not. In plain words, I don't forgive him and can't forgive him."

"Very well," said Monckton ; "I won't press the point. You will forgive your brother in the long run just because you are a gentleman. Meanwhile, I haven't a word to say on his behalf, though I know a case

might be made out for him. Don't quarrel with him ; that's all."

"No," Brian answered slowly, "I shall not quarrel with him ; only the sooner I get away from Beckton the better."

"Well, yes ; you can't stay on there, and I don't see any other chance of employment for you at present than the one you have chosen. Come and see me again before you go. I know a lot of London parsons, and I can at least put you in the way of hearing of vacancies, if I can't do anything else."

The conversation did not last much longer. Monckton, as usual, had work to do and appointments to keep ; and Brian, after taking leave of him, wandered in a somewhat irresolute fashion back towards home. He had made up his mind to depart from Kingscliff with as little delay as might be, and the question which was now agitating him was whether he should try to see Beatrice Huntley and say good-bye to her or not. Every sympathetic soul who has ever been in love will understand his quandary. His hopes were shattered utterly and finally. If, as Gilbert had warned him, Miss Huntley had been out of his reach when he had had the prospect of a fairly good position to offer her (for, when all was said, the Segraves were a fine old family and Beckton was a fine old place), it was evident that she must be doubly so now, and he shrank from the ordeal of explaining his circumstances to her. In fact, he could not explain them without making it appear as if either his father or his brother had treated him with cruel harshness. Would it not, therefore, be better alike for his peace and for his dignity that he should pass quietly out of her life and her memory, making no sign ? But then, again, he longed with an intense longing to see her face just once more, and surely he was entitled to that melancholy indulgence ! It was not a very great privilege to claim.

So, being for the moment possessed of that inestimable treasure, an evenly balanced mind, he wavered to and fro, like a Liberal-Conservative or a Conservative-Liberal, now walking some yards in the direction of Miss Huntley's villa, now hurriedly retracing his steps ; and what would have eventually become of him it is impossible to say, had not the knot of his difficulty been suddenly cut by the appearance of Miss Huntley herself.

It was just outside the town that they met, near those fields which had so often excited Mr. Buswell's cupidity ; and after

they had shaken hands, Miss Huntley leant back against the posts and rails that bordered the road, in an attitude which suggested that she looked forward to a prolonged interview. This movement on her part did not escape Brian's notice nor fail to rejoice his heart, notwithstanding an embarrassment which she appeared to share in some degree. He wished she would say something; but she did not, and it was he who at length broke the silence by thanking her for a beautiful wreath which she had sent to be laid upon his father's coffin. Perhaps that was as good a way of opening the conversation as any that he could have adopted, since it relieved her of the awkwardness which most people unfortunately feel in mentioning the dead, and enabled her to speak simply and kindly of the old man whose last words had been addressed to her.

"I have thought so often since that, if we had not lost our presence of mind, we might have saved him," she said, "and I have wondered whether you thought so too. I remember nothing except running away and hearing the crash; but one can see now how it must have happened. Of course he could not get up as quickly as we did, and if I had only thought of that, instead of flying like a coward——"

"I am sure you could not have saved him; you would only have been killed too," interrupted Brian; "there wasn't a second to spare. Besides, I suppose it was bound to happen. Monckton says it was the will of God."

"Oh, does he?" exclaimed Miss Huntley with an air of disappointment and disgust. "What a stupid, commonplace speech to make! I should have expected something better than that from Mr. Monckton."

"But if that is what he believes?"

"Well, if he said it sincerely—only then he might as well be a Mussulman at once. And yet I don't know; possibly he is right. But I'm glad I didn't hear him say it; it sounds so painfully like one of Clementina's remarks. Clementina can always bring a beautiful spirit of resignation to bear upon the misfortunes of her neighbours."

"That isn't like Monckton, at all events. Whatever he may be, he is no humbug."

"No, I don't think he is; I beg his pardon. Am I not one of his disciples?"

There was another interval of silence, during which Brian scraped the moss off the railings with the point of his stick and wondered how he could best impart the information that he must go out into the world and

seek his fortune; but he did not have to cudgel his brains long, for by-and-by Miss Huntley said hesitatingly—

"I have heard a rumour that everything has been left to your brother. Is it true?"

Brian nodded. "Yes," he answered briefly, "it is quite true."

"Oh, poor Esau! Do you remember my warning?"

"Yes, I remember; but I think it is only fair to my poor, dear old father to say that this has been in a sort of way a mistake. That is, if he had lived longer he would have made a different will. This one was drawn up hastily when he had very good reason to be displeased with me."

"If there has been a mistake, it can be set right," said Miss Huntley quickly.

"Oh, no; it is too late for that now," answered Brian. And then, to divert her attention from a dangerous topic, he began unfolding his plans for the future, representing them in as optimistic a light as he could, and declaring, truthfully enough, that the career of a successful organist had greater attractions for him than any other.

The scheme took Miss Huntley's fancy: she was not, apparently, one of those who deem the career in question unworthy of a gentleman. "After all," said she, "I am not sure that Jacob has the best of it. You will become famous now and compose oratorios and be made a baronet and all sorts of fine things, instead of vegetating down at Kings-cliff all your days, as you had every inclination to do. And then you will always have that nice old Manor House to escape to when you want to be rid of the world for a time. I think I am rather glad that you have been made the victim of this—mistake."

Here was a prophecy of a much more encouraging nature than Monckton's; but it was somewhat painful to Brian, because he could not help perceiving its absurdity. Yet perhaps it was as well that she should take things in that way. He smiled; and after a while she asked him when he proposed to go to London.

"Oh, very soon," he replied; "in a day or two, at the outside, I think. I want to get away."

"That is highly flattering to the friends whom you are so anxious to leave. Allow me to thank you in their name."

"It is Beekton that I am anxious to leave; not anything or anybody else, Heaven knows!" said Brian.

He spoke so seriously and the language of his eyes was so plain that she became serious

also. "I see," she said. And then, with a little sigh, "Well, good-bye; don't forget us all."

There was no excuse for prolonging the interview. Brian held her hand for a moment, took one long last look at the beautiful face which he hardly expected ever to see again and, murmuring some unintelligible words, turned away. But he had not taken half-a-dozen steps before Miss Huntley called him back.

"By the way," said she, with a certain assumption of carelessness (because the solemnity of his leave-taking had startled her a little), "if you remember my existence somewhere about April next, you might look me up and report progress. I shall be found at 95, Park Lane, under the fostering care of Clementina, who admires genius and will be proud to make your acquaintance."

Brian hesitated. "Thank you," he replied, "you are very kind; but I am afraid I shall not be exactly—that is, you know an organist

hardly mixes in the kind of society to which you belong."

"Really," said Miss Huntley, "I should suspect you of meaning to be insultingly ironical if I didn't know that you were incapable of irony. It is quite true that I am admitted into the most distinguished circles, and it is not less true that my grandfather was a respectable artisan. At least, I trust that he was respectable; but I couldn't affirm it upon oath. Pray, don't come and see me if you think you will be bored; but if you fail to appear I shall know the reason."

"I will come, then—if I can," answered Brian gravely.

So she waved her hand to him and walked swiftly away, leaving an aching heart behind her. A hopeless lover is a difficult man to please; and although, perhaps, Brian was not so selfish as to wish that Miss Huntley should be in love with him, her friendly indifference gave him nearly as much pain as if he had been.



APRIL.

APRIL has come!

And thro' the woodlands, late so dank and bare,
And lone and dumb,
And in the vales and uplands, everywhere,
Breathes the soft zephyr, blows a warmer air—
Bringer of Beauty and of radiant Mirth
And full-eyed Hope, thro'out the vernal earth;
And these sweet airy thoughts, that come and go,
Changing my sober mood to frolicsome,
And gracious sympathies that lively flow.

By every door
And path again beloved forms arise:
No more, no more,
Whistle the icy winds 'neath ruthless skies;
From favour'd slopes I hear frail bleating cries,
And quick short starts of song, and twitters;
And loud the rookery with clangour rings.
O joyous thought! we glide more near the sun,
And strikes a warmer shadow on the floor,
And all is hast'ning unto Summer noon.

XXVIII—17

And that pure green—

The daintiest green—that comes but once a year,
Around is seen

In budding grove and hedgerow, glist'ning clear,
And in the dewy-tender grassy spear; [flowers,
While the three darling flowers, our Childhood's
Woo'd by the passion of the genial hours,
In holm and hollow bloom, and with sweet breath
Make fragrant the west wind, which drives, serene,
The gorgeous, piled clouds o'er mead and heath.

From shore to shore,
The glancing arrows of the western rain
Sweep lightly o'er
A hundred fields, and thro' the dusty lane,
And city street; and lo! o'er hill and plain,
Far-stretching, spans the rainbow, gleaming grand,
As when the patriarch saw it in the land,
Vision and sign celestial; and o'er all
Bound the bright shadows, over mount and moor,
Joy holding everywhere high festival.

Thro' sunny ways,
 Sure prophecies in murmurous minors sound
 Of coming days
 Of overbrimming joy, when June bath crown'd
 The year with her gay chaplet, and resound
 The full-leaved regal woods. And he who goes
 Slow stepping o'er the fields, and cheerily sows
 His handfuls broadcast, hears that humming noise
 With welcome; and the lark, 'mid noontide blaze:
 Perchance the cuckoo's immemorial voice.

Blow, Western gale,
 With fresh'ning lusty strength, and bear afar,
 From every vale,
 And meadow, and bleak height, whate'er can bar
 The blossom-wreath'd year! Shine sun and star:
 Shine, O! thou silver sickle, clear and fair—
 Eve's queenliest jewel—nor our lower air
 With storm and havoc charge! So bless the time
 Which human hearts leap joyously to hail—
 Spring, once more glowing in immortal prime.

ALEX. FALCONER.

BIBLE CHARACTERS.

BY THE LATE CHARLES READE, D.C.L., AUTHOR OF "IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND," ETC.

I.—A LITERARY MARVEL.

THE characters in Scripture are a literary marvel.

It is very hard to write characters in one country to be popular in every land and age.

Especially hard in narrative. (Drama parades characters by numberless speeches, and autographs them by soliloquy—an expedient false in nature, but convenient in art.)

Hardest of all to create such world-wide and everlasting characters in few words, a bare record of great things said and done.

One test of difficulty is rarity: number, then, the world-wide characters—if any—in Thucydides and Herodotus, and observe whether Josephus, when he leaves watering the Bible and proceeds to supplement it, has added one deathless character to the picture-galleries of Holy Writ. Shall we carry the comparison higher, and include poetic narrative? then go to the top of the tree at once, and examine the two great epics of antiquity.

The *Æneid*—what a stream of narrative! what fire of description! what march and music of words! But the characters?—*Æneas* mediocre, his staff lay figures. Dido just interesting enough to make one angry with *Æneas*. Perhaps the strongest colour is in the friendship and fate of Nisus and Euryalus; and there a Jewish pen had shown the way.

The less polished but mightier Homer has achieved the highest feat of genius: he has made puny things grand, and fertilised pebbles. He has bewitched even scholars into thinking his Greeks wiser and braver than the Trojans; whereas, if you can shut your ears to his music, his Greeks were barbarians besieging a civilised city for a motive and in a manner incompatible with one ray of civilisation. The motive: from the first dawn

of civilisation no country with independent states ever got those states to unite in leaving home and besieging a distant city to recover the person of a solitary adultress. The manner: the first dawn of civilisation showed men that cities placed like Troy can always be taken by one of two methods, blockade or assault. But Homer's Zulus had neither the sense to blockade that civilised city and starve it out, nor the invention to make ladders, covered ways, and battering-rams, nor the courage to scale walls, nor even to burn or break through a miserable gate. The civilised Trojans had a silver currency, the Tyrian shekel, called by scholars with Homer on the brain "the Homeric shekel." Homer never mentions it, never saw it. The uncivilised Greeks had no currency but bullocks; no trade but exchange of commodities. The attack and defence of Troy were of a piece with the two currencies: the civilised Orientals, with a silver currency, barred out the Zulus, with a bullock currency and calves' brains, like a pack of school-boys, and showed their contempt of them by coming out and attacking them in the open with their inferior numbers. Yet the genius of Homer could dazzle men's eyes, and bewitch their ears, and confound their judgments, and sing black white. So behold the barbarians guilt for ever, and the civilised people smirched. *Carent quia vate sacro.*

But turn from the glories of the wondrous tale this magician has built on a sorry subject—fitter for satire than epic—to his characters, and he is no longer supreme.

To be sure, he does not dose us with monotones, abstractions, lay figures; *fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum*: he discriminates the brute courage of Ajax and the airy valour of Tydides, the wisdom of Nestor and

the astuteness of Ulysses. But his gods and goddesses?—mere human animals; blue blood for red, and there ends his puerile invention in things divine. His leading heroes are characters, but not on a par with his descriptions, his narrative, and his music. They are the one ephemeral element in an immortal song. Achilles, with his unsoldier-like egotism, his impenetrable armour, his Zulu cruelty to his helpless foe, and his antique tender friendship, is a brave Greek of the day, but he is not for all time; two-thirds of him no modern soldier would deign to copy.

The twenty-four books devoted by so great a poet to Ulysses have not engraved "the much-enduring man" on the Western heart.

In short, the leading heroes of Homer's epics are immortal in our libraries, but dead in our lives.

Now take the two little books called Samuel. The writer is not a great master like Homer and Virgil; he is artless, and careless to boot; forgets what he had said a few pages before, and spoils more than one good incident by putting the cart before the horse—I mean by false transposition, by presenting events out of their true and interesting sequence: a sad fault in composition. But the characters that rise from the historical strokes of that rude pen are immortal: so solid, and full of colour too, that they stand amidst the waves of time like rocks, carved into statues by Phidias, and coloured by Apelles.

Yet this writer has no monopoly of the art in ancient Palestine; he shares it with about sixteen other historians, all Hebrews, though some of them write Hebrew and some Greek.

In our day character-painting is much attempted by certain writers of fictitious narrative; but their method excludes them from a serious comparison with Homer, Virgil, and the sacred historians. They do not evolve characters by simple narration. They clog the story with a hundred little essays on the character of each character. They keep putting their heads from behind the show, and openly analysing their pale creations, and dissecting them, and eking them out with comments, and microscoping their poodles into lions. These are the easy expedients of feeble art. They succeed with contemporaries, and, indeed, are sure to be popular for a time, because most readers have slow or lazy minds, and love a writer who will save them the trouble of studying and penetrating character by doing it for

them in the very text of the story. But it would be paying this false method—which microscopes real mediocrity into false importance—too great a compliment to compare its fruits with the characters that are self-evolved in the sacred writers, and indeed in Homer and Virgil, for their *method* was, at all events, the true one, though its results in the single particular of character were inferior.

In further support of my present position let me submit a few truths to be taken in conjunction.

First. Moderate excellence in writing is geographical; loses fifty per cent. in human esteem by crossing a channel or a frontier.

Second. Translation lowers it ten per cent.

Third. But when you carry into the West a translation of a work the East admires ever so much, ten to one it will miss the Western mind. Eastern music is a dreamy noise to a Western ear, but one degree beyond the sweet illogical wail of an Æolian harp. Eastern poetry is to the Western a glue of honeyed words, a tinkling cymbal, or a drowsy chime. The sacred Koran, the Bible of a hundred million Orientals, is to your Anglo-Saxon the weakest twaddle that ever drivelled from a human skull. It does not shock an Occidental Christian, or rouse his theological ire. It is a mild emetic to his understanding, and there's an end of it.

Fourth. The world is a very large place: Palestine is a small province in the East.

Fifth. What the whole world outside Palestine could very seldom do at all, this petty province did on a very large scale. About seventeen writers, all Israelites, some of them with what would nowadays be called a little learning, some without, some writing in Hebrew, some in Greek, all achieved one wonder. They sat down to record great deeds done, and great words spoken, in Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Palestine, which districts united are but a slice of the East, and they told them wondrous briefly, yet so that immortal and world-wide characters rise like exhalations from the record.

Written in the East, these characters live for ever in the West; written in one province, they pervade the world; penned in rude times, they are prized more and more as civilisation advances; product of antiquity, they come home to the business and bosoms of men, women, and children in modern days.

Then is it any exaggeration to say that "THE CHARACTERS OF SCRIPTURE ARE A MARVEL OF THE MIND?"

LORD SHAFTESBURY AS A SOCIAL REFORMER.

By JOHN RAE, M.A., AUTHOR OF "CONTEMPORARY SOCIALISM," ETC.

TOWARDS the end of his long life, Lord Shaftesbury was one day visiting Harrow, his old school, and as he walked down Harrow Hill with the Master the latter said to him, "Can your Lordship remember any particular incident or occasion which induced you to dedicate your life as you have done to the cause of the poor and the wretched?" "It is a most extraordinary coincidence," was the reply, "that you should ask me that question here, for it was within ten yards of the spot where we are now standing that I first resolved to make the cause of the poor my own." The circumstances were these. In his school days at Harrow he was once sauntering on that very part of the hill, when he met a pauper's funeral. There were no relations or mourners, and the plain deal coffin in which the body was placed was borne by four or five drunken men, who were shouting and singing at the top of their voices as they went along, and who eventually let their burden fall with a crash on the ground, and then broke into violent swearing over it. That sight made a social reformer of Lord Shaftesbury. It was intolerable, he felt, that merely because a man was poor and friendless he should be thus left to suffer things that were a shame to our common manhood, and so then and there he declared that if God spared him he would in after years stand as the friend and kinsman of the poor.

This first breath of humane indignation was itself, however, in some measure the product of still earlier influences in his history, and among these there are two in particular that may be selected as being of paramount interest and importance. In the first place, young though he was, and brought up, as we may say, in the purple, he had yet tasted much in his own lot of the very sufferings of the poor. The future champion of neglected children had been a neglected child himself. He often knew what it was to go days without food, and pass nights weary and sleepless from sheer cold. His parents treated their children with a strange absence of affection. For one thing, they no doubt shared a mischievous error which, happily, is less prevalent now than it was in their day, that children cannot be kept obedient except by severity of discipline and a wholesome fear of their elders; but besides that, they seem to have been too much absorbed in their own pursuits—the father in politics, the

mother in fashion—to give proper thought to the simplest and most natural of parental duties. Shaftesbury himself was always respectfully reticent about all the harshness he endured as a boy at home, but on one occasion the remark escaped him, that "it would be incredible to most men, and perhaps it would do no good, if such facts were recorded." And school was even worse than home. At the tender age of seven he was sent to a private boarding school at Chiswick, where he underwent such misery at the hands of masters and bullies that the memory of it used to make him shudder to the end of his life, though he took some consolation from the reflection that perhaps "it might have given him an early horror of oppression and cruelty."

The other influence I have alluded to as contributing to mould the beginnings of his future character is not less important. There was only one patch of sunshine on all that desolate time; it was the simple affection and fidelity of his old nurse. She taught him his first words of prayer and bent his heart to religion; she seems to have been the only person in the world who showed him any genuine care or solicitude, or to whom he could venture to confide his troubles. It was her gold watch—which she left to him on her death—that he always wore, and he was fond of showing it and saying, "That was given me by the best friend I ever had in the world." His two chief characteristics in after life, the two springs of all the work he did, were his tender, abounding human sympathy, and his profound religious principle; and though there is that in the growth of character which will always elude our poor and perhaps presumptuous analysis, it is surely permissible to believe that for the development of these two great gifts of heart and conscience Lord Shaftesbury owed much to this kindly daughter of the poor. Wherever all over the world his beneficent work has scattered blessings in the homes of labour the name of Maria Millis deserves to be held in remembrance.

Of the religious side of the man I shall not touch here further than to point out that to his own mind his social work was always really and essentially religious work—"an affair," as he said, "less of feeling than of religion," from which consequently, having once put his hand to it, he dared not turn back or turn aside. Though, as we have

seen, he had resolved at a very early period—as indeed many other young men have resolved before and since—that he would live to brighten the lot of the poor, it was some time before it appeared that this was to be the main vocation of his life. His Oxford career, which ended in the distinction of a first class in classics, had given him the thought of devoting himself to science or literature, and the thought continued to haunt him for a few years even after his entrance on parliamentary work. Eventually, however, he perceived that whatever his tastes, his circumstances marked him for a political career, because with his advantages of station and connection, it was in such a career he would be able to be most useful to his generation. But when launched in politics, he had then to choose between the career of the ordinary placeman and the career of the philanthropic reformer. No doubt his natural bent soon discovered itself; his very first speech was in demand of lunacy legislation to humanise the treatment of the insane; in his first office, as Indian Commissioner, to which he was soon appointed by the Duke of Wellington, he made some endeavours to suppress suttee; and before he was half-a-dozen years in Parliament he had acquired such a character as a general friend of the miserable that the Short Time Committee asked him, in 1833, to take charge in the House of Commons of the “Ten Hours Bill,” in place of Mr. M. T. Sadler, who had failed to secure a seat in the Reformed Parliament. Curiously enough, he had known nothing of the subject till Mr. Sadler’s committee had published their evidence a year before; but that evidence had made a profound impression on his mind, and he believed that the factory children were suffering inhuman and disastrous wrongs which no Christian nation ought to allow. He therefore accepted the invitation and fairly embarked on what turned out a most remarkable and protracted struggle. He probably could not then have foreseen that this struggle was to occupy him for the rest of his life, but he certainly knew the responsibility he undertook; he knew he had to face much obloquy from all sides and to risk alienation from his political patrons and forfeiture of the expectation of office. But he made the choice then without a back-thought, and again and again in his life he did the same. Peel offered him a place in the Household in 1841 and a seat in the Cabinet in 1845; but each time Shaftesbury declined the office on the ground that party obligations might cripple

his factory agitation. Palmerston urged him to join his Cabinet in 1855, and Derby in 1866; but his answer was that there were still 1,600,000 factory children to provide protection for, and he could not give up the freedom necessary to plead their cause for the sake of place, emolument, or power. To enter into the full significance of this ever-renewed choice of Hercules, we must bear in mind that Lord Shaftesbury was, for a peer, a very poor man, and that down to the very end his life was one long struggle with pecuniary straits. His income was always narrow, and before his accession to the title half of it was borrowed money, which accumulated at high interest and left him a crippled and embarrassed man for years after his accession. His father had made him a very inadequate allowance—only £100 a year more, when he was a public man and had a numerous family, than he had received as a young bachelor at Oxford; and when he took up the factory question, the father so strongly disapproved of his conduct that they became absolutely estranged for ten years, and there seemed no alternative but to go into debt. The pecuniary penalty of this alienation was not the worst of the trial; but to Shaftesbury the voices of the children rang in his ear like the voice of God, and to prefer father or mother was to make the great renunciation. His straitened circumstances were peculiarly distressing to him as a philanthropist, because his labours in that capacity brought in upon him, from people who imagined he must be rich as well as charitable, a continual crowd of claims which he was unable to support as he desired. And after he entered on his estates, it is touching to read of his gratitude to his sister for offering to build some decent cottages on the property for him in room of the filthy and abominable huts which he found there, but lacked the means of replacing with better. It enabled him to take the beam out of his own eye, for he was distressed to find that, after rating others for the wretched dwellings they let their poor labourers live in, he had himself come into an estate which, as he himself says, was “rife with abominations to make one’s flesh creep, and I have not a farthing to set them right.”

The multifarious character of his activity as a social reformer is most striking. In general politics he interposed only now and again, chiefly when some grave moral question seemed involved, but the interests of the poor found him always a ready pleader, and the interests of the poor are many. He

was not only a zealous but an effective pleader, because he was always a convinced one. In fact he said himself he could not speak at all except from conviction, that he had little of the ordinary politician's aptitude to make a good appearance for his side whether he agreed with it completely or not. Then he had always previously mastered the details, and generally, by personal inspection of the circumstances. He had taken tea hundreds of times in workmen's houses; he had "slummed" so far back as 1846, and the result was the Model Lodging House Act; he visited asylums and mills, and saw everything with his own eyes before he exposed it in the fierce light of Parliament. No account can be given in the present limited space of his successive and continuous labours for the insane, for the blind, for the homeless boys of the streets, for sanitary legislation of all sorts, for ragged schools and training ships, for children in mines and brickfields and mills, for needle-women and flower-girls, for poor Jack at sea, or for his humble but particular cronies the costermongers, to whose brotherhood he belonged, owning a barrow, and hiring it like one of themselves, and once suggesting in joke that he might be addressed "K.G. and Coster." The combination is characteristic; he was probably as truly touched by the honour that sprang from the gratitude of these simple folk as by the decoration from the Crown. And speaking of honours, it is singular how few of them seem to have come his way. The Garter he had indeed twice refused before he finally accepted it, partly because he feared it might entail party obligations that would hamper his social work, but chiefly, we fear, because he could not afford the £1,000 of initiation fees. Up, however, till his decoration with the Garter, he had never received any public recognition whatever, except the freedom of the burgh of Tain.

As a reformer, Shaftesbury was no fanatic and no sentimentalist. He was often blamed for interfering with things he could know nothing about by men who claimed to be "practical" men because they were merchants or millionaires, but the event has now proved on which side the true practicality lay, and though his language was occasionally violent, his advocacy was always really distinguished by a close adherence to facts and by a moderation in policy. Did he not, for accepting the practicable compromise of ten and a half hours instead of ten in 1847, incur the fierce and ungrateful denunciations of Oastler, the Fieldens, and other more extreme friends of the measure, as if

he had been a traitor—he who might be thought to have already sufficiently established his sincerity by his prolonged sacrifices for the cause? or to take an example from another field of social effort, while losing no opportunity of exposing the sad evils of drunkenness, he never saw his way to be a total abstainer, still less a prohibitionist. Temperance was the virtue, not abstinence; and in 1868 he made at a public banquet what will seem to many a curious speech in defence of "a very old custom which seems to have been going out of late, but which," he says, "I am glad to see is being revived—the custom of drinking a glass of wine with your fellow-man." He speaks of it as "one of the wisest institutions" because he had often known it to be the means of composing quarrels and cementing friendship, and concluded, "Therefore, I say, never give up this convivial system, only take it, like you should every other means of enjoyment, in moderation." He was a simple, manly nature who liked the touch of honest friendship; his attachment to Palmerston, for example, is very beautiful; and while respecting abstainers he would not follow them because he would not have men ascetic, though he would have them sober.

The violent language I have spoken of was no exclusive characteristic of Shaftesbury's speeches, but was indeed an unhappy quality of the whole factory agitation and all who took part in it on whatever side. Charles Greville says it was the bitterest agitation he remembers in his day, though it was outside ordinary party lines, and arrayed Tory against Tory and Whig against Whig. Shaftesbury himself often complained of the strangely assorted host that was encamped against him, and of the asperity he endured in quarters where he believed he had a right to expect support. He was, he thought, the best-hated man of his time. Wilberforce had begun his work with a powerful committee and a prime minister at his back, and attacking as he did a system external to the country, excited few animosities at home. But with the Factory Acts the case stood otherwise. The manufacturing interest was naturally opposed to him as a body, though individual mill-owners sided with him, and factory legislation was started by a mill-owner, the first Sir Robert Peel; the landed interest, which sometimes claims now to have stood his friend, really held aloof, so that he found it difficult to get a peer to take charge of his Bill in the Upper House; ministers thought him dangerous, Sir James

Graham calling his proposals "Jack Cade legislation," and Lord Melbourne presenting him to the Queen as "the greatest Jacobin in your Majesty's dominions;" and what Shaftesbury himself seems to the last unable to understand or forgive, even the clergy and the so-called "religious world" maintained a complacent and timid indifference. "The factory question, and every question for what is called humanity, receive as much support from 'men of the world' as from the men who say they will have nothing to do with it." And again in later life he says, "I had more aid from the medical than the divine profession." But if the clergy bore none of the burden and heat of the day, he ought to have owned that they came heartily, when they at length did come, at the eleventh hour, and that the strong muster of bishops helped powerfully to carry the factory legislation through the otherwise lukewarm atmosphere of the Lords. What embittered this agitation more than usual was that it seemed to cross swords with the contemporaneous agitation of the Anti-Corn Law League. It was taken to be the landlords' retaliation for the manufacturers' war against protection. Class prejudice clashed against class prejudice, and men like Cobden and Shaftesbury, the two purest and most noble of our public men, doubted one another's sincerity. To Cobden it seemed hard to believe that a man like Shaftesbury could be animated by an honest zeal for the welfare of the poor, when he pled their cause against the manufacturers, but remained content to allow his own class to tax their very daily bread. Shaftesbury returned the compliment by thinking Cob-

den's object in seeking to cheapen bread was merely to be able to lower wages; though, as we know, whatever some other free-trade agitators may have believed, Cobden always repudiated the error which was unfortunately encouraged by Ricardo, and has been the source of much mischievous delusion ever since, that wages depended on nothing but the cost of living and were bound to fall when that fell. There was certainly in either case more than pretence for the mistrust, but both men came eventually to see they were mistaken and to own completely one another's public honesty. The world has ratified that judgment, but with I think this reservation—which it is not without use to note—that while in their own positive apostleship animated by a righteous public zeal, without taint of class advantage, they were each led to oppose the work of the other through what, if we penetrated beneath all the refinements that masked the origin of their opinions even from their own minds, would be found to be at bottom nothing else than class fears. One other thing is worth remembering. In both cases alike the class fears have turned out fallacious. The landed interest was never better off than for the quarter of a century after free trade, and the manufacturers' talk about the last half-hour being the only source of their profit is now laughed at as mere old wives' babble. Difficulties brought out, as they seem always to bring out, the mettle of English enterprise, and we may be sure that there cannot be the least danger to the country in such minor restraints at least as are successively dictated by the progress of humanitarian reforms.

WINTER IN THE SLANT OF THE SUN.

BY THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

III.—MEXICO.

FROM Jamaica* to Vera Cruz the sea road measures 1,680 miles, and we were never more than three days together out of sight of land. The morning after leaving Kingston we were in sight of Haiti—beautiful, fertile, and melancholy Haiti, 400 miles long, with a coast line of 1,500 miles abounding in excellent harbours, and divided into two republics, of which St. Domingo, with two-thirds of the whole, and containing a coloured as well as a negro population, has a population of 250,000—with important

mines of gold, silver, and copper, and forests of valuable timber.

The island was discovered by Columbus in 1492, and its history is atrocious with the unparalleled and incredible barbarities practised by the black and white races on each other in constant struggles for power. Haiti, where I landed to pay excellent Bishop Holly and his church a visit of brotherly respect, in area contains only one-third of the island, with a population of 800,000, of which the filthy capital, Port-au-Prince, constantly devastated by fire and earthquakes, numbers 22,000. Haiti produces coffee, cocoa, cotton

* ERRATUM.—In the article on "Jamaica," in last number, under illustration on page 193, and on page 194, for "Bay Tree Walk" read "Bog Walk."



Vera Cruz.

tapioca, and tortoiseshell, and is governed by a President and National Assembly with two Chambers.

In the opinion of Sir Spencer St. John, now British Minister at Mexico, and for fourteen years consul here (no man can be more competent to give one), Haiti is fast receding in a steady and hopeless decadence into the condition of a primitive African tribe. The natives have discouraged the residence of whites among them, without whom the negro inevitably retrogrades, and as they cannot of themselves originate a civilisation, so they cannot by themselves maintain it. The Vaudoux worship, incontestably accompanied with human sacrifices and a detestable cannibalism, not only is not put down, but is, it is to be feared, on the increase. It is usually practised at night and in secret places, but its influence is spreading, and though it has a thin veneer of Roman ceremony and ritual, the foreign element is only skin deep.

The heat was intense off Haiti, but our course to Havana was to the windward of Cuba; and as we passed over the Bahama Banks, which are difficult of navigation but well provided with lights, we had a fresh breeze from the Atlantic with squalls of rain, a waterspout, and a much cooler temperature. Cuba is 700 miles long, the mountainous part being in the south-east of the island, with 2,000,000 acres of virgin forest, chiefly mahogany, cedar, and ebony. The chief

agricultural products of the island are sugar, coffee, and tobacco. The latter article is said to be greatly adulterated; and the sugar interest is as much depressed here as elsewhere. At Bellomer, near Matanzas, to which a railway runs from Havana, there are some remarkable caves three miles long and partially lighted with gas. The inner chamber is said to surpass the Kentucky cave in richness and sparkle, but not to equal it in grandeur or size.

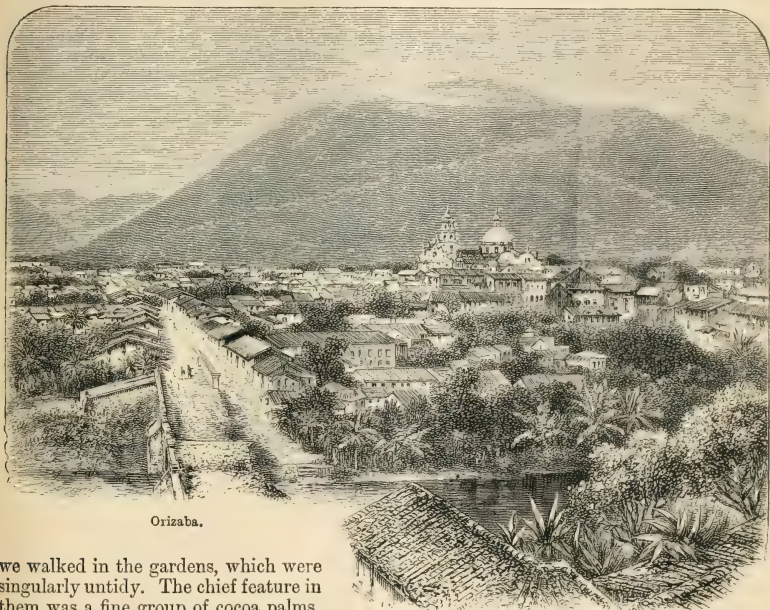
Havana was discovered by Columbus in 1492, and save for the space of a few months in 1762-3, when it fell into the hands of the English, it has always been Spanish soil. In the cathedral the great navigator is said to be buried, and an interesting monument attests the fact. The people of St. Domingo, however, insist that it was the body of his brother which was sent here for sepulture by an artfully contrived mistake, and that they possess the real man. As I have not been to St. Domingo, and have been to Havana, I am on the side of Havana.

The harbour is fine from the sea, finest perhaps as you approach it from Vera Cruz. The Fort and the Moro, both at the entrance of the harbour, are imposing and picturesque both in colour and outline, and interesting from having been taken by the English. There is a good deal of shipping to be seen, and there is constant communication with Vera Cruz, New Orleans, Colon, Florida.

and New York. There are some fine buildings in the city, an opera house, a Plaza which is especially brilliant in the evening, an interesting palace where the Captain General is lodged (he is a very great person indeed, both in authority and emolument), and streets, which if not so brilliant as those of Rio, nor so picturesque as those of Valencia, occasionally reminded me of both. The place seemed to me to be under a cloud. Certainly its once brilliant prosperity is gone, and Anthony Trollope, who visited it more

than thirty years ago, would now hardly recognise the languid and decaying town, which, to borrow the somewhat unpleasant expression of an American I came across at the Puebla Junction, seems to be "infected with the Spanish rot."

The public markets are interesting for the great variety of fruits and vegetables. The streets rival those of Moscow for bad paving, which is saying a good deal. In the environs we visited the country house of the Captain General. The rooms were closed, but



Orizaba.

we walked in the gardens, which were singularly untidy. The chief feature in them was a fine group of cocoa palms.

Of hotels, among the best are the Inghilterra and the Telegrafo. The latter, which has a pretty patio, I am inclined, after visiting them both, to pronounce the better. They are both dear, as everything in Havana is dear, except fruit and sponges. What, moreover, makes everything gratuitously dearer is the difference between the value of paper money and silver money. Some payments are charged in one, some in the other, and the process of converting one into the other always results in the discomfiture of the stranger. The cathedral has rather a striking façade, and the colour of the stone has a golden hue like that of our incomparable Lincoln Minster. The interior is painted

and papered, and not particularly striking, but the four pulpits, said to be constantly used both for preaching and catechetical instruction, made me ask myself why in our larger churches at home we are tied and bound to only one pulpit. The vestments here are perfectly magnificent, and were made in Barcelona. Their weight in hot weather, such as usually occurs on Corpus Christi Day, must be really distressing.

From Havana to Vera Cruz it is four days' steaming, first over the Bank of Campeachy and then across the Gulf of Mexico. Capital straw hats are made at Campeachy, half as expensive and quite as useful as those

of Panama, and I picked some up very cheap at Vera Cruz from an itinerant trader. About thirty miles from Merida, connected by railway with Progreso on the Yucatan coast, which is easily reached by steamer from Havana, some of the most interesting Aztec ruins in existence are to be found. The climate is salubrious, and there is no risk to health. Stephens (quoted by Mr. Beecher in his very readable "Trip to Mexico") speaks of having discovered the remains of forty-four ancient cities there, most of them but a short distance apart, with but few exceptions all lost, buried, and unknown, some of them perhaps never looked upon by the eyes of a white man. Their origin is buried in profound mystery, but one curious fact came under my notice which may throw a ray of light on an interesting question. A beetle is found at Merida, a specimen of which Captain Buckley showed us, used by ladies in Yucatan as an ornament on their dress, where it walks about, adorned with a gold pair of stays, and literally living on air. Singularly enough, the only other place where the beetle is found is Egypt. Did the Aztecs come originally from the land of the Pharaohs? I confess that when I saw the Mexican peasant women walking in the pretty garden in front of the cathedral, and observed the way in which they concealed their faces, carried their loose blue robes, and daintily moved themselves over the ground, I was instantly reminded of the Arab women I used to see on the Nile nearly forty years ago. A vase of native pottery, purchased at Otumba, and given to me by a kind fellow-traveller, has a face on it of a distinctly Egyptian type. Just south of Yucatan there is the settlement of British Honduras, which, occupied by us long before the Monroe doctrine was heard of, and too long immured in obscurity, is now claiming recognition as a promising locality for the British colonist. It has much to say for itself. This Crown colony is twice the size of Jamaica, its gay little capital is Belize, with 10,000 people, and it ought to have a great future before it, not only for the mahogany trade, which makes a sale of not more than £50,000 a year, but for minor industries, such as fruit, cocoa, tobacco, vanilla, spices. There is plenty of big shooting in the shape of jaguars, pumas, alligators, tiger-cats, and peccaries. The population is 27,000, of which 2 per cent. are whites, with a mountain range of 3,500 feet, and a seaboard of 160 miles. An elaborate report (from which I am now quoting) has been written on the colony by

Mr. D. Morris, director of the public gardens in Jamaica, and just appointed second in command at the Kew Gardens. He considers it, from its vicinity both to New Orleans and New York, as being more favourably placed than any of the West India islands for the development of the fruit trade. It is his opinion that in this way a more permanent prosperity might eventually be built up than ever existed in the palmy days of slavery. Minerals are not yet found. The wild turkey, toucan, partridge, whistling duck, pigeon, parrot, eagle, vulture, osprey, and hawk are found there. There is excellent fish and turtle. The greatest nuisance is the leaf-cutting ant, which can easily be destroyed with boiling water and carbolic acid. The vegetation on the banks of the old river is described as being wonderfully beautiful. Silk, cotton, and other trees abound, covered with orchids. There is a profusion of palms, ferns, and pine-apples. The india-rubber tree is also found, called toonee. The temperature is very equable, the atmosphere dry; in the winter there are cold northerly winds. The rainfall is from 70 to 80 inches annually. At present Belize can be reached only from New Orleans. This makes it inaccessible.

The Bank of Campeachy passed, we enter the Gulf of Mexico, to which Great Britain and the entire north of Europe owe such an unspeakable debt, for here it is that the Gulf Stream is formed, presently to emerge into the North Atlantic, and with its beneficent heat to warm our shores, which otherwise would have the climate of Labrador. Its waters are strewn with the beautiful sargasso. But now we had to face the possibility of not being able to land at Vera Cruz in time to see the city of Mexico, notwithstanding our more than six thousand miles of salt water traversed for this very thing. At this season of the year what is called a "norther" is apt to blow on the coast, and with such violence and steadiness that for five days together communication may be impracticable between shipping and the shore. For us, however, things turned out singularly fortunate. A strong norther had been blowing up to the night previous to our arrival—we had a taste of it on entering the gulf—began to blow again two days after we left, and continued blowing until the evening before our re-embarkation. I thus had my six days clear for the land. Quite easily, however, it might have happened otherwise, and it is a contingency to be taken into account by all who choose this route for

Mexico with little time to spare. When the northerners cease to blow, the heat and rains stir up the fever, and make the place a chamber of death.

At six on the Friday morning the captain's cheery voice was heard, "Orizaba is in sight." There it was, on the starboard side of the ship, rising like a little white cloud out of the rim of the yellowing horizon, ninety miles away. In three hours more we were off Vera Cruz,* a singularly picturesque city, with its long, glittering line of warehouses, churches, and public buildings, Orizaba, now in full majesty, lifting up its dome of snow above a distant chain of inferior mountains. We had heard that the railway folk sometimes attach a passenger carriage to a goods train, leaving at 10.30, and running as far as Orizaba. Was not it a delightful moment (which only old travellers can quite appreciate) when the tardy health boat came alongside, and Captain Powell, the courteous manager of the line at Vera Cruz, came up to us, and explained that he had made arrangements for our going up to Orizaba at once, and that the train was waiting our arrival? Our luggage was ready; we went straight to the railway pier without entering the town at all, and in less than half an hour we were travelling through the *terra caliente*, which extends for some miles from the sea to the foot of the mountains, once more on the North American continent, and on the very track of Cortes. The line at first passes through somewhat close thickets, worthless for cultivation, and used as ambush ground, to the cost of the railway traffic, during the late revolution. Presently it begins to ascend, and there is a station at Soledad, where the English, Spanish, and French troops in 1862 held a conference with the Mexicans, in the end the English and Spanish withdrawing, and the French, under Bazaine, their cleverest general, remaining, with what final results my readers do not need to be told. At Paso del Macho the fine scenery begins. On one side is a lofty wall of sloping mountain, richly wooded at the foot, and an immense plain, stretching away as far as the eye can reach, verdant and glittering in the sun. A Fairlie engine is now drawing the train, and it is a steady climb. At Atoyac there is a great chasm in the mountains, with a lovely waterfall; a rich parasitical vegetation covers—I might say strangles—the trees, and there are innu-

merable orchids, which, alas!—for it is mid-winter—are not now in bloom. All about here there lurks a deadly miasma, breeding a fever even more deadly than that of Panama, and the "vomito" asserts its sway to within a very few miles of Orizaba. Cordova is a lovely spot, also very unhealthy, famous for fruit and vegetables, and all tropical products—a sort of garden of the Lord. At the railway station the native women were selling beautiful pine-apples at 3d. apiece, large baskets of oranges, wonderful for colour, size, and flavour, for a shilling, besides many other fruits. As we drove along we saw the coffee-tree, with its pretty red berries carefully shaded by other trees, acting as umbrellas. This coffee, which is among the finest in the world, never comes into the market, being kept for private consumption. Here we are between 3,000 and 4,000 feet high, the mountains are exquisitely soft in hue, with a fine, jagged outline, and clothed with timber. Besides coffee, india-rubber, tobacco, oranges (two crops in the year), pines and bananas are freely cultivated. From Metlac station we run along the edge of the great barranca or ravine of Metlac, quite the finest thing on this side of Orizaba, with the river in a deep gorge hundreds of feet below, in front a spider-like viaduct spanning the chasm, apparently at right-angles to the track over which we are running, but which we have to cross, and presently do cross, with, I suppose, the sharpest and awkwardest twist engineers have ever planned. Up above us, on the opposite mountain, we see the road we have to climb, now crossing a bridge, now losing itself in a cutting, now absorbed in a tunnel, but presently emerging on the lofty elbow of the mountain, where it turns quite away and disappears. It was very fine. At the same time I think it has been just a little over-rated; and travellers who have crossed by the St. Gothard from Lucerne to Milan, though they have not rushed through the tropical vegetation of the Mexican railway, may console themselves with the conviction that nothing in all the world beats the Swiss and Italian Alps, and nothing compensates for the want of snow. It was darkening as we entered Orizaba, but huge bars of orange colour lit up the sky, and had almost the effect of an Aurora Borealis. Orizaba we found a delightful place for a Sunday's repose. The little town has a very Spanish look about it; the vegetation is rich, and the snowy peak of Orizaba, as clear as possible, looked straight into our rooms. Next day

* The sketch of Vera Cruz, on page 240, is supplied by the kindness of my accomplished fellow-traveller, W. M. Baillie, Esq.

we resumed our journey to Mexico. If I relate our travel somewhat minutely it is because this railway has a great reputation for almost unsurpassed beauty; and as it enticed me to Mexico it may entice others. From Orizaba the ascent to Boca del Monte is very fine, though I think I admired it even more as I descended. Soon we entered a deep valley entirely shut in by mountains, whose eroded sides gave indication of glacial action. The tropical vegetation ceases here. We are mounting, always mounting. Barley is in ear, the peach-trees are in blossom, and on the deciduous trees there are signs of spring. But the prevailing tree is pine; there is much to remind us of Scotland. As we went higher a friend, who has travelled over it, concurred with me in instantly comparing it with what is usually thought to be the finest piece of railway engineering in the world, the Rio Grande Railway, between Denver and Salt Lake City. But the Mexican line at Esperanza, its highest point, is 2,700 feet below Marshall's Pass, on the Rocky Mountains line; and I do not think, greatly as I admired this part of the railway, that it has anything quite to compete with either the Black, or the Castle, or the Grand Cañons on the North American Railway. This, in justice, I should add, that the travelling on the Mexican Railway seemed to me a vast deal safer. At Esperanza, where an excellent meal is provided, a dust storm usually begins, and lasts for some hours. Except that it obscured Orizaba and Malintzi, as well as the two volcanoes which watch and guard Mexico, it did not particularly matter. The train for several hours now travels over an arid, sandy waste, almost exclusively planted with a kind of aloe, called maguey, from which pulque, the national drink, is formed. The beverage has a slightly acid taste, a little like whey, though thicker and more glutinous, and it is said to have intoxicating qualities if you drink enough of it. The land is very valuable on which it is grown, and the rental of some of the estates amount to £20,000 a year. At Otumba is the site of the great battle-field where Cortes, in the agony of his magnificent despair, resisted 200,000 of the Mexicans, and secured his retreat, to return presently for revenge. Near here are two pyramids, the history and origin of which no one has yet deciphered. At first they look like two huge mounds. As you leave them on your way to Vera Cruz, the smaller one exposes a pyramidal side. They are at the little village of St. Juan Teotihuacan, and the

Indians present for sale at the railway station rough images and arrow-heads alleged to be dug up in the neighbourhood. No one, however, would dispute that these pyramids, with the genuine and countless antiquities which must lie buried near them, are, as Prescott calls them, the most ancient remains probably on the Mexican soil. They were found by the Aztecs, according to Aztec tradition, on their entrance into the country, when the present paltry village was a flourishing city; and it is beyond doubt that this vast plain, now so silent and deserted, was many years ago the busy centre of a countless and busy population, now utterly passed away and "without a sign."

In another hour the train is at the capital. My two days in this city seem like the flash of a humming-bird in the sun. Only two days, but then such days! and worth a good deal of fatigue. My own perplexity was how to spend the hours to the best advantage. My reader's perplexity may be to understand what I can possibly have to say worth his reading. First, however, let me give a little prosaic but perhaps convenient information for those who think of coming to Mexico, and so wish to have particulars about it. A network of railways unites the city with Vera Cruz, New Orleans, St. Louis, New York, Denver, and San Francisco. There is usually only one passenger train a day; the quantity of luggage free is very small. North of Mexico, there are Pullman cars. The best hotels are the Iturbide and the Humboldt. The rooms are hired at so much per day or week, and the meals must be taken at a restaurant. Accommodation is fairly good, but you have to pay for it. Cabs are moderate, and tramcars go everywhere. In some of the streets there is a good deal of bustle; and the street of San Francisco, leading from the Hotel Iturbide to the Plaza in which the cathedral stands, reminded me even of Rio, for sparkle, traffic, and handsome shops. The costume of the people is by no means so piquant as in South America. At Puebla, however, and in the interior it is far more picturesque. Silver-work, like that made at Genoa, is to be bought, and it is not expensive. Feather flowers are curious. "Antiquities" are of doubtful origin. In winter, the climate is delightful but very treacherous, from the fluctuations of temperature, and the variations of it on the sunny or shaded side of the street. Indeed, it is possible to catch a chill from staying in a shop on the north side of the street for any length of time without an overcoat. Practically, Mexico is

as well in the tropics, inside a barrier of mountains 7,600 feet above the sea. At first the breathing is affected, especially on going upstairs. I have yet to ascertain if it is good for asthmatic complaints. There are abundant excursions to be made in the neighbourhood, and a fortnight can pleasantly be spent there. But a fortnight for the city alone is enough. In summer when the rain comes, the climate is said to be most delicious; then the plains, brown and burnt up when we saw them, smile with verdure. Then, too, Mexico amply vindicates its old claim to be the City of Flowers. First we went to the cathedral, the successor of that built by Cortes, an imposing and stately building, though almost surpassed by that at Puebla, flanked with two lofty towers, and connected with an older building of very florid Gothic much reminding me of Burgos. The interior is lofty and capacious, though I think not so capacious as the cathedral at Montreal, with what I have never seen elsewhere, a narrow passage of nave railed off from the rest of the building, in communication with the choir which you see as you enter, and the altar at the east end of the church. It may be intended for the protection of the priests when in procession, from the vast pressure of the crowd. This church was once possessed of great treasure, of which it was despoiled during the Revolution. It has no stained glass, nor any pictures of conspicuous merit, and it cannot be named in the same day with Toledo and Seville. What I most enjoyed was the view from the summit, of the snowy volcanoes Popocatepetland Iztacchihuatl, ranking among the highest and grandest volcanoes in the world, and the lakes (miserable remnants of what they once were, before Cortes landed), and the chimneyless town all round, and the girdle of the everlasting hills, inferior though, as is said it is thought to be, to the Andes round Santiago, rivalled, as I myself confessed it to be, by the mountains round Salt Lake City. Then there is Chapultepec with its melancholy histories, and Tacubaya, where the rich city folk reside, and the Paseo, the Rotten Row of Mexico, brilliant in the evening; and behind, huddled under the mountains, Guadalupe, with its gorgeously decorated church and traditions of the Spanish invasion. As I stood there that spring morning and gazed on a landscape not easily surpassed for grand surroundings, romantic history, and terrible disaster, two thoughts almost absorbed me. One was that the glorious scene I was looking at with so much quiet enjoyment was the last sight on earth that

caught the eye of the miserable victims conducted in awful procession round the outer steps of the great teocali, which used to stand on the very site of the cathedral, until they reached the summit, where, in the sight of the gazing thousands below, they were to be barbarously murdered, and their bodies thrown down to the crowd. Many of the brave Spaniards taken prisoners of war were led up there to die, almost in the sight of their horror-struck comrades. Prescott gives it us as a possible fact—let us hope that he exaggerated—that sixty thousand human victims were offered here annually to the Sun god. A question coming out of it is, how to explain the indisputable fact of the Divine interposition on the side of the rapacious Spaniards in their expedition of superhuman daring, unprovoked invasion, and unparalleled success; how to find a justification of the Divine righteousness in the utter destruction of that blooming civilisation, the miserable wasting of those myriad lives, the unjust invasion of a prosperous people by cruel strangers, to whom they, at least, could have done, or intended to do, no manner of harm. The reason, I suppose, was as with the Canaanites of old, that the time had come for the sweeping away a bloody and superstitious religion, which outraged the instincts of humanity by the shedding of innocent blood. Cortes, with all his faults, was a sincere Christian, who devoutly believed in his religion, who put it before everything else in the world, nay, whose evidently sincere horror at the cruelties of the Mexican religion often tempted him to acts which involved him in tremendous jeopardy. The heathen temples were ruthlessly to be abolished with the horrid rites publicly practised there; the faith and worship of Christ were permanently to take its place, and Cortes was to be the Joshua of another Holy War, which should justify itself to posterity.

Besides the cathedral and the palace, Mexico, though with a population of 325,000, can boast of no public buildings of importance; indeed, from an architectural point of view, it is neither old enough nor new enough to be worth visiting. What I myself chiefly cared for was the scenery, the antiquities, and the people. Of the scenery, the mountains, the lakes, and the venerable cedar-trees were the constituent features. Half an hour's drive past the Alameda and along the Paseo will bring you to the villa of Chapultepec, where was the home of Montezuma and his race, built on the very site of the Aztec palace by a former viceroy, constantly occupied by the

Emperor Maximilian as his favourite residence, and now being fitted up for the President's use. It is magnificently situated on an eminence which commands the city and its environs, and the most interesting feature

tion that he was in the habit of sitting under it. This tree is fifty feet in circumference. It made me think of the cedars of Lebanon far away. Another tree we visited, also a cedar, and of apparently equal antiquity,



The Tree of La Trista Noche.

which is connected with Montezuma's great foe, Fernando Cortes. It is the tree of La Trista Noche, under which the defeated warrior is said to have rested and meditated on the night, always called the sad night, when he retired from the city, and with such infinite difficulty crossed the canals and beat the Mexicans off. Had the enemy only persevered in the pursuit not a single Spaniard would have lived to tell the tale, and the future of the world would have been changed.

Near the Cathedral is the Museum, a really interesting place, which sets one thinking in many directions, and which is being now improved and arranged with a good deal of care.

In a long shed are two of the most

about it is Montezuma's tree. At the back of the villa is a vast group of at least two hundred cedars, of immense size, of an age certainly equalling, possibly exceeding, a thousand years. Weird and sombre with what is called Spanish moss hanging from the branches, probably in their first prime before the Aztec capital had ever seen a white man's face or felt his sword, they are still full of life, and were just beginning when I saw them to put on their spring verdure. One of these, the monarch of the rest, is called Montezuma's tree from the reasonable tradi-

interesting antiquities in the City, curiously indicative at once of the civilisation and the barbarity of the ancient race. The Aztec calendar stone was dug up in the great square nearly a century ago, and for some time was built into the outer wall of the cathedral. It is an immense block of porphyry, deeply carved with circles and hieroglyphics; intended to indicate, for half the year, the times of the solstices and equinoxes. How the Aztecs, who possessed neither horses nor beasts of burden, could have moved hither a mass of stone weighing nearly fifty tons is a

mystery. The terrible sacrificial stone on which, at the summit of the teocali, the wretched victims were murdered, we examined with horrid interest. The deep cavity in the stone, where the victim's head was placed, to throw out the ribs more conveniently for the stone knife of the sacrificing priest, is very discernible, also the channel cut through the edge for the blood to run away. Here too were any number of hideous idols. Up-stairs are numerous antiquities of a less savage kind, such as the banner of Cortes, the feather shield of Montezuma, jars and vases of ancient pottery, and a long line of inferior portraits of Spanish Viceroy's. In the room where these portraits are hung (was the irony accidental or deliberate?), there is laid out for show a costly service of "silver," manufactured by the greatest of Parisian silversmiths for the Imperial use, and of which, on analysis, only 6 per cent. was



Funeral Urn.



Idol.

ascertained to be silver. A rough-tongued Republican might describe it as a fitting illustration of a Brummagem empire. A picture of Maximilian looks down upon it. The face is full of lofty character and gentle benevolence, but we all thought it lacking in power. That is just the point where he failed. In the same room with Maximilian's portrait is a cast of the head of his foe Juarez, who afterwards drank himself to death. It is a square, massive Indian head, with much resolution, extreme ugliness, and a cruel mouth. They have met already in the presence of the Eternal Righteousness. Much as one mourns for the untimely fate of a gallant and high-spirited prince, it is impossible not to sympathise with the claim of a free people for a government and ruler of their own. We respect Maximilian; we also wish he had stayed at Miramar.

The last building I saw in the city was the pretty little English church which a young English clergyman had just come out from England to serve. It is a difficult post; may he worthily fill it! The last person I saw was the President, who, though in mourning at the time from a recent death in his family, was kind enough to receive me, for an hour in the evening, at his private residence. General Diaz is a gallant soldier, who has proved his capacity in war by defeating the man who usurped the Government after the death of Juarez. He is a pure Indian, without a drop of European blood in his veins, and may be said in a real sense to be a scion of the original race. His face inspires confidence; it is strong and full of manhood,

but gentle, kindly, and just. Asking him, through the British Minister, who was good enough to present me, some questions about elementary education in Mexico, he volunteered some interesting information, which showed his personal interest in the subject.

There are two things he is said to wish to accomplish before resigning power, viz., the extension of conscription for the army to all classes of the community, and the making popular education compulsory. With Madame Diaz, whom he has lately married, I had a good deal of pleasant conversation in English, which she speaks well, having been educated by an English governess. I was careful to put in a good word for the artists, who greatly wish to draw Montezuma's cedar, and cannot for the surrounding trees. She readily promised to see if the neighbouring obstructions could be removed.

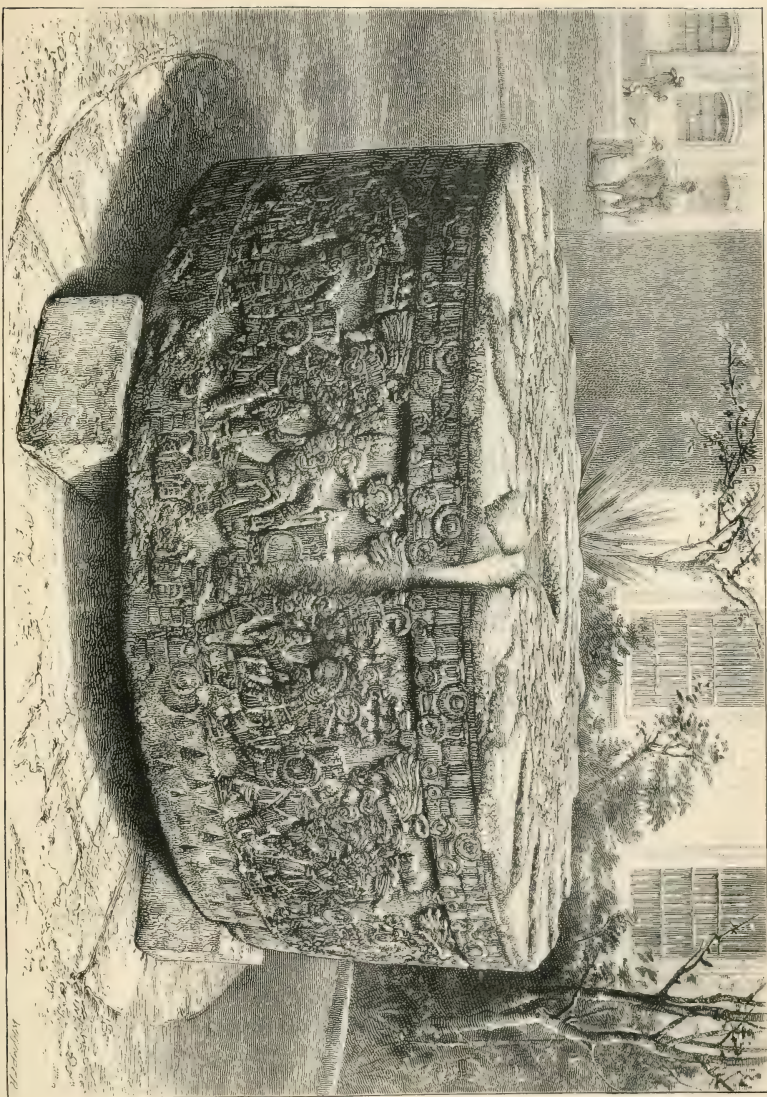
Unless one has private introductions to residents in the neighbourhood, or great abundance of time, a fortnight, as I have already observed, is sufficient for the city. The great elevation does not suit every one, the quality of the water is open to criticism, and there is no sort of doubt about the badness of the drainage. The so-called floating gardens are a fraud, and the canal leading to the lake Tezcuco obnoxious with vile odours. The real place to stay at, and which to an artist is far richer in opportunities for his pencil than Mexico, is Puebla, reached by rail in a few hours from the city, and both in beauty of situation and the purity of air surpassing the metropolis itself. There is a clean and moderate hotel. The city is close to the two great volcanoes; a tramway connects it with Cholula, where the square in which Cortes ordered that terrible massacre is still visible, and the pyramid, up which the victims were conducted for the sacrifice, still remaining, with a church built on the summit. Here Maximilian retreated, and was taken prisoner.

This beautiful country, so opulent in all the resources of nature, washed by the Pacific and Gulf of Mexico, with a market for all its produce close at hand, with its inexhaustible precious metals, its endless variety of fruits and flowers, its torrid and temperate zones, its network of railway, its population of thirteen millions, of which eleven millions are of native race, its healthy and delightful climate; what a future it has! what opportunities of greatness and opulence and power! if only its people could rise to the level of their fortune, and deserve to keep what they own. To mention climate only, I am told,

for instance, that the finest oranges in the world are grown in Sonora, on the Gulf of California; and at the city of Mexico (I never saw them) there are said to be strawberries every day in the year. But in Mexico as elsewhere, while the prosperity of the people must depend a very great deal on the integrity and wisdom of their rulers, the rulers are the persons whom the people select for what they really want them to do. The question actually at the root of all is, what are the people themselves? and are they ever likely by their force of character, their love of enterprise, and their strength of understanding, to make their country what it may be, and ought to be? It is hard to be very hopeful.

At this moment life in the metropolis is very insecure, and a dog is hardly less missed than a man. This happened just after I left. A magnificent American, whom I often met in the street, conspicuous by his size, picturesque dress, and costly sombrero, according to his wont was leaning out of a tram-car going on, when a passer-by snatched off his sombrero and ran away. Quick as a flash of lightning, he sprang out of the car, drew his revolver, and shot the thief in the back, who of course fell. The American came up to him, rescued his sombrero, put it on, sprang back into the tram-car, and quietly pursued his journey. No one thought of interfering with him; but the wounded man was taken up by the police and carried to the hospital, where probably he died. And who cared?

They are in appearance, and by report, a gentle, patient race; much indeed as they were in Montezuma's time. They are not lovers of change, for their usual answer when invited to make improvements is, "My father did not do it. Why need I?" Certainly they do not look to be a merry folk; at least, most of those whom I saw in town or country had a sad countenance, nor do they look intelligent. In their home life they have no great appreciation of the importance of the marriage vow, though in their relations to each other they are usually faithful, and public opinion condemns the man who does not maintain his own child. Their complexion is very dark, their stature small; the women, I should say, decidedly inferior to the men. It is impossible not to feel a very deep and sincere interest in their welfare. But it is less than a week's journey from the City of Mexico to the Capitol at Washington; and how long Mexico will be for the Mexicans, who can say?



"The Sacrificial Stone."

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER V.

"SHADRACH," said Hepzibah, "there's one thing as I wonder thee'st niver done."

It was June weather. The sky was streaked with faint lines of green and rose near the horizon, but the unfathomable soft haze of the zenith still held the warmth and brightness of the fallen sun and delayed the coming of the dusk. The evening was wonderfully still and tranquil, and sounds which would have been inaudible in the common turmoil of the day came clearly from the distance. Children shouted at their play, sheep bleated from the meadows; very far away, with a soft and regular pulsation, the blows of a steam-hammer sounded. Noise seemed removed.

Hepzibah had brought a kitchen chair into the garden, and sat under an apple-tree thick with blossom, from which a sailing flake or two of pinky white would fall now and then, floating hither and thither capriciously as its curves directed it through the warm, still air. She was busily hemming a coarse sort of towelling, and the zip of the needle and swish of the thread went on uninterruptedly. Shadrach, who was something of a dandy, was attired in his roomy suit of black, his tall shining hat, and his coloured comforter. He stood with his mouth only a little less wide open than his eyes, and with changeless visage and motionless head looked from side to side, or fixed a comfortable glance on a particular apple-blossom above him.

"Ah!" said he inquiringly. "And what might that be, Hepzibah?"

"I wonder thee'st niver made up something about Master Edward and the Old Blazer."

Shadrach's face wreathed itself into a slow smile as he looked at her, but catching her eye just as the smile was at the full, he drew his features with a ludicrous suddenness to their original expression, and looked sideways on vacancy as if he saw a not particularly interesting ghost there.

"Ha!" cried Hepzibah, "thee'st made up summat a'ready!"

The Bard's aspect, half shy, half boastful, proclaimed the truth of the guess.

"I've wrote down what I've done," he answered. "But it ain't finished yit."

"Not finished!" said Hepzibah. "Why, as a general run o' things, Shadrach, it's been your use to hit th' iron hot. And here's three month gone by!"

"Well," the Bard explained, "when I begun upon it, I settled up to have it done in a week's time or thereabout, and I went so far as walk into Armstrong's the printers, and price the printin' of a handful."

"Shadrach!" Hepzibah exclaimed with a voice and manner which proclaimed that the idea half delighted and half appalled her. "You never did!"

"I did though," Shadrach responded. "I thought to put 'em on sale at a penny apiece, as bein' summat towards the widders and orphins." Hepzibah dropped her sewing and surveyed the proportions of this enterprise with awe. "But when I come to look at it," Shadrach continued, "I worn't more than half content. It seemed to me as if it was a bit too rough dug out like, and I abode awhile to tek th' edges off on it. Well, then——" He paused and became utterly unable to encounter Hepzibah's inquiring gaze.

"What then?" she asked him.

"Well then," said Shadrach, "I took a piece of a journey into Brummagem."

"What did you go into Brummagem for?" demanded Hepzibah. The Bard's manner indicated so much importance and mystery that it was very disturbing to be kept in suspense.

"I went," said Shadrach, looking anywhere but at Hepzibah, "I went to the newspaper."

"The what?"

"The newspaper. 'Arise Birmingham Gaze-at-it.'" This was Shadrach's version of "Aris's Birmingham Gazette."

"What for?" asked Hepzibah. Shadrach had to be pumped and yielded but a limited return for each stroke of the handle.

"I seed th' editor," said Shadrach.

"Did you?" returned Hepzibah, in a tone which the Bard felt to be almost wounding—it expressed so little of the sentiment proper to the circumstance. This, however, was no fault of Hepzibah's. If she had understood she would have been as full of

wonder for Shadrach's temerity as he himself was.

"I think," said Shadrach, scratching his cheek pensively, "he was the merriest gentleman I ever looked at. He loffed when I went into his room and sin him first. I gi'en him the poetry, and I says 'It's about the Blazer disaster,' I says, 'nigh by Barfield.' He teks it and looks at it and says he, 'Be you the poet?' he says. 'Yis,' says I, 'it's my own mekin-up, all on it.' He went solemn all of a minute, and he read it through from start to finish, and then up he gets and says he, 'Excuse me a minute,' as polite as you please, 'I must have a bit of a talk about this,' he says, 'with my collogue.' So theer I abode for two or three minutes, and then he come back again a-rubbin' his hands and smilin'. 'I should like to print this,' he says, 'very much, but I'm afraid it's a bit out o' date.' I said it *was* a bit out o' date. 'But,' I says, 'it ain't that easy to do it all of a rush.' He loffed again, quite merry and hearty. 'No,' he says, 'it's cost a peck o' trouble, evident. I shouldn't like to lose sight on it, not altogether,' he says. 'I can't print it,' he says, 'but I should be rare and glad to have a copy on it.'"

"Niver!" cried Hepzibah in high delight.

"He did though. 'Rare and glad to have a copy on it,' he says. 'Might I get one o' my young men,' he says, 'to mek a copy?' I said as I'd be very pleased, so he rung a bell on the table and a youngish chap come in. 'Just copy that out, mister,' he says, and the young chap sat down and copied it. 'Don't alter a letter,' said th' editor. 'I wouldn't have it altered for annything.'"

"Niver!" cried Hepzibah again. The narrative absorbed her so that she altogether forgot her sewing and sat with both hands idle in her lap.

"I'm a-tellin' it to you just as it happened," said Shadrach. "'I wouldn't have it altered for the world,' he says. And when it was done he rolled up my paper and he gi'en it to me with just a little bit of a bow like this, an' he shook hands, and says he, 'I'm much obliged,' he says, 'and I'm very pleased to ha' seen thee,' and all the time he was a-loffin' and a-smilin' to do your heart good. I was niver kinder treated i' my life.'"

"Why Shadrach," said Hepzibah, fully alive to the dignity of the interview by this time, "that's a thing as thee'st remember to thy dying day."

"And it is," responded Shadrach with solemnity. "But theer's gifts as nigh on

iverybody can lay claim to, and theer's gifts as is just gi'en here and theer."

Hepzibah took up her sewing again and went on with it thoughtfully, but the way in which the thread lingered now and then showed clearly that her mind was still occupied with the remembrance of the honours bestowed by fortune upon Shadrach and his gift.

Shadrach meanwhile had drawn from one of his coat-tail pockets a crumpled and dog-eared sheet or two of foolscap paper covered with a set of knotted, corrugated, and involved hieroglyphics. Hepzibah sewed on, but looked attentive and expectant. The Bard cleared his throat and began—

"Lines on the Fatal Disaster at the Old Blazer."

"Put it up for a minute," said Hepzibah. "Here's Mr. Edward."

She would not have stopped him had the theme been different, but she had a delicacy about Mr. Edward's praises being chaunted in his hearing. Mr. Edward resented the mention of his own heroism, and even Hepzibah, who was privileged to say almost what she pleased to the members of the Blane household, had been compelled to silence.

There was something odd about Mr. Edward this evening. His walk was lurching and uneven; his cheeks were blanched and his eyes were strangely glazed. Hepzibah arose in alarm.

"Why, Mr. Edward," she cried, "what's the matter with you? You look as if you'd seen a ghost."

"No such thing's ghosts," said the miserable young fellow thickly. "Don't you bother 'bout me. I'm all ri'."

Terror, pity, and shame rushed upon the two simple creatures in such a flood that their wits were swept away. They could only gaze at each other in profound dismay, whilst Ned Blane stood blearing at them with drunken eyes, his head and shoulders lurching though his feet stood still. The frank, manly youngster was all gone, and a brutish caricature stood in his place, inert, fatuous, mournful to behold.

"Master Ned," said Shadrach, more in horrified surprise than blame, "you've been a-drinkin'."

"Very well then," returned Master Ned, with ghastly unchanging gaze, and lifted eyebrows. "Why not? Why shouldn't Old Blazer's Hero cheer his heart a bit as well's other fellows? Eh?"

"Oh! Master Edward," Hepzibah broke in,

half crying. "That's no way to cheer hearts, poor dear soul. It would be the way to break 'em—yours and mine, and all on us—if it happened often. But anybody may be overtaken in a fault, and it niver happened afore. Go to bed, Master Edward, there's a love. Do, now."

"Poor 'ar' never rejoices," said poor Ned, with an idiotic laugh. "Been to the Chase Arms. Been drinking. Hero's health. Old Blazer Zero. That's me. Saved your life, old Shadrach. Come and have drink on the strength of it."

"To think of his coming through the streets like this!" said Hepzibah. "There's crowds in the place as 'ud be wicked enough to take delight in it. And him the stidiest, aimiablest— Oh, for pity's sake, don't let his mother and the children see him! Help me to get him up-stairs, Shadrach."

But unhappily Master Edward was in no mood to be helped up-stairs, and refused all offers of aid in that direction. He wanted to drink with Shadrach. He had saved Shadrach's life, risking and almost losing his own to do it, and he was moved to tears by the reflection that Shadrach had never offered to pay for a drink in reward for this service. He had never thought Shadrach a mean fellow until then, but he gave it to be understood that the memory of Shadrach's ingratitude in that particular had often cut him to the heart.

"Better late than never," said Master Edward. "Come and do it now, and I'll forgive you."

Shadrach was deeply wounded by this imputation on his gratitude.

"As for askin' a gentleman to drink wi' me," he pleaded, "I should never ha' found the cheek to do it. And you know full well, Master Edward, it's very wide o' what you'd think and say if you was in your right mind this minute."

"Say I'm not in my right mind again," said Master Edward, with increased thickness of utterance, "and I'll give you a hiding."

This threat from a man so placable, amiable, and peace-loving, seemed, both to Hepzibah and Shadrach, of as little value as the breath which served to speak it.

"Why," said Shadrach, respectfully propitiatory and explanatory, "you know right well, Master Ned, as you bain't i' your right mind just this minute."

And thereupon, without any sort of further warning, Master Ned knocked Shadrach down. For a moment the unexpectedness

of the blow and her amazement at it held Hepzibah paralysed. But in another moment she had pinioned her young master by the arms, both her arms being passed through his at the elbow, and whilst she held him thus Shadrach rose to his feet from the turf and picked up his hat, regarding his assailant with a sorrow and amazement so profound and so unmingled with anger or resentment, that the drunken man's eyes, lit and cleared by the emotion which followed the blow, caught the meaning in a flash, and he stood rebuked and ashamed. Then being for the moment no better than a mere bundle of foolish nerves, with no brains to guide them or will to control them, he began incontinently to weep, and to maunder that it was an accident, and that he loved Shadrach like a brother. And being willing in this maudlin mood to do anything to which he was bidden, he was smuggled up-stairs secretly, and there partially undressed by Shadrach and finally locked in by Hepzibah.

It was too late to go back to the garden, where the dusk and the dew were falling fast together, and Shadrach had no mind to take the humble place which was allowed to him in the family circle. So Hepzibah undertook to meet him at his mother's house, when the children should have been got to bed and the latest of home duties performed. When, true to her promise, she arrived, an hour later, Shadrach sat in his company clothes beside the smouldering fire, and received her with a sidelong nod of the head.

"Master Ned's all right, I reckon?" said Shadrach. "You wouldn't ha' been here else."

"I pep at him afore I left," Hepzibah answered. "He was fast asleep. But oh, Shadrach, it's a dreadful thing to have happened."

"None so dreadful," returned the Bard, cheerfully. "There's a many as has been caught out once in a way, as niver suffers 'emselves to be caught out again."

"There can be nothing worse, I think," said Hepzibah, "than for a man to take to drink."

"Hepzibah," said the Bard, "that's poetry."

"No!" cried Hepzibah.

"Yes, but it is, though," the authority declared stoutly. "Or if it is not I will mek it so. Wait a minute. There can be nothin' wuss, I think, Than for a mon to tek to drink, Unless—but that is more uncommon—It is to see a drunken womman."

"Poetry!" said Hepzibah, in a sort of charmed stupor. "Why, they slipped off

my tongue as if they'd been no more than common words. I allays thought it took a effort, Shadrach!"

"I should think it did an' all," Shadrach replied, as if he were a little nettled by the implied disparagement of the gift. "There's a many as can get as fur as the fust two lines, but four's a trial. Thee try thy hand at four, Hepzibah, and see what thee canst make on it."

"No, no," returned Hepzibah, humbled already by the test proposed. She was so full of the dreadful event of the evening that even the amazement of having deviated into poetry could not charm her from the theme. She returned to it whilst the Bard, with his head poised critically on one side and his mouth a little wider open than usual, was still tasting the combination quatrain. "Mister Edward," she said mournfully, "isn't the man he used to be, Shadrach."

"No?" said Shadrach, dropping the study of the quatrain instantly. "As how?"

"He's been changed from the very night when you come to the house and spoke o' Mary Howarth's weddin'. He was used to be the gayest creetur—always ready with his bit of a joke, poor young gentleman, and the smile on his face like sunshine. And now theer's niver a merry word to be had for love nor money. He draws himself about as if he took no interest in life, and sometimes he'll smile that sad it would break your heart. Thee know'st, Shadrach, when you've nussed a child, an' lived to see him grow up the finest young man of a parish, it ain't like a stranger."

"Thee think'st he frets about her?" asked Shadrach wistfully.

"Shadrach," said Hepzibah, wiping a tear away with a corner of her herden apron, "I've niver believed as you'd be a-sittin' afore me now if it hadn't been for that. It was only a man as was desperate of his life could ha' run the risk he did. I've heard it said by more than one as it seemed like going back to death more than it was like a common rescue. His heart was broke, poor thing, and he set no worth on his life at all. It was a hundred to one again saving you, Shadrach, and Master Edward isn't like a novice as doesn't know the ins an' outs o' things."

"I allays set it down to his bein' fond o' thee," said Shadrach. "He knowed you'd fret if anything had happened to me."

"He know'd I'd ha' fretted a sight worse," replied Hepzibah, with a rather tart decision, "if anything had happened to him."

"That's human nature," said the Bard humbly, "an' what's human nature has got to be took and be put up with."

"Of course it's human nature," returned Hepzibah. "If I'd ha' nussed you an' carried you about as soon as I was big enough to do it, and seed you grow up bit by bit into the likeliest young man for miles and miles, and then to fall into trouble over a pale-faced chit of a girl as throwed herself away on a wastrel like Will Hackett——" Here Hepzibah wiped her eyes again with the corner of her apron, and left the theme unfinished.

A minute or two later there entered a little old woman, whom both Shadrach and Hepzibah greeted as "mother." The little old woman had a fretful face, a fretful voice, and with these, as it seemed, a fretful temper.

"Hast been callin' me 'mother,'" she said, addressing Hepzibah, "this ten or twelve 'ear. Beest goin' to keep the lad danglin' at thy tail till he's grey?"

"Nay, mother," said Shadrach mildly, "it stands to rayson her can't leave wheer her is while theer's trouble i' the place."

"Well," said the little old woman querulously, "theer's a pair on you. When I was a wench the gells liked a mon as 'ud have 'em to church whether or no, an' stand no shilly-shallyin'. And if the gell was that standoffish for a number o' 'ears as thee'st been, Zibah, the lads 'ud ha' routed out another from somewheer."

"He's fine and welcome, I'm sure," said Hepzibah, rising and drawing her shawl about her.

"Say not so, Hepzibah!" said the Bard. "Let nothin' come twixt you an' me, For I am iver true to thee."

"Who's to tek care on him?" asked the old woman, "and do his mendin' and get him his bit o' victuals when I'm gone? It'll be no great time, I reckon, afore I'm carried out toes foremost, and him no more to be trusted to tek care of himself than a child, as is no more than could be expected, considerin' his gift, and the way his thoughts goes wool-gatherin'."

"Well, well, mother," said Shadrach, "if I'm contented, so must thou be. I'll see thee home, Hepzibah."

CHAPTER VI.

"HAY-BERRY-HAM!" said Mr. Horatio Lowther. "Hay-berry-ham!"

Mr. Lowther was seated in his office at a table overpread with papers, which he was

in the act of sorting and docketing. He made no cessation in his work as he uttered this curious call; but his voice took an ascending tone as he repeated it, until its oily smoothness gave way to a grating shrillness. When the cry had been repeated half-a-dozen times a voice was heard overhead—

"Hillo!"

"You have been there all the time?" asked Mr. Lowther. "Why did you not answer sooner?"

"Better late than never," said the voice, and a pair of corduroyed legs came into view on the open stairway which led from the upper room to the lower.

"What do you mean by better late than never?" asked Mr. Lowther, frowning.

"Nothing," said the voice gruffly, as its owner came into view. "I might ha' said Better never than late. It would ha' been truer about most things."

"Hay-berry-ham!" said Mr. Lowther, speaking rather high in his head, and in a tone of dignified reproof and protest.

"Abrum," the other corrected him doggedly. "Christened name, A—b—r—u—m, Abrum. Don't put *me* on the rack and drag me out into four synnables. I won't have it."

"Did you get the document at the County Court last night?" asked Mr. Lowther.

"Yes," said Abram, a little more doggedly than before.

"Then go down to Mr. Hackett's and take possession."

"That's a nice job, that is," the man grumbled. He was a clean-shaven, wooden-featured, bald man, with moist eyes and a chronic scowl of satire. "Where's the hurry?" he demanded. "It'll do at night, won't it? Come now. Why shouldn't I put it off till after dark?"

He had come down-stairs in his shirt-sleeves, and on receipt of Mr. Lowther's commands had reached down a coat from a nail on the office wall. He had struggled half-way into the coat, which was rather too small for him, when he paused to put these questions.

"You know very well that it will not do after dark," said Mr. Lowther. He added suavely, "Prokerastration is the thief of time. Do what you are told."

"All right!" returned Abram, struggling with the coat. "Hadn't I better wait till about two minutes after one o'clock? Everybody turns out of the factory just then. Everybody knows me, and when I go into a house they know what I'm there for. Bless your heart, I'm known as well as you are."

"Do as you are told," said Mr. Lowther, "and do it now."

"Shall I send the Town Crier round to say I'm going?" Abram asked, standing on tip-toe to reach his hat. "They're a very young married couple, Gaffer. The gell's always been particular respectable. Folks ought to know as the bailiff's in the house."

"Do as you are told," repeated Mr. Lowther, "and do it now."

Abram departed, grumbling inarticulately, and Mr. Lowther, with great smoothness of voice and suavity of manner, called him back in order to irritate him.

"Let me see the document," he said; "and be sure that it is in order."

Abram, who by long experience of his employer could read him like a book, returned with a smiling alacrity in order to irritate Mr. Lowther, and lugging the paper from his breast-pocket, presented it with a burlesque flourish of politeness. Mr. Lowther, having failed of his purpose, glanced casually at it and returned it, and Abram took his way in glee, but had no sooner reached the street than he allowed the tip of his nose to rise and the corners of his mouth to descend to their normal expression.

He walked at a great pace to Hackett's house, a semi-detached villa on the edge of the town, and, having knocked at the door, made himself as small as he could to avoid observation, until a clean little rosy-cheeked maid, in a pink print and a smart cap, answered to his summons. The rosy maid blanched when she saw him, for Mr. Lowther had had dealings with all sorts of people in his time, and—little fish being proverbially sweet—he rather liked the small fry best. And the maid knew Mr. Lowther's messenger from home experience. Abram, though a duly qualified servant of the court, was in a sense Mr. Lowther's retainer. When not engaged in his professional duties, Abram did odd jobs for Mr. Lowther, and even in the exercise of his profession was oftener engaged in his behalf than in that of all other people put together.

"Gaffer in?" said Abram, nodding at the maid to claim his old acquaintance with her.

"No," answered the girl. "Master's gone to the races."

"Missis in?"

"Yes."

"Tell her there's a party wants to speak to her."

The maid during this brief colloquy had, more by defensive instinct than design, closed the door little by little, until by this time

only one of her eyes was visible behind it, but the visitor pushed it open with authoritative shoulder, and closed it behind him when he had entered upon the neat little hall. The little maid recoiled before him, and disappeared with a backward gaze of terror. Abram watched her as she mounted the stairs, and shook his head twice or thrice up and down.

"Pretty ockpation this is," he said, grumbling half aloud. "But if it's got to be done, it's got to be done, and it's just as well to have a cove in the business as does it pleasant as it is to have a cove in the business as does it unpleasant."

The maid, panting a little and somewhat scared, knocked at the drawing-room door. Her mistress's voice bade her come in, and she entered, and, having closed the door, stood silent for a moment or two. The three-months' bride was seated near the window looking out with absent eyes. A half-finished piece of embroidery was in her hands, but they lay idly in her lap with an air of weary lassitude. There was a hint of the same expression in her face, which was of a delicate and rather meagre oval. Her eyes were of a darkish blue-grey, mystic and dreamy. Her lips were mobile and tender, but she had a very decided little chin, and the form of her eyebrows too, notwithstanding the dreamy mystery of the eyes they surmounted, looked as though she might upon occasion claim a will of her own.

When only a second or two had gone by in silence, a dim sense that there had been something stealthy and afraid in the girl's action intruded itself upon her day dream. She turned and awoke from her fancies with a little start at this curious thought, and a glance at the maid's face confirmed it. She rose, and laid the embroidery on a table near her.

"What is the matter, Sarah?"

"Oh, if you please, ma'am," said the maid, "the bum-bailiff's in the house!"

"What is in the house?" asked Mrs. Hackett. Her experience was at fault. She had been tenderly nurtured, and knew little of the disgraces and miseries of life.

"Mr. Whitelaw, ma'am," answered the scared maid. "He's the county-court man, if you please, ma'am. He was put into father's house when we was sold up."

This sounded alarming, but the alarm was only vague. What could the man want here? "Where is he?" she asked. "In the hall? I will go and see him."

She descended the stairs, a little fluttered

in spite of herself, and encountered Abram in the hall. The man, to do him justice, explained his mission civilly, and even with some delicacy.

"You won't put yourself about about me, ma'am," he said, "neither about eatin', nor yet about sleepin'. I ain't particular, nor used to be particular. Dessay when Mr. Hackett comes home he'll put this little matter straight. Prob'ly it's a oversight. Often and often I finds it so."

She left him standing in the hall unanswered, and returned to her old place and posture by the window. The outlook on the summer day had already seemed a little trifling and weary. She had once or twice failed to banish the intruding fear that her marriage was an irretrievable misfortune. It was early to have to do battle with so horrible a conclusion; it was earlier still to be vanquished by it, even though loyalty was yet too active and self-respect too strong to allow her to be conquered for more than a moment at a time.

And here is the place for the revelation of a fact which in its own way is a tragedy. The poor thing had not gone through the ordinary gates of enchantment to marry Will Hackett. She had married that handsome and sweet-voiced prodigal, not in the least because she loved him, but because she was going to reform him. Life was to have been all nobility and self-sacrifice and lofty duty until this black sheep should change his colour, and then she was to have her reward, poor child. But Master Will was one of those effusive, amiable, generous, and free-handed gentry who have no more heart than a turnip. He had seemed so affectionate! In his courting days he had been so easily guided. When a young man has his arm round a pretty girl's waist it is not difficult to seem affectionate; and young men in their courting days have often seemed easily guided, though they have turned out sadly tough in the mouth and rusty in the temper a little later on. But if once the girl who is tied to such a man has gone through the land of rainbows and magic promise he will never seem to her to be altogether the brute he is. Something of the old glamour will cling to him, and bring yet a hint of the old happy blindness to her eyes. Something of the old sweet thrill will stir in the heart at times. So aided, the black sheep may seem to be only a little—a very little—dingier than his brethren of the flock. There are cases—we have mostly been happy enough to know them—where to one faithful and tender pair of eyes in the

world the blackest sheep has shown lustrous white. Shall we scorn that blissful folly, or laugh at it? Not I—for one.

For Mary Hackett there was none of this beautiful illusion possible. She had married a rake with her eyes open and as a matter of conscience. Perhaps it is too easy to say "with her eyes open." Let a home-reared maiden open her eyes as wide as she may she can have but a little knowledge of the rake. She knows vaguely that he is not so good as the run of men, and she knows, on the authority of the silliest and falsest proverb to be found in the collection of all nations, that when reformed he makes the best of husbands. Master Will had been determined to be found out early. In taking a wife he had not proposed to cripple himself. His friends called him "the married bachelor," and he was proud of the title. It bespoke the fact that he had surrendered nothing of his liberties; that the yoke which weighed on most men who married had found no place upon his shoulders.

His wife was little to blame therefore if she discovered the fatal error into which she had fallen a little earlier than most women would have done. She came of the solid, honest trading class, who abhor Bohemianism, and regard debt as the worst of evils, and idleness as one of the worst of crimes. These sentiments were born into her and were a part of her. The shifts of the new household had hurt her bitterly many a time already. The little pile of unpaid tradesmen's bills weighed like an incubus upon her spirit. The calls for each separate bill, and her compelled statement that she would speak to Mr. Hackett about it, were like stabs to her. And now, before she had found time even to begin to reconcile herself to her situation, she and her husband were put to open shame.

The blow fell dull at first, and it was an hour or two before she began to know what pain it carried. The maid came to tell her that dinner was ready, but she could not eat and would not trouble even to make a pretence of eating. In a while a tear or two began to flow, and when once she had given way so far she had lost control of herself, and flying to her bedroom she locked the door and cast herself upon the bed in an abandonment of grief and shame.

The weary dreadful day crawled on minute by minute and hour by hour when this burst was over, and she paced her room to and fro as she looked at the future. More than once

a gust of wrath passed over her spirit and stirred the sick waters of despair. But she would have none of that, and wrestled against herself with all her forces. She had no right to anger—no right to reproach: she had thrown those rights away.

All the while her heart cried out for her mother. Pride held her back, but gave way at last before the imperious call of nature. The friendly darkness had fallen and no one would see her come and go. She was not certain that she was not a prisoner, and even that fear spurred her a little in the way of her own desires, for she wanted to test it and to know the worst, if there were a worse than had happened already. So she slipped on bonnet and shawl and left the house, no effort being made to restrain her. She sped swiftly homewards—the mother's roof had always covered home—since her marriage as before it—and as she went there was such a promise of the peace she longed for in her mother's arms, that it impelled her to run.

Blank disappointment at the door. Mother and daughter had had but little intercourse of late, and the estrangement had grown so far already that Mrs. Howarth had gone away on a customary summer visit of a week to her sister without letting her daughter know of it. Her father was indoors, said the domestic, and would be glad to see her. No, she made shift to answer, she would call again when her mother had returned. She dared not face her father with the news.

The night had grown black and tempestuous. She had had no leisure to notice this before, but she saw it as she turned, and the gloom and threatened storm added their quota to the weight which rested on her. The road was lonely, with strips of green on either side of it, and *sere* and there a stile, which gave a glimpse of open fields brooding darkly in the night. The tears she had shed so freely already, the hurried race to her father's house, the disappointment there, the darkness and loneliness of the road, all helped one way. She sank upon a hillock beneath the tall overhanging hedge and burst into a new passion of tears. Only a minute later she heard between her own sobs the sound of a quick footstep on the path, and rose to her feet to find a sombre figure bending over her.

"My poor dear creature," said a pitying and familiar voice, "what's the matter? Don't be afraid of me. I wouldn't hurt you for the world."

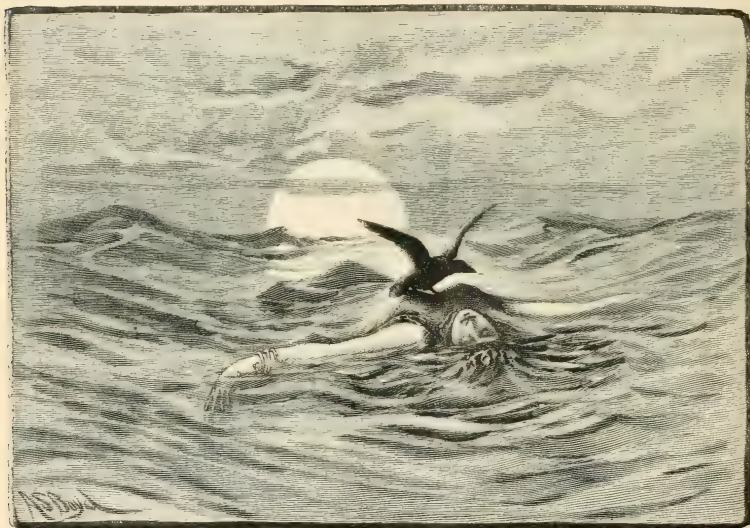
Ned Blane!

THE DELUGE.

BY WILLIAM CANTON.

*A*ROUND the globe one wave from pole to pole
Rolled on, and found no shore to break its roll.
One awful water mirrored everywhere
The silent, blue, illimitable air,
And glassed in one same hour the midnight moon,
Sunrise and sunset and the sun at noon.

Beneath the noontide sun 'twas still as death.
Within the dawn no living thing drew breath.
Beneath the cold white moon the cold blue wave
Sealed with an icy hush the old world's grave.
But hark ! upon the sunset's edge were heard,
Afar and faint, the cries of beast and bird.



*Afar, between the sunset and the dark,
The lions had awakened in the ark.
Across the great red splendour white wings flew,
Weary of wandering where no green leaf grew ;
Weary of searching for that unfound shore
From which the raven had returned no more.*

*And as the white wings laboured slowly back,
And down the huge orb sank, a speck of black
Stood fluttering in the circle of the sun,—*

*While the long billows, passing one by one,
Lifted and lowered in the crimson blaze
A dead queen of the old and evil days.*

*One gold-clasped arm lay beautiful and bare ;
The gold of power gleamed in her floating hair ;
Her jewelled raiment in the glassy swell
Glittered ; and ever as she rose and fell,
And o'er his reddened claws the ripple broke,
The raven fluttered with uneasy croak.*

SOMETHING ABOUT THE CUNARD LINE.

By JOHN BURNS.

THAT "human nature is a curious thing, and there is plenty of it," is probably better exemplified on board a great ocean steamship than in any other place in the world. There is to be found a motley assemblage of men, women, and children, sometimes numbering upwards of fifteen hundred souls—not packed like herrings in a barrel, motionless and compressed, but as bees in a hive, active and swarming about every hour of the day. Their lives are linked together and subject to one common destiny for the time being, and the knowledge of this fact, as well as the circumscribed nature of the immediate surroundings, promotes sociability and good-fellowship, and induces passengers to take an unusual interest in their neighbours. Even the most unsympathetic, morose, and austere dispositions feel the effect of the genial spirit which pervades the atmosphere of shipboard, and insensibly permit themselves to become thawed to some extent under its influence. Then, too, the anxious, the harassed, and the careworn, seldom fail to obtain mental relief from the invigorating sea air, and they are enabled, at least partially and temporarily, to view life less gloomily. And, after all, it is only natural that it should be easier to "drown dull care" at sea than on land!

Old voyagers love to dilate on the trying experiences of bygone days when people sailed to and fro between Great Britain and America in the brigs commonly called "coffins," and subsequently in clipper ships, splendid in wearing and tearing against a westerly breeze, but the comfort and luxury of which would be only misery and endurance to us nowadays. But the vast majority of the travelling public accept with complacency, and quite as a matter of course, the refinements and conveniences to be found on board the ocean steamers of to-day. They fail to grasp the full extent of the advancement which has taken place within the last half-century, and they are apt to overlook the intricacies of the human mechanism which has to be constantly but quietly kept in motion for the attainment of order, regularity, and discipline. They possess no intelligent conception of the vastness and variety of the provisioning necessary for the proper maintenance of the crowds carried in our modern floating hotels; nor have they the slightest ideas of the quantities of fuel and ship's stores generally absorbed by these insatiable

leviathans. As it is right for every one at times to "pause and consider" the giant strides of progress in all directions, one of the main objects of this sketch is to supply some of these deficiencies of popular knowledge. But, before detailing the internal economy of our large ocean vessels, let me institute a comparison between the pioneer vessels of the Cunard line and the latest addition to our fleet, which will at once disclose the remarkable progress of steam navigation upon the Atlantic. The *Britannia*, built in 1839, took 600 tons of coals leaving Liverpool for her outward voyage. She burned 44 tons per day, whilst her steam pressure was 9 lbs., and her speed a little over 8 knots per hour. Gradually and steadily the ships, whose nomenclature ended in "*ia*," increased in all those particulars until the culmination was reached in the *Etruria*, built in 1885. She has averaged a speed of 18 knots in nine consecutive voyages between Queenstown and New York, which is equal to nearly 21 statute miles per hour, or somewhat greater than the average speed of the ordinary train service on any railway in the world. Her engines indicate 14,000 horse-power, and are supplied with steam from 9 double-ended boilers, each with 8 furnaces, or a total of 72 furnaces. The total consumption of coal is 300 tons per day, or 12 tons per hour, or 466 lbs. per minute; and if the whole of the fires were raked together and formed into one large fire there would be 42 tons of coal, or a mass 20 feet long, 20 feet broad, and rather more than 4 feet high, fiercely burning. Besides the coal, 130 gallons of oil are used daily for journals, bearings, &c. In the engine-room are the dynamos and driving-engines used for lighting the ship, which are looked after by the engine-room staff. Her crew is made up as follows:—

The Captain

"Who spreads the graduated chart
And bounds the distance by the rules of art."

6 Officers.

Surgeon and Purser.

46 Seamen.

Carpenter and Joiner.

Boatswain and Mate.

2 Masters-at-Arms.

12 Engineers.

112 Firemen and Trimmers.

72 Stewards.

6 Stewardesses.

24 Cooks, Bakers, and Assistants.

In all, 287 hands.

Before the commencement of a voyage the crew have to "sign articles;" at this time the officers and sailors are examined by the ship's surgeon for colour blindness, and every officer joining the service is examined by an expert for long and short sight.

The ships are always sent from the loading berth in dock to the Company's moorings in the Sloyne at least twenty-four hours before the time appointed for sailing, and on the day before sailing each member of the crew is given a metal badge with a number stamped upon it, showing the boat (which has a corresponding number) he belongs to. After the men have received their badges, they are mustered, their names are called, and then they are put through the various drills appointed by the directors to be carried out; these consist of boat drill, fire drill, pump drill, bulk-head door drill, and sending squads of men, belonging to one or more boats, from one part to any other part of the ship. When the order is given, "Out all boats," the men (sailors, firemen, and stewards) go to their respective boats, *i.e.* those with badges numbered 1 to No. 1 boat, and so on, and at once cast off the lashings, grips, and covers, swing the boat out, square the davits, and stand by for the order "Lower away;" all this time the boat keepers (always sailors) are in the boat, and never leave her till she is again swung in board and secured. When the order "Lower away" is given, the rope ladder, with which each boat is supplied, is passed to the men on deck and one end secured to the ship's rail, the other end going down with the boat. As soon as the boat touches the water the order "Man all boats" is given, the boat's crew, consisting of four sailors (two already in the boat), two firemen, two stewards, and the officer or quartermaster in charge, then get into the boat and she is sent to pull round a vessel or buoy at some distance from the ship; upon their return, the oars are laid in and the boats sent away under sail; when they come back from their sailing cruise they are hoisted in, put into their respective chocks, and secured for the voyage. It is very rare for a boat to exceed three minutes from the time the order "Out all boats" is given till she is well clear of the ship's side. The fire drill, pump drill, and bulk-head door drill are each in turn attended to, and an excuse is never allowed for any member of the crew being absent while the drill is going on. The store rooms, state rooms, saloons, sounding machines, lead lines, rockets, and all life-saving appliances are thoroughly examined,

and if found perfect the ship is considered in good order for the voyage. At a fixed hour on each day during the voyage the bulk-head doors are closed and opened to keep them in good working order. All minor regulations of the Cunard Company receive the same strict attention—indeed I may say

"To all its rules conformity is paid,
The service lov'd and discipline obey'd."

The officers and sailors are divided into two watches, and keep watch and watch from the time of departure from one port till the time of arrival at the other. These watches are—first watch, from 8 P.M. till midnight; middle watch, from midnight till 4 A.M.; morning watch, from 4 A.M. till 8 A.M.; forenoon watch, from 8 A.M. till noon; afternoon watch, from noon till 4 P.M.; then come the dog-watches, the first from 4 P.M. till 6 P.M., the second from 6 P.M. till 8 P.M.; by this arrangement seven instead of six watches are made, the intention being to change the turn of the night watch every twenty-four hours. By the way, it was facetiously remarked by Theodore Hook that the term dog-watch comes from these watches being "curtailed." The chief officer, 3rd and 5th officers, and half the sailors are in one watch (the port watch), the 2nd, 4th, and 6th officers and half the sailors make up the starboard watch. When the chief officer is on deck he is stationed on the bridge where the telegraphs to the engine room, wheel house, and other parts of the vessel are fixed, the 3rd officer is on the look-out bridge, forward, and the 5th officer is at the *con* attending to the steering of the ship; two of the sailors are stationed as far forward as possible as look-out men, one sailor is stationed at the crank hatch to pass an order to the engine room should anything go wrong with the telegraph to the engine room, and a quartermaster is stationed in the after wheel house to attend to the steering engine and also to look after the wheel chains; in thick weather the look-outs are doubled, and in heavy weather additional men are stationed in the after wheel house to put the brakes on the circle on the rudder head should anything go wrong with the wheel chains, steering engine, &c., in which case the hand steering gear could be attached in less than a minute; the remaining part of the watch, under the boatswain, attend to making or shortening sail, washing decks, &c. When the starboard watch comes on deck the 2nd officer relieves the chief officer, the 4th the 3rd officer, and the 6th the 5th

officer, the look-outs, &c., being relieved by members of the watch coming on duty. Every care and attention is paid by the officers and look-outs, or it would be impossible to navigate ocean steamers as safely as is done. This routine is carried on from the beginning till the end of the passage, and through sunshine and darkness, storm and tempest, the only change made is removing the look-out men from the fore end of the ship, where they might have a chance of being washed away, to the look-out bridge, or even to the main bridge, but this latter is only done in very bad weather.

The engineers (with the exception of the chief engineer, who does not keep a watch), and firemen and trimmers are divided into three watches, each of 4 hours' duration—this gives 8 hours on duty and 16 hours off duty during the day. In fine weather the engineers and men have the greater part of the 16 hours off duty to themselves, but in thick and foggy weather the engineers and some of the best men who have been on watch for 4 hours, have to stand by the starting gear and safety valve gear for another 4 hours, supposing the thick weather to continue for that time. A moment's thought will show that in such event the watch on duty in the engine room and stokehole must remain at their stations and attend to whatever is requisite in the ordinary work of running the engines; and as it is just as necessary that some one be stationed at the starting and safety valve gear to stop and reverse the engines should such an order come from the bridge, the engineers and some of the men who have kept the previous watch are told off to this duty.

Passengers inhale with the sea air an access of enthusiasm, and are ready to become excited on the smallest provocation. Is it a passing vessel? Or a spouting whale? Or a towering iceberg? It forms for the nonce an all-absorbing topic of interest and eager speculation. But, even to those who cannot be termed epicures, the chief concern and uppermost thought of each day is undoubtedly "What shall we eat and what shall we drink?" The fresh breezes create hearty appetites, and with numbers of people the time is agreeably spent in the enjoyment of one meal or in the anticipation of the next. Under these circumstances, what an important department is that under the charge of the Chief Steward!

"Not winds to voyagers at sea,
Nor showers to earth more necessary be,
Not to the thirsty boatswain, flip
Than is the Steward to a ship."

So high does the department in question rank in the estimation of the *voyageur*, that no apology becomes necessary for introducing a detailed description of its organization; and I conceive that some statistics relative to the consumption of victualling and other stores may prove interesting, especially to such readers as have crossed the Atlantic, and to those who contemplate making the trip.

The chief steward is not only responsible for the good order of the servants and the cleanliness of the saloons, cabins, baths, &c., but for providing the passengers with a good and liberal table. The greatest care is exercised in the selection of the staff who have to attend to the passengers' wants, and that these are many and constant the ordinary routine will show.

The bakers turn out at 4 A.M.; this is not a case of "weather permitting," for "blow high, blow low," out they come, or there would be no hot rolls or bread or cakes for breakfast. The cooks turn out at 5.30 A.M. At 6 A.M. coffee is served in the state-rooms to any passenger requiring it, or on deck should any one have so far forgotten himself as to get out of bed at that hour. Breakfast is served from 8 to 10 A.M., lunch from 1 to 2 P.M., dinner from 5 to 7 P.M., and supper from 9 to 10 P.M.; in the intervals between breakfast and lunch, lunch and dinner, and dinner and supper, the passengers assist digestion with ginger nuts, prunes, oranges, nuts, cake, and many other things, looked upon with horror by the natural man; and this never ceases till the end of the voyage, giving employment to the cook till 10 P.M. The bakers finish the day's work at 7 P.M. The stewards turn out at 6 A.M., clean saloons, smoking room, &c., &c., and prepare the tables for breakfast; a portion of the stewards attend to the bedrooms, but the greater number attend at table or wherever they may be required. They finish the day's work at 11 P.M., and are the hardest worked men on board the ship.

The amount of provisions, groceries, &c., on board at the time of sailing are very large. For a single passage to the westward the *Etruria*, with 547 cabin passengers and a crew of 287 persons, had, when leaving Liverpool on 28th August last, the following quantities of provisions—12,550 lbs. fresh beef, 760 lbs. corned beef, 5,320 lbs. mutton, 850 lbs. lamb, 350 lbs. veal, 350 lbs. pork, 2,000 lbs. fresh fish, 600 fowls, 300 chickens, 100 ducks, 50 geese, 80 turkeys, 200 brace grouse, 15 tons potatoes, 30 hampers vegetables, 220 quarts ice cream, 1,000 quarts milk, and 11,500 eggs.

In groceries alone there were over 200 different articles, including (for the round voyage of 22 days)—650 lbs. tea, 1,200 lbs. coffee, 1,600 lbs. white sugar, 2,800 lbs. moist sugar, 750 lbs. pulverised sugar, 1,500 lbs. cheese, 2,000 lbs. butter, 3,500 lbs. ham, and 1,000 lbs. bacon.

The foregoing seem enormous quantities, but very little was left upon the ship's arrival in port. The consumption may easily be accounted for when it is considered that the crew (each member of which is allowed 2 lbs. of beef per day) use 574 lbs., that 350 lbs. per day will be used in making beef tea, making a total of 924 lbs. for the crew and the single item of beef tea; then breakfast, lunch, dinner, and supper for 547 passengers account for the remainder; 11,500 eggs appears to be a large consumption for an eight days' passage—it is in reality one egg per minute from the time the ship sails from Liverpool until her arrival at New York—but they are prepared in many ways for breakfast, and disappear in hundreds at supper; in fact, it is not an unusual thing to see a lady or gentleman finish off a supper of grilled chicken and devilled sardines with four poached eggs on toast, and it is the same with everything on board. Lemons are used at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per head per day; oranges, 3 per head per day; and apples, when in season, at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per head per day.

The quantities of wines, spirits, beer, &c., put on board for consumption on the round voyage comprise—1,100 bottles of champagne, 850 bottles of claret, 6,000 bottles of ale, 2,500 bottles of porter, 4,500 bottles of mineral waters, 650 bottles of various spirits.

Crockery is broken very extensively, being at the rate of 900 plates, 280 cups, 438 saucers, 1,213 tumblers, 200 wine glasses, 27 decanters, and 63 water-bottles in a single voyage.

As regards the consumption on board the fleet for *one year*, we can almost say that our sheep and oxen “feed on a thousand hills,” for we consume no less than 4,656 sheep, 1,800 lambs, and 2,474 oxen—an array of flocks and herds surpassing in extent the possessions of many a pastoral patriarch of ancient times. This is equivalent to 2,091,754 lbs. of meat, or 4 lbs. per minute. We consume 831,603 eggs, or more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ per minute; and we drink 21,000 lbs. of tea in the year, and 71,770 lbs. of coffee, sweetened by 296,100 lbs. of sugar; whilst the following articles also figure largely: $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons of mustard, $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons of pepper, 7,216 bottles pickles, 8,000 tins sardines, 30 tons salt cod

and ling, 4,192 4-lb. jars jams, 15 tons marmalade, 22 tons raisins, currants, and figs, 18 tons split peas, 15 tons pearl barley, 17 tons rice, 34 tons oatmeal, 460 tons flour, 23 tons biscuits, 33 tons salt, 48,902 loaves of bread (8 lbs. each), 53 tons hams, 20 tons bacon, 15 tons cheese, 930 tons potatoes, 24,075 fowls, 4,230 ducks, 2,200 turkeys, 2,200 geese, 31,212 tablets Pears' soap, 3,484 lbs. Windsor soap, 10 tons yellow soap.

Our passengers annually drink and smoke to the following extent: 8,030 bottles and 17,613 half bottles champagne, 13,941 bottles and 7,310 half bottles claret, 9,200 bottles other wines, 489,344 bottles ale and porter, 174,921 bottles mineral waters, 34,400 bottles spirits, 34,360 lbs. tobacco, 63,340 cigars, 56,875 cigarettes.

The heaviest item in our annual consumption is naturally coal, of which we burn 356,764 tons, or almost 1,000 tons for every day in the year. This quantity of coal, if built as a wall four feet high and one foot thick would reach from the Land's End to John o' Groat's House. Our consumption of engine oil is 104,048 gallons; of burning oils, 23,020 gallons; of paint oil, 9,290 gallons; of waste, 90 tons; of white lead, 51 tons; of red lead, 12 tons.

That our ropes form another huge item may be judged from the fact that if all were joined together they would stretch from Glasgow to London and forty miles beyond!

Then, with respect to the aggregate employment of labour by the Cunard Company, it requires 34 captains, 146 officers, 628 engineers, boilermakers, and carpenters, 665 seamen, 916 firemen, 900 stewards, 62 stewardesses, 42 women to keep the upholstery and linen in order, with 1,100 of a shore gang, or about 4,500 people to run our ships, which traverse yearly a distance equal to five times that between the earth and the moon.

There are many good stories told of the olden days, when there was less betting about the ship's time in the twenty-four hours, and whether the pilot at Sandy Hook should step on board with his right or his left foot first, or whether he would wear a wideawake or a hat. I well remember hearing of “Sam Slick” (Judge Haliburton), the father-in-law of my partner, William Cunard, standing on the deck of a steamer on a voyage to England, when a Yankee came up to him and said, “I hear, sir, that you come from the place where ‘Sam Slick’ lives.” “Ah,” said the Judge, “I think I know him as well

as any man living, for I have shaved him for forty years." The Yankee at dinner told his friends that the man whom they all thought so intelligent and clever was only a barber, for he had himself stated that in his native place he had shaved "Sam Slick" every morning for forty years! On one occasion a passenger who had never been at sea before, came on deck in the morning, and finding all the fore and aft sails set, rushed into the cabin, telling everybody "There's something wrong. The curtains are all down," when an old lady, whose daughter had been sick most of the voyage, exclaimed, "There's nothing wrong. My gal has been browsing about the deck all morning!" Some of the anecdotes relate to the old captains. Harrison, of the *Asia*, going to Halifax encountered a dense fog off the banks of Newfoundland, and at breakfast told his passengers that he should make the land by three in the afternoon. The day wore on, when close to the hour named the cry came from the lookout, "Breakers ahead!" and down went the helm instant. Harrison, who stood amidst a knot of anxious passengers, took out his watch and calmly remarked, "Very good; made land to the minute!" That same Harrison, as brave and true a sailor as ever lived, afterwards commanded the *Great Eastern*, and was drowned in the Solent, when going ashore in a dingy. "Old Judkins" was a mighty sailor and splendid navigator, could be as gentle as a lamb to beautiful woman, and gruff as a bear to the other sex if they crossed his path; but even to the lady passenger he could sometimes growl, as when he replied to the buxom widow who asked if there were always fogs on "the Banks"—"I don't live upon them, madam."

"Cheery Lott" was another veteran commander, and in the days of his bachelorhood, a worthy minister officiating on board his ship quite unconsciously took for his text, "Remember Lot's wife," which made the modern Lott rage furiously; as he also did upon another occasion, when a sailor complained within his hearing that the pork was "as salt as Lot's wife," the good captain being peculiarly sensitive to all such allusions to his distinguished biblical namesake.

I made a voyage to New York with the present Commodore of the fleet, Theodore Cook, the type of a skilful captain, with a nerve of cold-blast steel, and who has commanded no less than twenty-four of our ships. He was taking his noon observations one day when a cloud interrupted his vision; a passenger coming up said, "Captain Cook,

I'm afraid that cloud prevented you from making your observation." "Yes, sir," replied the potentate of the sea, "but it did not hinder you from making yours."

The career of the Cunard Line, extending over nearly half-a-century, has not been devoid of interesting episodes outside the prosaic limits of ordinary business routine, as will be seen from the two following incidents, which I have selected to conclude this article. The first relates to an action of chivalry in the yet undegenerate days of commercial emulation, and well deserves grateful remembrance.

In 1850—one decade after the formation of the Cunard Line—there started into existence the Collins Line, which in its day was a great power, and for a series of years fought hard and fought well for the supremacy in the Atlantic trade. At the very height of the struggle our steamship *Alps* was seized by the United States' Customs in consequence of an accusation brought against some of her crew for smuggling, and bond was demanded to the extent of £30,000 sterling; when who should come forward and stand surety for the Cunard Company but the great firm of Brown, Shipley, & Co., agents in New York for the Collins Line! That was truly generous, and it told us both that we could fight as men and act like men in time of trouble. The second incident occurred in 1861, when the friendly relations between Great Britain and America were put in jeopardy through the forcible arrest of Messrs. Mason and Slidell, Confederate Commissioners, on board of the British Royal Mail steamer *Trent*, by the Commander of the Federal war steamer *San Jacinto*. This was at the beginning of winter, when time was of exceeding value, and the resources of the Cunard Company were at once brought into requisition to convey troops and stores to Canada. On the 4th of December orders were telegraphed to Liverpool to fit up the *Australasian* as a transport. She was completed on the 10th, took in her coals on the 11th, embarked the 1st Battalion of the Rifle Brigade and stores on the 12th, and sailed, on the 13th, under the command of Captain Cook, for Bic, on the St. Lawrence. On the 5th of December similar orders were received with regard to the *Persia*. She received her coals on the 14th, embarked 1,270 officers and men of the Guards on the 15th, sailed the following day, under the command of Captain Judkins, and landed them in due course at Bic, but the ice threatening to envelop the ship, Captain

Judkins had to bolt for the open sea, leaving all his boats behind. The story of these charters is a curious one. We made the contract with the Admiralty for about £50,000, but after it was closed we received official intimation that if this special service was successfully carried through, we would be paid a premium of £10,000. Well, as stated, we landed the Guards in the *Persia* at Bic, but the *Australasian*, although she made a gallant attempt to reach that port also, was prevented from doing so by the ice closing in upon her, and she was obliged to

debark her troops at Halifax. We had clearly, therefore, forfeited our premium, but what did the Government say? They heard the story, and Lord Palmerston, who was then Prime Minister, remarked, "You can claim nothing as you did not land the *Guards and Rifles* at Bic; but, inasmuch as you put the Guards ashore there, we might give you £5,000." Then, in a moment afterwards, with a twinkle in his eye, he said, "No, gentlemen, you shall have the £10,000. You did your best, and I like pluck." Alack-a-day! would that be done now?

THE SUN'S HEAT.

By SIR WILLIAM THOMSON, LL.D., F.R.S.

SECOND PAPER.

IN last month's paper on this subject we have seen that the sun draws on no external source for the heat he radiates out from year to year, and that the whole energy of this heat is due to the mutual attraction between his parts acting in conformity with the Newtonian law of gravitation. We have seen how an ideal mechanism, easily imagined and understood, though infinitely far from possibility of realisation, could direct the work done by mutual gravitation between all the parts of the shrinking mass, to actually generate its heat-equivalent in an ocean of white-hot liquid covering the sun's surface, and so keep it white-hot while constantly radiating out heat at the actual rate of the sun's heat-giving activity. Let us now consider a little more in detail the real forces and movements actually concerned in the process of cooling by radiation from the outermost region of the sun, the falling inwards of the fluid thus cooled, the consequent mixing up of the whole mass of the sun, the resulting diminished elastic resistance to pressure in equi-dense parts, and the consequent shrinkage of the whole mass under the influence of mutual gravitation. I must first explain that this "elastic resistance to pressure" is due to heat, and is, in fact, what in my paper of last month I called "Sir Humphrey Davy's repulsive motion." I called it so because Davy first used the expression "repulsive motion" to describe the fine intermolecular motions to which he and the other founders of the Kinetic theory of heat attributed the elastic resistance to compression presented by gases and fluids.

Imagine, instead of the atoms and mole-

cules of the various substances which constitute the sun's mass, a vast number of elastic globes like schoolboys' marbles or billiard balls. Consider first, anywhere on our earth, a few million such balls put into a room large enough to hold a thousand times their number, with perfectly hard walls and ceiling, but with a real wooden floor; or, what would be still more convenient for our purpose, a floor of thin elastic sheet steel, supported by joists close enough together to prevent it from drooping inconveniently in any part. Suppose in the beginning the marbles to be lying motionless on the floor. In this condition they represent the atoms of a gas, as for instance, oxygen, nitrogen, or hydrogen, absolutely deprived of heat, and therefore lying frozen, or as molecular dust strewn on the floor of the containing vessel.

If now a lamp be applied below the oxygen, nitrogen, or hydrogen, the substance, becoming warmed by heat conducted through the floor, will rise from its condition of absolutely cold solid, or of incoherent molecular dust, and will spread as a gas through the whole enclosed space. If more and more heat be applied by the lamp the pressure of the gas outwards in all directions against the inside of the enclosing vessel will become greater and greater.

As a rude mechanical analogue to this warming of a gas by heat conducted through the floor of its containing vessel, from a lamp held below it, return to our room with floor strewn with marbles, and employ workmen to go below the floor and strike its underside in a great many places vehemently with mallets. The marbles in immediate contact

with the floor will begin to jump from it and fall sharply back again (like water in a pot on a fire simmering before it boils). If the workmen work energetically enough there will be more and more of commotion in the heap, till every one of the balls gets into a state of irregular vibration, up and down, or obliquely, or horizontally, but in no fixed direction; and by mutual jostling the heap swells up till the ceiling of the room prevents it from swelling any further. Suppose now the floor to become, like the walls and ceiling, absolutely rigid. The workmen may cease their work of hammering, which would now be no more availing to augment the motions of the marbles within, than would be a lamp applied outside to warm the contents of a vessel, if the vessel be made of ideal matter impermeable to heat. The marbles being perfectly elastic will continue for ever * flying about in their room striking the walls and floor and ceiling and one another, and remaining in a constant average condition of denser crowd just over the floor and less and less dense up to the ceiling.

In this constant average condition the average velocity of the marbles will be the same all through the crowd, from ceiling to floor, and will be the same in all directions horizontal, or vertical, or inclined. The continually repeated blows upon any part of the walls or ceiling will in the aggregate be equivalent to a continuous pressure which will be in simple proportion to the average density of the crowd at the place. The diminution of pressure and density from the floor upwards will be precisely the same as that of the density and pressure of our atmosphere calculated on the supposition of equal temperature at all heights, according to the well-known formula and tables for finding heights by the barometer.

In reality the temperature of the atmosphere is not uniform from the ground upwards, but diminishes at the rate of about 1°C . for every 162 metres of vertical ascent in free air, undisturbed by mountains, according to observations made in balloons by the late Mr. Welsh, of Kew, through a large range

of heights. This diminution of temperature upwards in our terrestrial atmosphere is most important and suggestive in respect to the constitution of the solar atmosphere, and not merely of the atmosphere or outer shell of the sun, but of the whole interior fluid mass with which it is continuous. The two cases have so much in common that there is in each case loss of heat from the outer parts of the atmosphere by radiation into space, and that in consequence circulating currents are produced through the continuous fluid, by which a thorough mixing up and down is constantly performed. In the case of the terrestrial atmosphere the lowest parts receive by contact heat from the solid earth, warmed daily by the sun's radiation. On the average of night and day, as the air does not become warmer on the whole, it must radiate out into space as much heat as all that it gets, both from the earth by contact, and by radiation of heat from the earth, and by intercepted radiation from the sun on its way to the earth. In the case of the sun the heat radiated from the outer parts of the atmosphere is wholly derived from the interior. In both cases the whole fluid mass is kept thoroughly mixed by currents of cooled fluid coming down and warmer fluid rising to take its place, and to be cooled and descend in its turn.

Now it is a well-known property of gases and of fluids generally (except some special cases, as that of water within a few degrees of its freezing temperature, in which the fluid under constant pressure contracts with rise of temperature) that condensations and rarefactions, effected by augmentations and diminutions of pressure from without, produce elevations and lowerings of temperature in circumstances in which the gas is prevented from either taking heat from or giving heat to any material external to it. Thus a quantity of air or other gas taken at ordinary temperature (say 15°C . or 59°F .) and expanded to double its bulk becomes 71°C . cooler; and if the expansion is continued to thirty-two times its original bulk it becomes cooled 148° farther, or down to about 200°C . below the temperature of freezing water, or to within 73° of absolute cold. Such changes as these actually take place in masses of air rising in the atmosphere to heights of eight or nine kilometres, or of twenty or twenty-five kilometres. Corresponding differences of temperature there certainly are throughout the fluid mass of the sun, but of very different magnitudes because of the twenty-seven-fold greater gravity at the sun's sur-

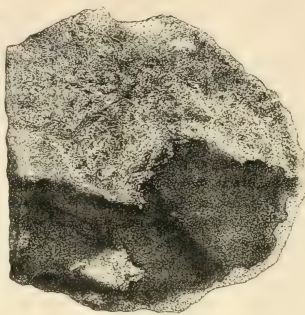
* To justify this statement I must warn the reader that the ideal perfectly elastic balls which we are imagining must be supposed somehow to have such a structure that each takes only a definite average proportion of its share of the kinetic energy of the whole multitude, so that on the average there is a constant proportion of energy in the translatory motions of the balls; the other part being the vibratory or rotational motions of the parts of each ball. For simplicity also we suppose the balls to be perfectly smooth and frictionless so that we shall not be troubled by need to consider them as having any rotatory motions such as real balls with real frictional collisions would acquire. The ratio of the two kinds of energy for ordinary gases, according to Clausius, to whom is due this essential contribution to the kinetic theory, is,—of the whole energy, three-fifths translational to two-fifths vibrational.

face, the vastness of the space through which there is free circulation of fluid, and last, though not least, the enormously higher temperature of the solar fluid than of the terrestrial atmosphere at points of equal density in the two. This view of the solar constitution has been treated mathematically with great power by Mr. J. Homer Lane, of Washington, U.S., in a very important paper read before the National Academy of Sciences of the United States in April, 1869, and published with further developments in the *American Journal of Science* for July, 1870. Mr. Lane, by strict mathematical treatment, finds the law of distribution of density and temperature all through a globe of homogeneous gas left to itself in space, and losing heat by radiation outwards so slowly that the heat-carrying currents produce but little disturbance from the globular form.

One very remarkable and important result which he finds is, that the density at the centre is about twenty* times the mean density; and this, whether the mass be large or small, and whether oxygen, nitrogen, or hydrogen, or other substance, provided only it be of one kind of gas throughout, and that the density in the central parts is not too great to allow the condensation to take place, according to the ordinary gaseous law of density, in simple proportion to pressure for the same temperatures. We know this law to hold with somewhat close accuracy for common air, and for each of its two chief constituents, oxygen and nitrogen, separately, and for hydrogen, to densities of about two hundred times their densities at our ordinary atmospheric pressure. But when the compressing force is sufficiently increased, they all show greater resistance to condensation than according to the law of simple proportion, and it seems most probable that there is for every gas a limit beyond which the density cannot be increased by any pressure however great. Lane remarks that the density at the centre of the sun would be "nearly one-third greater than that of the metal plati-

num," if the gaseous law held up to so great a degree of condensation for the ingredients of the sun's mass; but he does not suggest this supposition as probable, and he no doubt agrees with the general opinion that in all

probability the ingredients of the sun's mass, at the actual temperatures corresponding to their positions in his interior, obey the simple gaseous law through but a comparatively small space inwards from the surface; and that in the central regions they are much less condensed than according to that law. According to the simple gaseous law, the sun's central density would be thirty-one times that of water; we may assume that it is in all probability much less



[..... 5 centimetres]

Fig. 1. (See page 26S.)

than this, though considerably greater than the mean density 1.4. This is a wide range of uncertainty, but it would be unwise at present to narrow it, ignorant as we are of the main ingredients of the sun's whole mass, and of the laws of pressure, density, and temperature, even for known kinds of matter at very great pressures and very high temperatures.

The "paradox" referred to in my article of last month is, as I now find, merely a misstatement (faulty and manifestly paradoxical through the omission of an essential condition) of an astonishing and most important conclusion of Lane's theory. In Newcomb's "Popular Astronomy," first edition, p. 508, the omission is supplied in a footnote, giving a clear popular explanation of the dynamics of Lane's conclusion; and the subject is similarly explained in Ball's "Story of the Heavens," pp. 501, 502, and 503, with complete avoidance of the "paradox." And now I take this opportunity of correcting my hasty correction of the "paradox" by the insertion of the four words added in italics to the following passage, quoted from p. 150. "The truth is, that it is because the sun is becoming less hot *in places of equal density* that his mass is allowed to yield gradually under the condensing tendency of gravity, and thus from age to age cooling and condensation go on together."

The question, Is the sun becoming colder or hotter? is an exceedingly complicated one,

* Working out Lane's problem independently, I find 22½ as very nearly the exact number.

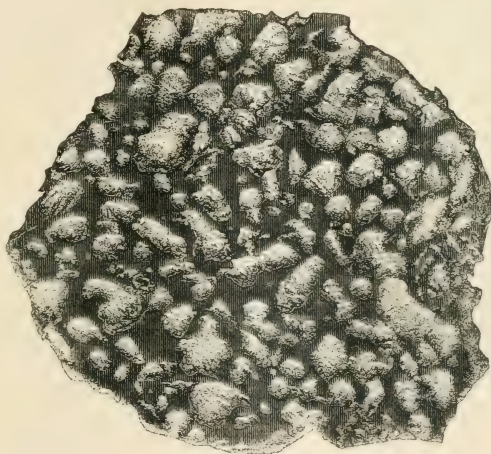
and, in fact, either to put it or to answer it is a paradox, unless we define exactly where the temperature is to be reckoned. If we ask, How does the temperature of equi-dense portions of the sun vary from age to age? the answer certainly is that the matter of the sun of which the density has any stated value, for example, the ordinary density of our atmosphere, becomes always less and less hot, whatever be its place in the fluid, and whatever be the law of compression of the fluid, whether the simple gaseous law or anything from that to absolute incompressibility. But the distance inwards from the surface at which a constant density is to be found diminishes with shrinkage, and thus it may be that at constant depths inwards from the bounding surface the temperature is becoming higher and higher. This would certainly be the case if the gaseous law of condensation held throughout, but even then the effective radiational temperature, in virtue of which the sun sheds his heat outwards, might be becoming lower, because the temperatures of equi-dense portions are clearly becoming lower under all circumstances.

Leaving now these complicated and difficult questions to the scientific investigators who are devoting themselves to advancing the science of solar physics, consider the easily understood question:—What is the temperature of the centre of the sun at any time, and does it rise or fall as time advances? If we go back a few million years to a time when we may believe the sun to have been wholly gaseous to the centre, then certainly the central temperature must have been augmenting; again, if, as is possible though not probable at the present time, but may probably be the case at some future time,

there be a solid nucleus, then certainly the central temperature would be augmenting, because the conduction of heat outwards through the solid would be too slow to compensate the augmentation of pressure due to augmentation of gravity in the shrinking fluid around the solid. But at a certain time in the history of a wholly fluid globe, primitively rare enough throughout to be gaseous, shrinking under the influence of its own gravitation and its radiation of heat outwards into cold surrounding space, when the central parts have become so much condensed as to resist further condensation greatly more than according to the gaseous law of simple proportion, it seems to

me certain that the early process of becoming warmer, which has been demonstrated by Lane, and Newcomb, and Ball, must cease, and that the central temperature must begin to diminish on account of the cooling by radiation from the surface, and the mixing of the cooled fluid throughout the interior.

Now we come to the most interesting part of our subject—the early history of the Sun. Five or ten million years ago he may have been about double his present diameter and an eighth of his present mean density, or $\cdot 175$ of the density of water; but we cannot, with any probability of argument or speculation, go on continuously much beyond that. We cannot, however, help asking the question, What was the condition of the sun's matter before it came together and became hot? It may have been two cool solid masses, which collided with the velocity due to their mutual gravitation; or, but with enormously less of probability, it may have been two masses colliding with velocities



[..... 13½ centimetres]

Fig. 2. (See page 268.)

considerably greater than the velocities due to mutual gravitation. This last supposition implies that, calling the two bodies A and B for brevity, the motion of the centre of inertia of B relatively to A must, when the distances between them was great, have been directed with great exactness to pass through the centre of inertia of A; such great exactness that the rotational momentum, or "moment of momentum,"* after collision was no more than to let the sun have his present slow rotation when shrunk to his present dimensions. This exceedingly exact aiming of the one body at the other, so to speak, is, on the dry theory of probability, exceedingly improbable. On the other hand, there is certainty that the two bodies A and B at rest in space if left to themselves, undisturbed by other bodies and only influenced by their mutual gravitation, shall collide with direct impact, and therefore with no motion of their centre of inertia, and no rotational momentum of the compound body after the collision. Thus we see that the dry probability of collision between two neighbours of a vast number of mutually attracting bodies widely scattered through space is much greater if the bodies be all given at rest, than if they be given moving in any random directions and with any velocities considerable in comparison with the velocities which they would acquire in falling from rest into collision. In this connection it is most interesting to know from stellar astronomy, aided so splendidly as it has recently been by the spectroscope, that the relative motions of the visible stars and our sun are generally very small in comparison with the velocity (612 kilometres per second) which a body would acquire in falling into the sun, and are comparable with the moderate little velocity (29.5 kilometres per second) of the earth in her orbit round the sun.

To fix the ideas, think of two cool solid globes, each of the same mean density as the earth, and of half the sun's diameter; given at rest, or nearly at rest, at a distance asunder equal to twice the earth's distance from the sun. They will fall together and

collide in exactly half a year. The collision will last for about half an hour, in the course of which they will be transformed into a violently agitated incandescent fluid mass flying outwards from the line of the motion before the collision, and swelling to a bulk several times greater than the sum of the original bulks of the two globes.* How far the fluid mass will fly out all round from the line of collision it is impossible to say. The motion is too complicated to be fully investigated by any known mathematical method; but with sufficient patience a mathematician might be able to calculate it with some fair approximation to the truth. The distance reached by the extreme circular fringe of the fluid mass would probably be much less than the distance fallen by each globe before the collision, because the translational motion of the molecules constituting the heat into which the whole energy of the original fall of the globes became transformed in the first collision, is probably about three-fifths of the whole amount of that energy. The time of flying out would probably be less than half a year, when the fluid mass must begin to fall in again towards the axis. In something less than a year after the first collision the fluid will again be in a state of maximum crowding round the centre, and this time probably even more violently agitated than it was immediately after the first collision; and it will again fly outward, but this time axially towards the places whence the two globes fell. It will again fall inwards, and after a rapidly subsiding series of quicker and quicker oscillations it will subside, probably in the course of two or three years, into a globular star of about the same dimensions, heat, and brightness as our present sun, but differing from him in this, that it would have no rotation.

We supposed the two globes to have been at rest when they were let fall from a mutual distance equal to the diameter of the earth's orbit. Suppose, now, that instead of having been at rest they had been moving in opposite directions, perpendicularly to the line joining them, with a velocity of 1.89 metres per second. The moment of momentum of these motions round an axis through the centre of gravity

* This is a technical expression in dynamics which means the importance of motion relatively to revolution or rotation round an axis. Momentum is an expression given about a hundred and fifty years ago (when mathematicians and other learned men spoke and wrote Latin) to signify translational importance of motion. Moment of a couple, moment of a magnet, moment of inertia, moment of force round an axis, moment of momentum round an axis, and corresponding verbal combinations in French and German, are expressions which have been introduced within the last sixty years (by scientists speaking as now, each his own vernacular) to signify the importance of the special subject referred to in each case. The expression moment of momentum is highly valuable and convenient in dynamical science, and it constitutes a curious philological monument of scientific history.

* Such incidents seem to happen occasionally in the universe. Laplace says, some stars "have suddenly appeared, and then disappeared, after having shone for several months with the most brilliant splendour." Such was the star observed by Tycho Brahe in the year 1572, in the constellation Cassiopeia. In a short time it surpassed the most brilliant stars, and even Jupiter itself. Its light then waned away, and finally disappeared sixteen months after its discovery. Its colour underwent several changes; it was at first of a brilliant white, then of a reddish yellow, and finally of a lead-coloured white like to Saturn." (Harte's translation of Laplace's "System of the World." Dublin, 1830.)

of the two globes perpendicular to the plane of their lines of motion is just equal to the momentum of momentum of the sun's rotation round his axis. It is an elementary and easily proved law of dynamics that no mutual action between parts of a group of bodies, or of a single body, rigid, flexible, or fluid, can alter the moment of momentum of the whole. The transverse velocity in the case we are now supposing is so small that none of the main features of the collision and of the wild oscillations following it, which we have been considering, or of the magnitude, heat, and brightness of the resulting star, will be sensibly altered; but now, instead of being rotationless, it will be revolving once round in twenty-five days and so in all respects like to our sun.

If instead of being at rest initially or moving with the small transverse velocities we have been considering, each globe had a transverse velocity of three-quarters of a kilometre per second (or anything more than .71), they would just escape collision, and would revolve in equal ellipses round the centre of inertia, in a period of one year, just grazing one another's surfaces every time they come round to the nearest points of their orbits.

If the initial transverse velocity of each globe be less than, but not much less than, .71 of a kilometre per second, there will be a violent grazing collision, and two bright suns, solid globes bathed in flaming fluid, will come into existence in the course of a few hours, and will commence revolving round their common centre of inertia in long elliptic orbits in a period of a little less than a year. Tidal interaction between them will diminish the eccentricities of their orbits, and if continued long enough will cause the two to revolve in circular orbits round their centre of inertia with a distance between their surfaces equal to 6.44 diameters of each.

Suppose now, still choosing a particular case to fix the ideas, that twenty-nine million cold solid globes, each of about the same mass as the moon, and amounting in all to a total mass equal to the sun's, are scattered as uniformly as possible on a spherical surface of radius equal to one hundred times the radius of the earth's orbit, and that they are left absolutely at rest in that position. They will all commence falling towards the centre of the sphere, and will meet there in two hundred and fifty years, and every one of the twenty-nine million globes will then, in the course of half an hour, be melted, and raised to a temperature of a few hundred thousand or a million degrees centigrade.

The fluid mass thus formed will be exploded by this prodigious heat, outwards in vapour or gas all round. Its boundary will reach to a distance considerably less than one hundred times the radius of the earth's orbit on first flying out to its extreme limit. A diminishing series of out and in oscillations will follow, and the incandescent globe thus contracting and expanding alternately, in the course it may be of three or four hundred years, will settle to a radius of forty* times the radius of the earth's orbit. The average density of the gaseous nebula thus formed would be $(215 \times 40)^{-3}$, or one six hundred and thirty-six thousand millionth, of the sun's mean density; or one four hundred and fifty-four thousand millionth of the density of water; or one five hundred and seventy millionth of that of common air at an ordinary temperature of 10° C.

The density in its central regions, sensibly uniform through several million kilometres, is one twenty thousand millionth of that of water; or one twenty-five millionth of that of air. This exceedingly small density is nearly six times the density of the oxygen and nitrogen left in some of the receivers exhausted by Bottomley in his experimental measurements of the amount of heat emitted by pure radiation from highly heated bodies. If the substance were oxygen, or nitrogen, or other gas or mixture of gases simple or compound, of specific density equal to the specific density of our air, the central temperature would be $51,200^{\circ}$ Cent., and the average translational velocity of the molecules 6.66 kilometres per second, being $\sqrt{\frac{2}{3}}$ of 10.2, the velocity acquired by a heavy body falling unresisted from the outer boundary (of 40 times the radius of the earth's orbit) to the centre of the nebulous mass.

The gaseous nebula thus constituted would in the course of a few million years, by constantly radiating out heat, shrink to the size of our present sun, when it would have exactly the same heating and lighting efficiency. But no motion of rotation.

The moment of momentum of the wholesolar system is about eighteen times that of the sun's rotation; seventeen-eightieths being Jupiter's and one-eighteenth the Sun's, the other bodies being not worth taking into account in the reckoning of moment of momentum.

Now, instead of being absolutely at rest

* The radius of a steady globular gaseous nebula of any homogeneous gas is .49 per cent. of the radius of the spherical surface from which its ingredients must fall to their actual positions in the nebula to have the same kinetic energy as the nebula has.

in the beginning, let the twenty-nine million moons be given each with some small motion, making up in all an amount of moment of momentum about a certain axis, equal to the moment of momentum of the solar system which we have just been considering; or considerably greater than this, to allow for effect of resisting medium. They will fall together for two hundred and fifty years, and though not meeting precisely in the centre as in the first supposed case of no primitive motion, they will, two hundred and fifty years from the beginning, be so crowded together that there will be myriads of collisions, and almost every one of the twenty-nine million globes will be melted and driven into vapour by the heat of these collisions. The vapour or gas thus generated will fly outwards, and after several hundreds or



thousands of years of outward and inward oscillatory motion, may settle into an oblate rotating nebula extending its equatorial radius far beyond the orbit of Neptune, and with moment of momentum equal to or exceeding the moment of momentum of the solar system. This is just the beginning postulated by Laplace for his nebular theory of the evolution of the solar system; which, founded on the natural history of the stellar universe as observed by the elder Herschell, and completed in details by the profound dynamical judgment and imaginative genius of Laplace, seems converted by thermodynamics into a necessary truth, if we make no other uncertain assumption than that the materials at present constituting the dead matter of the solar system have existed under the laws of dead matter for a

hundred million years. Thus there may in reality be nothing more of mystery or of difficulty in the automatic progress of the solar system from cold matter diffused through space, to its present manifest order and beauty, lighted and warmed by its brilliant sun, than there is in the winding up of a clock* and letting it go till it stops. I need scarcely say that the beginning and the maintenance of life on the earth is absolutely and infinitely beyond the range of all sound speculation in dynamical science. The only contribution of dynamics to theoretical biology is absolute negation of automatic commencement or automatic maintenance of life.

I shall only say in conclusion:—Assuming the sun's mass to be composed of materials which were far asunder before it was hot, the immediate antecedent to its incandescence must have been either two bodies with details differing only in proportions and densities from the cases we have been now considering as examples; or it must have been some number more than two—some finite number—at the most the number of atoms in the sun's present mass, a finite number (which may probably enough be something between 4×10^{47} and 140×10^{47}) as easily understood and imagined as number 3 or number 123. The immediate antecedent to incandescence may have been the whole constituents in the extreme condition of subdivision—that is to say, in the condition of separate atoms; or it may have been any smaller number of groups of atoms making up minute crystals or groups of crystals—snowflakes of matter, as it were; or it may have been lumps of matter like a macadamising stone; or

like the stone (Fig. 1) on page 264, which you might mistake for a macadamising stone, and which was actually travelling through space till it fell on the earth at Possil, in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, on April 5, 1804; or like that (Fig. 2) on page 265, which was found in the Desert of Atacama, in South America, and is believed to have fallen there from the sky—a fragment made up of iron and stone, which looks as if it has solidified from a mixture of gravel and melted iron in a place where there was very little of heaviness; or this splendidly crystallised piece of iron (Fig. 3), a slab cut out of the celebrated aerolite of Lenarto, in Hungary;† or this

* Even in this, and all the properties of matter which it involves, there is enough, and more than enough, of mystery to our limited understanding. A watch-spring is much farther beyond our understanding than is a gaseous nebula.

† These three meteorites are in the possession of the Hunterian Museum of the University of Glasgow, and the wood-



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.

wonderfully-shaped specimen (Figs. 4 and 5), a model of the Middlesburgh meteorite (kindly given me by Professor A. S. Herschel), with corrugations showing how its melted matter has been scoured off from the front part of its surface in its final rush through the earth's atmosphere when it was seen to fall on March 14, 1881, at 3.35 P.M.

For the theory of the sun it is indifferent which of these varieties of configurations of matter may have been the immediate antecedent of his incandescence, but I can never think of these material antecedents without remembering a question put to me thirty years ago by the late Bishop Ewing, Bishop

of Argyll and the Isles: "Do you imagine that piece of matter to have been as it is from the beginning; to have been created as it is, or to have been as it is through all time till it fell on the earth?" I had told him that I believed the sun to be built up of meteoric stones, but he would not be satisfied till he knew or could imagine, what kind of stones.

I could not but agree with him in feeling it impossible to imagine that any one of these meteorites before you has been as it is through all time, or that the materials of the sun were like this for all time before they come together and became hot. Surely this stone has an eventful history, but I shall not tax the patience of readers of *GOOD WORDS* by trying just now to trace it conjecturally. I shall only say that we cannot but agree with the common opinion which regards meteorites as fragments broken from larger masses, but we cannot be satisfied without trying to imagine what were the antecedents of those masses.

cuts, Figs. 1, 2, and 3, have been executed from the actual specimens kindly lent for that purpose by the Keeper of the museum, Professor Young. The specimen represented by Fig. 1 is contained in the Hunterian collection, that by Fig. 2 in the Eck collection, and that by Fig. 3 in the Lanfine collection—the scale of dimensions is shown for each. It may be remarked that Fig. 2 represents a section of the meteorite taken in the plane of the longest rectangular axes; the bright markings being large and well-formed crystals of olivine, embedded in a matrix of iron. In Fig. 3 is depicted the beautiful Widmanstätten marking characteristic of all meteoric iron, and so well shown in the well-known Lenarto meteorite.

A RAINBOW.

By WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

CLOUD rolls up from the west,
Blotting the sun in the sky;
Rain pours down from its breast,
Stone nor leaf is dry.

Cloud rolls off to the east,
Sun shines out afresh;
All things, greatest and least,
Laugh in a diamond mesh.

Vast arch springs from the plain,
 Lovely, of seven-fold hue,
 Built by the sun and rain;
 Melting swiftly from view.

Sol, that painter of pow'r,
 Shows on his palette there
 The colours of every flow'r,
 Of earth, of sea, and of air.

It is not seen of the birds
 That hop and flutter and trill,
 Or the placidly grazing herds,
 Or the flock of sheep on the hill.

Storm, shadow, and ray
 Triumph and disappear;
 Hour melts into day,
 Day melts into year.

Force changes and flows;
 Nothing is lost or spilt.
 SOUL, who art watching these shows,
 Rate thyself as thou wilt,

Curve and colours are thine,
 Thine are the eyes to see:
 Natural, human, divine,
 This is of Heaven and of Thee.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

BY WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.—LEYLAND AND MAYO.

MR. LEYLAND, the proprietor of the *Helvetic News*, was a tall, good-looking man, with a heavy moustache, dark hair, which he parted in the middle, an imposing presence, and a plausible tongue. He neither wrote for the paper nor paid much attention to the details of the business, but he was great at giving orders, drawing cheques, entertaining people of distinction, and giving the *coup de grâce* to hesitating advertisers; yet he did not commit the error of making himself too common, never interfering unless "some big thing" was at stake, when his grand manner and amazing statements about the circulation of the paper were generally successful. He was equally clever at raising the wind, and on several occasions, when the paper seemed to be at the last extremity, had contrived by some bold stroke or ingenious combination to give it new life. His latest feat of the sort was persuading the American banker mentioned by Gibson to take an interest in the paper (albeit the fact was not generally known) and grant the proprietor an almost unlimited over-draft.

Mayo, Leyland's manager and second in command, was a slightly built young fellow with sharp grey eyes, blonde complexion, and a quick, vivacious manner. He was full of fire and energy, and as industrious as Leyland was the reverse, conducted all the business correspondence of the paper, looked after the accounts, and kept his eye on everything. Like his chief, he was nothing if not enterprising, and their enterprise generally took the form of spending money. If profuse outlay could insure success then might the *Helvetic News* count on a brilliant future.

On the day after Balmaine's first appearance in the office, Leyland and Mayo were engaged in conversation in the former's room, a handsome, luxuriously furnished apartment, one side of which was covered with a great map of Europe, the other adorned with valuable engravings.

"Has anything come in this morning?" asks Leyland as he leans back in his fauteuil and lazily smokes a fine Havanna cigar.

"Nothing to mention—orders for a thousand francs from Paris and eight hundred from Baden."

"Nothing from Bevis?"

"I did not expect anything—he has only just got to work."

"Late, is he not?"

"Very. I have been urging him to start for a month past, both by letter and telegram; but when he once gets down to that villa of his in the Riviera he is hard to move, and whatever you say or do he always takes his own time."

"Always; but for all that he is the best canvasser we have."

"Rather. I don't know what we should do without him. I wish he was not quite so expensive, though. I have just been looking up his account, and his commission last year amounted to fifteen thousand francs, and his travelling expenses to eight."

"Nearly a thousand pounds sterling—rather stiff that; but he gets more advertisements than all the other fellows put together, so we must not complain. Where is he now?"

"At Florence. It is no use going farther south at this time of the year—hardly any use going even to Florence, I am afraid. Then by Milan and Turin to the Italian lakes Locomo and Bellinzona, and over the Gothard

to Lucerne. "Then he will do the Bernese Oberland, call at Basel and Berne, and be here, I expect, in about six weeks."

"A good programme. He should do a lot of business."

"Sure to do. He always does. He has three of the best qualifications for an advertising canvasser a man can have—fine manners, ready tact, and a tongue that would almost talk a knot out of a tree, as Harman would say. I know nobody to be compared with him, except you, Leyland—if you would work."

"I'll take care I don't," answered Leyland with a laugh. "I know a trick worth two of that, Mayo. I would rather watch others work. That reminds me, though I really don't see why it should, that I had a question to ask about finance. How do we stand with Harmans?"

"Sixty thousand francs to our debit. Will they stand it, do you think?"

"What a question, Mayo! They have stood it, or we shouldn't have got the money."

"Will they let it stand, I should say?"

"What else can they do? And if we want more they will let us have it; and the more we owe them the safer we are. They cannot afford to pull us up, and we cannot afford to pay them off."

"That is quite true; especially the latter," returned Mayo with an amused smile, "and I assure you I never thought of anything so absurd as paying them off. I only feared that they might possibly bother us with questions and request us to reduce the account."

"Not they; there is no reason why they should, at any rate at present; and I have got the length of Robert Harman's foot. He called last night."

"About business?"

"No; he wanted to introduce an American general and his wife to our family circle, as he put it; and we asked them all to dinner for next Monday. By the way, have you seen the new assistant editor yet? Harman was asking about him."

"Not yet. The fellow may be useful if he has anything in him."

"Of course he may, but now we have got Milnthorpe we might have done without him."

"That is true; but don't you see what a pull it gives us over Gibson? This new fellow, Balmaine, will always be ready to slip into the other's shoes; and, to tell the truth, I am getting rather out of conceit with Gibson. He is lazy, his leaders are stale, and

Balmaine would do the work for half his screw."

"I dare say. But you forgot that Gibson has a three years' agreement."

"No, I don't; but it is a queer agreement that one cannot get out of, and I have no doubt we shall find a way of getting out of this when the time comes. Hallo! there's a whistle, put your ear to the spout, Mayo."

"Mr. Robert Harman would be glad to see Mr. Leyland," says Mayo, still holding the tube to his ear.

The next moment the door opens and in walks the American banker. A large man all over—hair long, hat tilted back on his head, eyes all aglow with excitement, clean shaven, fresh-coloured face, and an eager look, as if he had just conceived some new idea and was burning to bring it forth.

"Good day, gentlemen, good day," he exclaimed, in a loud and hearty voice, shaking hands with both Leyland and Mayo at the same time, "how is the *Helvetic News* to-day?"

"First rate," says Leyland with his most urbane smile. "We had several thousand francs worth of advertisements this morning, and the season is only just beginning. Now Bevis has got to work we shall have as many every day."

"Glad to hear it. Nothing like going a-head. And you do go a-head, there is no mistake about that, we cashed drafts yesterday that make your account more than sixty thousand on the wrong side."

"So Mayo was saying just now," quietly observes Leyland, "and to tell you the truth, I am surprised it is not more. You have no idea what the expenses of a daily paper are; and we are only just emerging from winter, which, as you know, is our worst time, a great deal going out and very little coming in. But now the tide is turning, and in a few weeks we shall be flush. I dare say, though, we shall have to ask you for another ten thousand francs or so in the meantime."

"The devil you will! Well, draw it as mild as you can, for though we want to give your enterprise all the support in our power we are not quite made of money, and I have partners. So far as I am personally concerned I look on a daily paper here as a grand fact, and the *Helvetic News*, properly worked, is destined, I do believe, to become a great power. It will help in the realisation of my design of making Geneva the centre of European travel for the English-speaking people of three continents. We are adding a large news-room and lounge to our offices.

which will be open free to all travellers. I want to get up a company for building a Casino ; we will undertake to place half the shares ; and I mean next summer but one—it is too late for this—to get up an international boat-race on the lake here—between English and American amateur crews, of course—and in the autumn we must have both flat races and steeplechases ; and I am organizing a system of circular notes and cosmopolitan credits that will place us in communication with every respectable banking-house in the civilised world. We must spare no effort to attract attention to the place, and make it so fashionable and attractive that no traveller can feel that he has done the continent at all unless he has spent a few days at Geneva. It is a big enterprise, I know, but I am determined to carry it through, and I attach great importance to your co-operation and the influence of the *Helvetic News*.”

All this was said with great energy and rapidity and almost in a breath.

“We will do all we can, you may be sure of that,” Leyland answered warmly, “your interest is our interest, more travellers mean more money-changing for you, more subscribers and more advertisements for us. You may count on our hearty co-operation in all those schemes you have been mentioning, Harman. The paper is always at your disposal for paragraphs and articles, anything you like in fact. But then you must not talk of stopping the tap, you know.”

“I was not talking of stopping the tap. I was only asking you to draw it mild, and be as moderate as you can. I am quite satisfied ; but our New York and London houses may not see matters in precisely the same light, remember.”

“Hallo, the whistle again ; what is it, Mayo?”

“Mr. Gibson and Mr. Balmaine would like to know when they can see Mr. Leyland and Mr. Mayo.”

“Say we are engaged, and tell them to come in an hour.”

“Let them come in now,” interposed the banker. “I have very little more to say, and I want to speak to Gibson and make the acquaintance of his new assistant.”

So the newcomers were ushered into the room and Balmaine was introduced in due form to the assembled trio, who gave him a gracious reception, though Leyland’s manner was marked by a certain condescension, as if to signify to Alfred that the proprietor of a newspaper was something very different from its assistant editor.

“I am glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Balmaine,” said the banker warmly. “I hope we shall be good friends, and if you will let me, I may sometimes profit by your literary skill. I have bothered Mr. Gibson occasionally, but now, when I want an article put into shape, I shall come to you. An editor-in-chief ought to write very little. His business is to supervise others, revise what they write and furnish them with ideas. Is not that so, Gibson?”

“It is exactly what I have been saying ever since I came here ; and I have no doubt that with Mr. Balmaine’s help I shall be able to give more time to the general supervision of the paper ; and I hope we shall succeed in making it even brighter and better than, as everybody admits, it is at present.”

“That is hardly possible, I think, Gibson,” said Harman, the suspicion of a smile playing about the corners of his mouth. “Considering the means at your disposal the *Helvetic News* is admirably edited. And now I want all of you to lunch with me, second breakfast they call it here, at my hotel on Sunday. I mean the entire editorial staff and Mr. Leyland and Mr. Mayo. Can that be managed, Gibson ? I mean with reference to the duties of the paper, for you unfortunates have to work on Sundays.”

Gibson declared that it could be managed very easily, and accepted the invitation on behalf of Delane and Milnthorpe. Alfred accepted it on his own, and it was accepted as a matter of course by the manager and proprietor.

“I like your Mr. Balmaine,” said Harman, when the former and Gibson had taken their leave, “he has a good face, and is of better breeding, I should say, than either the chief or his subs.”

“Yes, he seems a likely sort of chap ; I dare say he will do,” answered Leyland carelessly. “I say, Harman, it’s awfully good of you to invite those fellows to breakfast.”

“Not at all. I honour writers of every class, and like to stand well with them.”

“That is all very well ; but I cannot say that I honour newspaper writers much—I know too much about them. They have no principles ; they write anything you tell them. Take Balmaine, now, I know absolutely nothing of him, but I would bet my bottom dollar that I could make him write a Tory leader one day and a Radical leader the next.”

“I don’t believe you could, Leyland ; he is not a man of that sort, and I would back

my opinion with a bet if there were any way of bringing it to a test."

"Which at present there is not," said Leyland half jestingly, "unless we become Conservative."

"Which you won't," returned Harman, who did not seem to appreciate the joke, "unless you want to forfeit my support."

"That settles the matter," laughed Leyland, "for we don't want to forfeit your support; anything but that. And we will assume, if you like, that Balmaine is that phenomenal being, a journalist with principles."

"You may say what you like about him," said the banker, who appeared just a little huffed by the other's chaff; "I have taken a fancy to that young man, and, if he can write a smart letter, I will try to throw something in his way."

"Those are the three men who control the destinies of the *Helvetic News*, and, to a certain extent, our destinies," said Gibson to Alfred, when they got outside; "what do you think of them?"

"I will tell you when I know them better," was Alfred's cautious answer; "you cannot learn much of people's character in a casual interview of a few minutes. What do you think of them, Mr. Gibson? You have had far more opportunities of judging them than I have."

"That is quite true. Well, I will tell you my opinion when you have had an opportunity of forming yours."

Balmaine had called at the office a few minutes previously to ask if he would be wanted before Sunday. Gibson replied in the negative, and, as we have seen, took him below to pay his respects to the proprietor and manager. As they passed through the spacious and well-appointed offices, Alfred noticed with some surprise how large was the staff of clerks, all of whom seemed to be fully occupied; but the most prominent object was a huge thief-proof, fire-resisting safe that could hardly fail to impress casual visitors, paper merchants, type foundries, and others with a sense of the importance of the *Helvetic News*, and of the vastness of the cash and other securities that needed so much safeguarding.

CHAPTER XIX.—ON THE LAKE.

IN after years a great many things both grave and gay befell Balmaine; but the impression of his first sail round the lake remained ever green in his memory. The day was perfect, the early morning air fresh and elastic, the scene about the port striking and

animated. The shore, lined with fresh-leaved trees and handsome buildings, the quaint houses of the old town, climbing up the heights crowned by the grey towers of St. Peter and the golden cupolas of the Russian Church—all was new to him; and although the picturesque never palls on the lover of nature, the sense of novelty and the gratification of long-cherished desires add piquancy to enjoyment. The reality, too, exceeded his expectation. The hour being early the Alps were not yet visible, and on the rugged sides of the Jura were reposing masses of cloud so white, so still, and in form so fantastic and weird, that they might have been vast snow-fields, icy crags, and tremendous glaciers, blocking up the horizon and reaching high as heaven. Yet, still as they seem, the clouds move. They creep slowly up the gullies and roll back from the pine forests, and then, between the white mass and the dark background, mountain and forest show a tint of blue so deep and tender that it might be one of heaven's own windows, or the way into fairyland. Now to the south the morning glory is retreating before the advancing day, and the diademed peaks of the Pennine Alps, emerging from a silvery sea, stand revealed in all their beauty and fill the sky with their majestic presence. A few minutes later and all the vast stretch of country, from the mountains of Savoy to the Dent du Midi, from the snows of Mont Blanc to the gorges of Mont Reculet, is bathed in brilliant sunlight, and the crystal waters of the lake sparkle like liquid diamonds in a setting of azure.

The region round about is, moreover, rich in historic associations. Westward, the Fort de l'Ecluse guards the famous pass cleft unnumbered years ago by the great Rhone glacier, and through which, by comparison only the other day, the greatest of the Cæsars followed on the traces of the flying Helvetians. Atilla and his Huns wasted the land with fire and sword, Teutonic tribes marched along the shores of the lake to the sack of Rome, and the valley once echoed to the tread of Napoleon's legions as they marched to the conquest of Italy.

Yet, charmed with the beauty of the landscape as Balmaine undoubtedly was, and delighted as he might be with the clearness of the sky and the serenity of the weather, I would not aver that all the fore-mentioned reflections were suggested to his mind or that he gave much heed to the historic associations of the scene before him. For he had more companions than he counted on, and was too much disturbed with questions and exclama-

tions to give himself up to thoughts of the sublime or contemplation of the beautiful.

In the Pension Guichard, as the reader is already aware, were three lady lodgers, each of whom, as Alfred, when he took up his quarters there, speedily learnt, bore the name of Von Schmidt and represented a distinct generation of that ancient and respectable family. There were Madame von Schmidt, the grandmother; Madame Karl von Schmidt, the mother; and Mademoiselle von Schmidt, the daughter. Being Germans, they naturally all played on the piano. Madame von Schmidt had been a teacher of music, Madame Karl was a teacher of music, and Mademoiselle, a pretty little blonde of seventeen, was learning to be a teacher of music. Except early in the morning, before the other lodgers went out, and in the evening when they had come in, Madame Guichard's piano was seldom silent, for when Madame Karl was not giving lessons her daughter was generally practising with preternatural energy. A distracted neighbour, who stayed at home all day long and was writing a book, threatened Madame Guichard with an action; but Switzerland being a free country, she defied him, and bade the Von Schmidts, with whom she was very intimate, to play on.

On the Friday evening Delane told Alfred, in a sheepish sort of way, that he had invited Madame Karl and her daughter to go with them round the lake.

"It will not cost us anything," he said. "I have got tickets for all."

This announcement did not seem very greatly to delight Balmaine. He foresaw that he should have to escort and entertain the elder lady, who happened to have a very decided moustache, a very loud voice, and rolled in her walk like a sailor, while Mademoiselle would fall to the lot of the sub-editor.

"They are very nice," urged Delane deprecatingly, "and not too rich, and have to work hard all day long. The trip will be a great pleasure for them and do Mademoiselle a power of good; she is looking very pale, as you may have noticed."

It was impossible to resist the young fellow's appeal. "By all means let them come," Alfred said, "and we will do our best to make the trip pleasant for them."

It was pleasant for all. Madame and Mademoiselle were in ecstasies of delight, and Alfred found the elder lady a much more agreeable companion than he had expected. Despite her moustache and ungainly walk, she was a highly cultivated woman, and had

a frank matronly manner, which at once engaged Balmaine's liking, and her story won his respect. He had already heard something of it from Madame Guichard and Delane. Her husband, much older than she, was an Austrian officer of high rank, who had died a few years previously at Vienna very much in debt, owing to some unfortunate speculations in which he had embarked. All that he possessed did not suffice to discharge his liabilities, and Madame Karl found herself utterly destitute, and with her old mother and a young daughter absolutely dependent on her. A brilliant pianist, she might possibly have earned a livelihood in the Austrian capital by giving lessons, but the humiliation was greater than she could bear, and, having a few friends at Geneva, she went thither and set up as a teacher of music. Her undoubted ability soon brought her some good paying pupils, and she was earning an income that would have made them very comfortable if she had not thought it her duty to pay off her husband's debts. All that remained, after providing for their modest wants, was, every quarter, remitted to his creditors at Vienna.

"As I helped my poor husband to spend his money," she said, "it is only right that I should help to pay his debts."

And then she spoke of her life in Austria, Milan, and other places.

"So you have not only visited Italy, but lived there?" asked Alfred.

"Certainly. During the occupation we lived in Northern Italy many years. Ida, my daughter, was born at Venice."

It struck Balmaine that Madame Karl could, perchance, give him some information about the Hardys. She was evidently a woman whom he might trust, and he proceeded to give her an outline of the case, without, however, saying anything very definite about the fortune. It was not necessary that he should, and both Warton and Artful had warned him that to make much noise about it would almost certainly bring forth false claimants.

Madame Karl listened to the tale with great interest. "I wish I could help you," she said; "but I don't think I ever heard of this man; at any rate, under the name of Hardy. It is not likely I should. I was on the other side, you know."

"If he was taken prisoner or executed, I thought you might possibly have heard some mention of him."

"It is not likely, there were so many of them; and if I did, I have forgotten. If we

had not been turned out of Italy I have no doubt I could find out whether he was taken by the Austrians. You may, however, be sure of one thing—he is not in prison now. Why should our Government care to keep Italian prisoners after we left the country? They were all released.”

“That is a new light,” answered Alfred musingly. “I never thought of that before; it knocks Mr. Artful’s theory on the head. Well, if Philip Hardy is not in prison where can he be?”

“Dead, I should say,” returned Madame Karl promptly; “conspirators and soldiers of fortune have short lives, and your Monsieur Hardy appears to have been both. But why don’t you ask Colonel Bevis? If anybody can tell you he can.”

“Who is Colonel Bevis?”

“Why, don’t you know? It is he who keeps the *Helvetic News* going—the best advertisement canvasser, they say, on the Continent. He has served in the British army, I think. At any rate, he was one of Garibaldi’s men, and deeply implicated in every revolutionary movement in Northern Italy.”

“How did he come to be an advertisement canvasser?”

“By being poor, I suppose. Men like him generally are poor. We cannot always choose our destinies, or I should not be a music mistress. He is very fortunate in having secured such a position. M. Delane says that he makes very much money, and he spends his winters in the Riviera and in Italy, and his summers in Switzerland and South Germany. It is, perhaps, not so fine a thing to be a canvasser as to command a regiment, but I am sure Colonel Bevis is better off now than when he was organizing secret societies in Lombardy and Venice, or fighting with the Red Shirts in Naples. He is the man for you; he knows Italy well. So does M. Corfe; but I would rather speak to the Colonel if I were you.”

“I am much obliged to you for suggesting the idea, Madame von Schmidt, and I shall certainly profit by it; but you do not tell me where I shall find this remarkable colonel-canvasser. Is he in Geneva?”

“Not at all; he is probably on a journey. I dare say M. Delane will tell us.”

Delane, who was promenading round the deck with Ida, being called, informed them that Colonel Bevis was travelling, and would no doubt, in accordance with his usual custom, be at Geneva some time during the summer.

And then the subject dropped, and Balmaine occupied himself with contemplating the scenery, while Delane and Ida resumed their promenade round the deck.

“Journalism is a very honourable profession, M. Balmaine,” observed Madame Karl, apropos of nothing in particular.

“Unquestionably,” answered Alfred.

“But not a very profitable one, I fear.”

“I beg your pardon, Madame Karl, for some people it is very profitable.”

“Ah, yes, but not for such people as you and our friend, M. Delane.”

“Not at present, perhaps; but there is no telling what the future has in store for us, and Delane is a very clever young fellow, I think.”

“The future! No, as you say, there is no telling what the future has in store for us. You think it has something good—young people always do—but those who are verging on fifty know that it must have some evil, and may have much. Make the most of your youth, M. Balmaine; it will not last too long. Do you know, I am rather anxious about Ida?”

“Why? She looks very well.”

And so she did, for though she was rather *petite*, and her face somewhat too broad, Ida, with her flaxen hair, dreamy blue eyes, cream white neck and pink cheeks did not come very far short of being a typical Teutonic beauty.

“She looks very well,” repeated Alfred.

“Yes, the child is pretty, is she not?” said the mother, proudly, “but she is excited and flushed now. Poor girl, I can neither give her a *dot* nor leave her a fortune, so she must work—perhaps I make her work too hard. But she is very clever and ardent, and besides singing and the piano she learns the modern languages, so she is sure to get her living, don’t you think so, M. Balmaine?”

“Very sure, I should say; and with that face of hers, and so many accomplishments, she is sure to get a husband.”

“So much more reason why she should learn to make money, M. Balmaine,” returned Madame Karl, with rather a bitter laugh, “she may have to keep her husband—some women have—or to pay his debts. I was a music mistress’s daughter, and teaching music myself, when General von Schmidt—he was captain then—became my husband. It was a love match, though to look at me now you wouldn’t think so. But what would have become of us if I had not been able to turn an honest penny!”

Alfred inferred from this conversation, and

even more from Madame Karl's manner, that she had some fear that Delane and her daughter might become too fond of each other. The vigilance with which she watched them was amusing: she seldom let them go beyond earshot, never out of sight

CHAPTER XX.—HARMAN'S BREAKFAST.

CORFE's supper was a decided success; none the less so, perhaps, owing to its somewhat Bohemian character, for his rooms were on the third floor of a ramshackle shabby-looking house, in an unfashionable quarter, and his guests were far from belonging to the *crème de la crème* of Genevan society. They were very merry fellows, however, and one of them, whom from his long dishevelled hair and generally harum-scarum appearance Alfred took to be an artist, kept the table in a roar. Corfe did the part of host to perfection, sang a good song to his own accompaniment on a guitar, told some excellent stories, and his manner was as genial and agreeable as it had been unpleasant and repelling on the day Balmaine first met him. He seemed to be quite another man, yet the hard lines about the mouth, and a fleeting frown that once or twice overshadowed his face, showed that he had it in him to be as cynical and ill-humoured as he was now amiable and good-tempered.

"What do you think of Corfe?" asked Alfred of Delane, as they walked home together across the plain. "He rather puzzles me."

"He puzzles everybody, I think. He was very nice to-night, wasn't he? He has two quite opposite humours, and you have seen him now in both. I sometimes think that he is one of those fellows who have missed their tip somehow, and come down in life. And that's what Gibson says, and Gibson is uncommonly shrewd. He says if ever he saw a disappointed, discontented man, that man is Corfe. All the same, some people like him and speak well of him, and in spite of his ill-temper and that, I fancy he is a very good fellow at bottom. Only he is very ready to take offence, and when he falls out with anybody he lets 'em have it hot."

"You think he is a sort of man that one ought to keep on good terms with, then?"

"I am sure."

"Well, then, I will try to keep on good terms with him, and if he continues to be half as amiable as he showed himself to-night I shall have no difficulty."

Harman's breakfast was not nearly so pleasant as Corfe's supper. The wines were

exquisite and the viands everything that could be desired; they had all the luxuries of the season, but the meal was intolerably long, and as the banker, Leyland, Mayo, and Gibson kept the conversation pretty much to themselves, and Delane and Milnthorpe, awed by the presence of their superiors, never opened their mouths, except to eat and drink, Balmaine did not find it very lively, and felt it a decided relief when the senior sub-editor, speaking for the first time, suggested that it was about time they went to the office.

"Indeed it is," said Gibson in a rather thick voice, for he had taken very kindly to his wine; "why it is actually after three o'clock. I must go too and get my leader done. I shall be over in a few minutes, Delane. I will just stay and finish this cigar."

"If you think this suitable," observed Alfred in an undertone, drawing some "copy" from his pocket, "it may perhaps save you the trouble of writing a leader. It is an article on the Eastern Question."

"Thank you very much," returned the editor with a gratified smile; "will you let me cast my eye over it for a moment?"

"It will do very well, Mr. Balmaine" (turning over the leaves); "just the thing we want—crisp, lively, and not too long. You can let Lud have it. But you need not go just yet. If Lud gets the copy in an hour it will be quite time enough."

"Yes, stay a few minutes longer," put in Harman, who had overheard the conversation, "and won't you take another cigar? I have something to say to you."

Thus pressed Alfred took another cigar and resumed his seat, and the banker, after a few indifferent remarks, asked him if he would like to write some letters for an American paper. Alfred said he should very much like to write some letters for an American paper.

"I thought so," said the banker. "Well, you call at my office to-morrow about eleven and I will introduce you to the editor of a paper at Pittsburgh, who, I think, on my recommendation, will be glad to make an arrangement with you."

Balmaine replied that nothing would give him greater pleasure, and shortly afterwards he took his leave and betook himself to the office of the *Helvetic News*.

During the week that followed Alfred got fairly into harness, and for some time afterwards his life, so far as appeared, was regular and uneventful. So far as appeared, because,

as a matter of fact, no life can be really uneventful. Every day brings its incidents, and, though we know it not, any one of them, even the most commonplace, may be big with fate. What, for instance, can be more ordinary than going to bed and getting up, admiring a landscape or watching a sunset, yet we must all, sooner or later, go to bed and get up for the last time, and take our last view of earth and sky. A casual introduction to a stranger may lead to serious consequences, and a chance meeting in a railway carriage form a turning-point in a man's destiny.

But though Balmaine settled down to steady work, and the days went on unmarked by any startling event, his life at Geneva was decidedly interesting. If there had been nothing else he would have found amusing occupation for his leisure in studying the characters of the people he met, and watching the little intrigues and comedies that were always going on about him. At the office there was jealousy between upstairs and down, for the clerks were allowed to canvass for advertisements, and paid a commission of twenty-five per cent. on all they obtained; the sub-editors were not, and this was a sore grievance with Milnthorpe and Delane. Gibson was both able and shrewd; but, as Alfred soon found out, he liked to take things very easy, and make-believe that he worked desperately hard. Delane, who was full of energy, did more real work in a day than the chief did in a week. "He did not do much before you came," the sub one day observed to Balmaine, "now he does next to nothing."

This was quite true. There were at least three days a week on which Gibson did not write a line for the paper—did nothing, in fact, but answer a few letters and look over a few proofs.

"Between ourselves," went on Delane, "I don't think it was very 'cute of him to let you come at all; there really isn't work for more than three, and being by far the best paid of the lot, if there should be a change, he is the most likely to have to go. At any rate I should think so."

"How much has he?"

"Three hundred and fifty francs a week."

"Fourteen pounds."

"Yes; nearly twice as much as you, me, and Milnthorpe get, all put together. Isn't it a shame? I have no respect either for Leyland or Mayo: they are unmitigated ruffians, both of them."

"If they are such a bad lot why don't you

leave them?" asked Alfred, who began to think he had got into rather queer company.

"Because I don't want to. The private character of the men and their management of the paper are nothing to me. I do my duty, and that is really all I have to care about; and then Geneva is an uncommonly nice place. I like the life here; and there are other reasons."

At this point the young fellow blushed a little, and Balmaine thought of Ida von Schmidt; so, by way of changing the subject, he made an inquiry touching the circulation of the *Helvetic News*.

"You asked me that once before, I think," said Delane drily.

"So I did, and got no answer," said Alfred, smiling. "Is it a mystery?"

"Very much so. To be frank, I don't know what it is, and don't want to know."

"Why?"

"So that I may be under no temptation to tell lies. That is what old Bevis does."

"Does he tell lies then?"

"He does not profess to do. I mean he does not know and won't be told anything about the circulation. When anybody asks him he says, in his loftiest manner: 'That is not in my department, my dear sir, and the circulation varies so much, according to the season, that I should not like to risk telling an untruth by going into details; but I can assure you with the utmost confidence that it is large and influential.' He calls that diplomacy."

"And there are people," said Alfred, "who say there is very little difference between diplomacy and artistic lying."

He made no further inquiry about the circulation of the paper.

Milnthorpe was rather an enigma. He did his work, chiefly translating, slowly, but well, had very little to say, and seemed depressed, and nobody knew where he lived. Delane thought he did not like to expose his poverty by associating with his equals, for he could not be persuaded to enter a café, and never smoked unless somebody gave him a cigar.

Besides his office work, which he did not find very arduous, Alfred wrought a good deal at home. He did a series of letters for the American editor—to whom Harman so kindly introduced him, a certain Dr. Pilgrim, a tall, spare man, with a white choker, a soft voice, and an unctuous manner—of the *Pittsburgh Patriot*. The *Patriot*, as the doctor informed him, was a semi-religious, high-toned first-class paper, circulating among first-class fami-

lies. He wanted some articles on the graver aspects of Swiss life, on the religious views of the people, the character of their Protestantism, and, above all, on the Old Catholic movement. At the same time the letters, though weighty with facts, were to be lively in style. For as the doctor rightly observed, if newspaper articles be not readable they are of very little use, and to be readable they must be lively. When he asked Alfred if he thought he could write him a few such letters as those he had described, say four or five, the young fellow modestly replied that he thought he could, and would do his best. As for remuneration, the editor of this serious, semi-religious paper remarked, with one of his sweetest smiles, that first-class journals like the *Patriot* paid twenty dollars an article irrespective of length, "which we don't want, for everybody knows that it is easier to pad out than to boil down."

Balmaine, after thanking Dr. Pilgrim "very much," went home rejoicing, and feeling almost as if he had a hundred dollars (five letters at twenty a-piece) in his pocket. He gave several days to reading up the subjects suggested and making inquiries, and a fortnight afterwards forwarded his first letter to the high-toned *Patriot*. Nor did his good fortune end here. No American journalist could possibly pass through Geneva without calling at the editorial offices of the *News*, to look over the files and have a talk with the staff. Some of these gentlemen made themselves very much at home, and seemed to consider the sub-editors' room a public lounge and their waste-paper baskets public spittoons. Others were very nice fellows indeed, and one of them, the representative of a Boston daily, Sunday, and bi-weekly, invited Alfred (one of whose articles in the *Helvetic* had attracted his attention) to contribute an occasional letter "on any darned subject he liked," and assured him that he wrote well enough for the London *Times*, "or any other sanguinary paper."

With these two strings to his bow Alfred came to the conclusion that it was not necessary to make any offerings to English papers for the present; they might be refused; it would be better to send his communications where they were sure of acceptance. The reception of his first letter by the *Pittsburgh Patriot* was extremely gratifying. The acting editor (Dr. Pilgrim not having yet reached home) bespoke for it the particular attention of his readers, described the writer as one of the most rising and successful of the younger generation of English journalists, and pro-

mised them further effusions from his brilliant pen. Alfred sent a copy of the paper to Cora, whom it greatly delighted; it was, moreover, seen by many people at Calder, and made the subject of a few complimentary remarks in the *Mercury*.

Another agreeable incident was the receipt of a letter from Artful and Higginbottom, inquiring if he still thought he should be able "to find a clue to the mystery that enveloped the fate of the unfortunate Mr. Philip Hardy and his daughter," and offering, on the part of the trustees, "to defray any reasonable charge to which he might be put in prosecuting the investigation which he had so kindly promised to make." This meant that they would pay his travelling expenses, so he should now be able, when he got a holiday, to make the journey across the Alps from which he hoped so much.

Everything seemed propitious, and the rupture of his engagement with Lizzie Hardy, which took place about this time, left him almost without a care. Although the affair had once caused him so much concern, he could hardly think of it now without laughing at his simplicity in attributing to a foolish flirtation the character of a solemn betrothal. Shortly after his arrival at Geneva he had received from his sweetheart a long letter, to which he replied in due course, but not being able to make passionate protestations of love he contented himself with descriptions of the country and the people, and of his own doings and experiences. To this, rather to his satisfaction, there came no answer; and then there ensued a long silence which Alfred, whose too tender conscience began to suggest that he was treating the girl badly, was the first to break by a second letter in the style of the first. Lizzie replied in a missive which she meant to be freeing and dignified, but which (after his first surprise) Balmaine found intensely amusing. She could not imagine, she said, what induced him to write to her in the way he had done. It had never occurred to her to consider the innocent familiarities which at one time she had allowed him as implying an engagement, even if their relative positions had not rendered such a thing impossible, and she desired that the correspondence might cease with the present communication.

"Innocent familiarities! our relative positions! by Jove, that's good," soliloquised Balmaine, and though he was glad to be set free, it was some alloy to his satisfaction that Saintly Sam's daughter had so completely befooled him.

When he informed Cora what had come to pass, she congratulated him warmly on what she called his escape. "I always thought Miss Hardy was a flirt," she said, "and as you are no longer here to flirt with her she has probably found a swain who can. The next time you are engaged, I hope it will be with somebody worthy of your love and my friendship; but for Heaven's sake do not venture on such a step until you are rich enough to keep a wife."

CHAPTER XXI.—COLONEL BEVIS.

So soon as Balmaine had got fairly into harness Gibson took his holiday. He had worked so hard during the previous twelvemonth, he said, that a period of relaxation was absolutely necessary for his health. Before going away he gave precise instructions about the editing of the paper. All the leaders were to be written by Alfred, and none were to touch on English politics. With this exception, he was to have full scope. "And if you are ever pressed for time or do not see your way to a subject," added the chief, "you can always get one of the least read of English or American papers. The *Saturday Sentinel*, for instance, is a capital paper to quarry from. Its sub-leaders are often very good, and there are always one or two that by running through with a wet pen you can make to look as if they were written purposely for the *Helvetic*."

Alfred modestly replied that he thought he would rather trust to his own unaided resources; and when Gibson returned from his holiday-making he congratulated the young fellow handsomely on the diligence and ability with which he had discharged his duties. Another success scored to Alfred was the reproduction of one of his articles by a London paper. Delane said this was a feather in his cap. Mayo came specially into the editor's-room to inquire by whom it had been written, and said a few gracious words to Balmaine on the occasion; for incidents like this were not alone flattering to the *amour propre* of all connected with the *Helvetic News*, they made the paper more widely known, and so helped canvassers in their quest for advertisements.

On entering the sub-editors' room one morning, Alfred was informed that Mr. Mayo wanted to see him down-stairs. In the managers' room was a fine soldierly looking man, whose age might be from forty-four to fifty, but by reason of the uprightness of his carriage, the freshness of his complexion, and the lightness of his hair and moustache as yet

unfrosted with white, he looked younger than his years. He was dressed with great neatness, wore the badge of some military order, and, as Balmaine subsequently heard, had a right to call himself "Chevalier."

This gentleman was Colonel Bevis, and Mayo, after introducing them to each other, mentioned that the Colonel wanted a special article written, and asked Alfred to take his instructions and put it into shape for the printer.

"It is about Rothenkirschen, Mr. Balmaine," said the Colonel very graciously, "the new place in the Oberland, you know. They have found some dirty water, built a Kursaal and several hotels, and want to attract English and American visitors. I have taken a very good advertisement from them on condition that we reciprocate by doing a little *reclame*, and give a special article about the place. And I can personally testify that it is most charmingly situated—on that score you can hardly exaggerate—and several highly respectable doctors are ready to take oath that the mineral waters are good for every ill that flesh is heir to. You will find all the facts in this newspaper cutting—you read German, of course—and a few observations of my own in this paper. Do you think you can shape these materials into a readable article? I shall be very much obliged if you can, because I promised the people, you know."

Alfred answered that he would do his best, and asked the Colonel if he would like to see a proof of the article in order to make sure that it was quite to his mind. The Colonel said, "Very much," and asked Alfred to be good enough to send the proof to him at the Hotel de la Grande Bretagne, where he should be visible at five P.M.

It was the first time Balmaine had done any puffing, and he hoped the description of Rothenkirschen, given in the German paper, was true, for in that case the earthly paradise was only about a hundred miles from Geneva. The magnificent scenery, the fine climate, and the mountain air alone made the place worth a visit, while the charming grounds of the Kursaal, morning music, daily excursions, evening concerts, and congenial society rendered life in that favoured spot beyond expression delightful, and by drinking plentifully of the waters you might live for ever and never be ill. Alfred did not say quite all this, neither did he set forth all the maladies for which a sojourn at Rothenkirschen was recommended as a specific; nevertheless he produced a really brilliant article, and one that could hardly

fail to prove satisfactory to all concerned. As he wanted to cultivate Bevis's acquaintance he took the proof to him instead of sending it.

"Thank you very much, Mr. Balmaine," said the Colonel, whom he found smoking a cigarette in the corridor of the Bretagne; "it is very kind of you to take so much trouble, and you add to the favour by being so prompt. Promptitude in the eyes of an old soldier is a high quality. This will do very well—very well indeed. 'In the whole of Switzerland there is no spot on which nature has showered so many blessings as the valley and village of Rothenkirnschen. Whilst its great altitude insures the purity of its invigorating air, the huge mass of mountains to the north and east shelters it from every inclement wind, and renders the climate as balmy and enjoyable as that of the land in which it seemed always afternoon. The thermal establishment is begirt with fragrant fir-trees, and the gleaming glacier-born river, which rushes in tumultuous route past its walls, flows between fair gardens and green meadows into the Kirschen lake, a mile farther on.' Really, Mr. Balmaine, nothing could be better. I do not see how anybody can help going to Rothenkirnschen after reading this description, and, better still, it will be sure to bring us another advertisement. There is only one thing wanting."

"And that is—"

"The name of the resident physician, Dr. Schlachtermann. Don't you think you could bring it in somehow? It would please him immensely, and make the advertisement quite sure; and he is really a clever fellow. He gave me a prescription that has quite cured my sciatica—'pon my word he did."

"How would this do?" said Alfred, taking out his pencil. "Put it in after 'patients,' you know. The sentence will now read thus: 'The invaluable qualities of the mineral waters have been proved, as well by chemical analysis as by the testimony of hundreds of patients, who, under the skilful treatment of Dr. Schlachtermann, one of the most eminent of Swiss bath physicians, have recovered health and strength, even when recovery had been deemed hopeless,' &c., &c."

"Just the thing, Mr. Balmaine, just the thing. You understand exactly what I want. A few articles like that will increase our advertisements by twenty thousand francs. I have often suggested to Mayo that he should have somebody on the staff with a knowledge of German, and able to write an attractive article. Your help will be in-

valuable. I shall have to apply to you again. Will that appear to-morrow?"

"Certainly," said Alfred, putting the proof in his pocket, and making as if he meant to go.

"Must you go already?" said the Colonel, taking his hand. "I know you are a busy man, but if you can stay and have dinner with me I shall be very glad. It will be ready in half an hour, and I will release you as soon afterwards as you like."

Alfred accepted the invitation; it was what he wanted, and he did not find it difficult to lead the conversation to the subject of the Colonel's adventurous life, on which he was as loquacious as veterans are wont to be, yet at the same time very entertaining.

CHAP. XXII. BALMAINE LEARNS SOMETHING.

COLONEL BEVIS continued his reminiscences at great length, but after he had run on for some time Balmaine took advantage of a pause to inquire how he had become connected with the Italian revolutionary movement.

"Easily enough," was the answer; "after the Crimean war was over, I wanted something to do, chance took me to Italy, and there I became acquainted with the chiefs of the party. They employed me in various capacities. I took service with Garibaldi, and fought through the campaign of 1860."

"You were one of the famous thousand of Marsala, then?"

"Yes," said the Colonel drily, lighting another cigarette, "I was one of the thousand of Marsala; the Chief made me a Colonel, and on one occasion I commanded a brigade."

"You mean Garibaldi; what a fine fellow he is!" exclaimed Balmaine enthusiastically.

"And you were really a friend of his, Colonel?"

"I had that honour," replied the Colonel, rather coolly, "and I think I was more friendly to him than he was to me."

"Do you mean that he did not treat you well? no, that is impossible."

"I do mean it. If it had not been for me he would have lost one of the most important battles of the campaign. I landed in Naples in command of reinforcements from Sicily. My instructions were to hasten to the front as quickly as possible, an engagement being momentarily expected. But we were short of supplies, and quite without money. My men wanted shoes, bread, and powder. To requisition the inhabitants would have been the worst possible policy; it might have turned them against us. What was I to do? I had, fortunately,

the reputation of being a rich Englishman, so I ordered what I wanted, and paid for it in drafts on my London bankers, and reached the front just in time to turn the tide of battle. If we had been only an hour later it might have gone ill with the cause, for the Chief was over-matched and hard pressed."

"And were the drafts paid?"

"Ultimately they were, of course, but if we had not won they would not have been. What I complain of Garibaldi for is that he did so little for his followers. He told the King that he wanted nothing for himself, yet he might easily have stipulated something for us—either moderate pensions or positions in the Italian army. As it was, we were just turned adrift with next to nothing. I fought in every battle, and was twice wounded, yet all they gave me was, the Order of the Iron Crown, and about five pounds a year! And here I am, an old soldier, one of the thousand of Marsala, drumming for advertisements."

"And you drum as well as you fight, I believe, Colonel Bevis. People say you are the best canvasser in Europe, and that is something to be proud of. You must have met a great many people in your wanderings—did you ever meet in Italy, or elsewhere, an Englishman of the name of Hardy?"

"Hardy, Hardy!" said the Colonel thoughtfully. "As you say, I have met very many people in my life, so many, that a name may easily slip my memory. Still, my memory is very good. Hardy, Hardy! Do you mean Philip Hardy?"

"Yes, I mean Philip Hardy!" answered Balmaine eagerly; he felt as if he were on the track of a discovery.

"Did you know him?"

"No, but I am very anxious to find out something about him, and if you can help me I shall feel greatly obliged!"

"He was engaged in the revolutionary movement, wasn't he?"

"Yes, and disappeared about ten years ago!"

"Did he?" said Bevis absently. "Yes, I knew Philip Hardy; and, though I did not meet him often, I liked him well. He married an Italian wife and had a little girl, I think!"

"That is just the man!" exclaimed Alfred excitedly.

"But he does not always go under the name of Hardy. He had reasons, reasons of state let us say, for taking an alias occasionally. Is that another characteristic?"

"It is, it is. The Philip Hardy you know

is the Philip Hardy I want to find, or, at any rate, a clue to his fate!"

"Is he a relative of yours, Mr. Balmaine?"

"No, he has few relations, I think; but a friend of mine, at Calder, is very anxious to find out what has become of him, and I was asked by some people in London to make inquiries. They want to have proof of his death—if he be dead!"

"Property, I suppose?"

"Yes, there is some property. And I have heard so much about the case, that I would like, as a matter of personal feeling, and for the gratification of a legitimate curiosity, to discover a clue to the mystery!"

"I think I understand. But what about the little girl? I remember seeing her at Pallanza, and a pretty little thing she was."

"She has disappeared too!"

"By disappearing, you mean that nothing has been heard of her?"

"Exactly; nothing has been heard of her since old Mr. Hardy's death, ten years ago!"

"And for more than that time Philip Hardy has been out of my mind. So many things happen nowadays, that out of sight is literally out of mind. Yet, now, when I think of it, I have an indistinct recollection of hearing that something had happened to Hardy—or was it that he had gone to England, he and his daughter?"

Balmaine shook his head.

"They never came to England!"

"You don't know that they never started though. As for that, I don't know either. But I know a man who can give you the information if anybody can!"

"And that is ——"

"Andrea Martino. He kept the Hotel Martino at Locarno, but that was only a blind. His house was really a rendezvous for revolutionists, and after 1866 he gave it up. But he knew everybody engaged in the revolutionary movement, and if anything happened to any of us he was sure to hear of it. Yes, I am certain that Martino could tell you what became of Hardy."

"Can you give me his address, Colonel?"

"Unfortunately, I cannot. I have not seen him for two or three years. I met him accidentally at Naples, but though I did not ask him where he was living, I know he is not living there. I can get to know, though."

"If you would kindly do so, Colonel Bevis, I should be very much obliged," Alfred said earnestly. "You will have to write to somebody, I suppose."

"I don't think writing would be any use. It must stand over until I make another trip into Italy."

Balmaine looked disappointed.

"When will that be?" he asked.

"In the winter; I am not sure what month. But you may be sure I shall not forget your commission. If you think there is any danger of my doing so (smiling), drop me a line about November. Here is my card."

The address on the card was Villa Italia, Nice.

"One question more, Colonel Bevis," said Alfred, putting the card into his pocket, "and I will cease troubling you. Do you know what *nom de guerre* Philip Hardy was in the habit of using?"

"I don't. I think he told me at Pallanza what he called himself just then, but I have quite forgotten whether it was Amelio, Fama, Frascati, or Leopardi. I rather fancy it was Leopardi. Martino will tell you in a moment."

"I wish I could see Martino a moment," muttered Balmaine despondingly. "I am going to have a short holiday, and almost think I shall cross the Alps and make some inquiries on my own account. Where would you recommend me to go?"

"About the Italian lakes and North Italy, I should say. That was generally Hardy's beat, I think. And he was very fond of the Baths of Lucca. The Baths of Lucca would be a likely place. But unless you know under what name he went I don't see what you can do. Better wait, and keep your money in your pocket, until I can place you in communication with Martino."

"You could not possibly do that at once, could you, Colonel?"

"How can I, when I have not the most remote idea where the man is? I can find out from one or other of my old comrades either at Turin or Milan, or elsewhere; and if the man I ask does not happen to know, he will certainly be able to tell me who does. But as for writing, there is one absolute rule these fellows make about letters, and that is never to answer them."

Alfred, seeing it was useless to press the matter further, let it drop, and shortly afterwards took his leave, feeling both discouraged and disappointed; for though the information he had obtained from Bevis was good, so far as it went, it did not go far, and it might be six months before he could be placed in communication with Martino. Bevis might surely get his address before that time if he liked; and why did he not like? Then

he was disappointed with the Colonel himself. Garibaldi was Alfred's model hero, the type of all that was noble, unselfish, and loyal. With what splendid disinterestedness he had given up his conquests to the King; and, asking neither riches nor honours, retired to his island home and resumed the cultivation of his garden and the care of his cattle. The companion of such a man, "one of the few, the immortal few that were not born to die," ought surely to have imbibed something of his spirit, and to find in the consciousness that he had followed a heroic leader and fought in a great cause a reward far above decorations and pelf. And yet here was Bevis grumbling because Garibaldi had not done more for him than he had done for himself, because he had not stooped to entreat the Italian Government to recompense the men who had redeemed a kingdom with their blood! To blame the Liberator for this was to surpass in meanness the Government which had failed to perform so obvious a duty.

Yes, Alfred was disappointed with Bevis. The fine old soldier, whom he had pictured in his imagination, was merely a smart and not very scrupulous canvasser for advertisements, and now that the novelty of the thing was wearing off he began to perceive that most of the people whose acquaintance he had lately made were, more or less, humbugs. Furbey, Corfe, Gibson, Leyland, Mayo, and Bevis were every one humbugs, and the *Helvetic News* was probably the greatest humbug of all. A few days later, however, he saw reason to modify this judgment and assign the bad pre-eminence to the *Pittsburgh Patriot*. He had sent his bill to the proprietor when he sent his last article to the editor; and Dr. Pilgrim (who was a shining light of the denomination to which he belonged) in acknowledging receipt of the two documents, wrote as follows:

"I am quite at a loss to understand how you can have conceived the idea that we pay for contributions. If I may trust my memory (and it never yet deceived me) nothing whatever was said about payment, and our friends are generally more than satisfied with the consciousness that in writing for us they are promoting a good cause, and the pleasure of seeing their compositions in print. Moreover, the Society which runs the *Patriot* is just now far from rich, and cannot afford to use paid articles. But as I cannot bear even the implied reproach of having misled you, however inadvertently, I shall send you, in the course of a few days the sum of five

dollars, being at the rate of one dollar an article, which I trust you will deem in the circumstances a fair equivalent for your trouble."

This was a bitter disappointment to Alfred in more ways than one, for counting confidently on getting his money from the *Patriot*, he had spent rather more freely than he otherwise would have done, and had hardly any money beforehand either for holiday making or contingencies. To make matters worse the *Boston Hub*, for which he had written three letters, paid him in the same coin as the *Patriot*. In reply to his request to fill up the "blank bill" he sent them, with whatever amount they thought he deserved, the proprietors observed that, having a good many amateur correspondents in Europe, they were not in the habit of paying for foreign letters, but if he would continue his contributions (which seemed to please their readers) they would be happy to mail him regularly a free copy of their bi-weekly edition.

"What a mean lot of beggars they are!" was Balmaine's exclamation as he tore up the letter with unnecessary energy, and threw the bits on the floor. "This is my first experience of American papers and, by Jove, it shall be my last."

But he found that if an American journal can be mean, an American gentleman can do all that the most chivalrous regard for honour requires. A few days afterwards he met Harman, and the banker, who was always very friendly, after asking about himself and the paper, inquired how he was getting on with the *Pittsburgh Patriot*. For reply Alfred showed him Dr. Pilgrim's letter.

"The wretched old skunk!" exclaimed Harman, giving the letter a blow with his fist, as if it were in some way answerable for the dishonesty of the writer. "Why, I heard him say myself that he would pay you at the rate of twenty dollars a letter. But look here, Balmaine, I introduced this fellow to you, and recommended you to write for him, and I'll see you paid."

He was as good as his word. The very next day Alfred received a letter from the bank, enclosing a bank note for five hundred francs! and this sum, as he afterwards learnt, Harman's agents succeeded in recovering from Dr. Pilgrim.

Of all his new acquaintance Balmaine liked best to talk with Madame Karl von Schmidt. She had seen a good deal of the world, possessed a shrewd wit, the vicissitudes she had undergone made her sympa-

thetic with the troubles of others, and she took a motherly interest in his welfare. Delane, however, she generally kept at a distance, perhaps because she wanted to keep him at a distance from her daughter.

Madame Karl took hardly less interest in the Hardy mystery than Alfred himself, and he had to give her a full account of his conversation with Bevis, which had so greatly disappointed him. She hinted, much to his surprise, that if he offered to pay the Colonel for his trouble he would probably find him more communicative. It was not very noble or chivalrous on his part, she said, "but you must take people as you find them." And Bevis knew the value of money—a good many people did not.

"I am learning," laughed Balmaine. "I have learned a great deal since I left home. I get more *disillusionné* every day. I shall think soon, with Napoleon, that every man has his price."

"Then you will be wrong. Most men have—but not all. As you say, you are learning, and there is no teacher like experience. But as for this mystery of yours, I must tell you frankly, Monsieur Balmaine, that I think you are making very good progress. You have met a man who knew Monsieur Hardy and his daughter, who confirms that they were in Italy at a certain time, and who promises to give you the address of a person who can give you his *nom de guerre*, and tell you what became of him. I do not see what you would have more—unless you expect to read all about it in the *Journal de Lacustrie*, at a cost of fifteen centimes. A mystery that can be solved by asking six questions, *ma foi*, I would not give a fig for."

"You are right, Madame Karl; I am too impatient, and I was so much annoyed at not getting Martino's address that I overlooked the importance of the information I have actually acquired. I must now see what I can do about offering Colonel Bevis something for his trouble."

The next day Alfred wrote to Artful and Higginbottom, announcing his intention of making a journey across the Alps in quest of information. He told them, too, what he had learnt from Bevis, and asked them if they would permit him to offer that gentleman an *honorarium* for the trouble he might incur in obtaining Martino's address.

The answer was a letter highly commending his exertions, and urging him to persevere, and requesting him to spare no effort to procure Martino's address. A draft

for fifty pounds was enclosed, "to be used for travelling expenses, or otherwise, at your discretion."

But before it came Bevis was gone; and

though Balmaine wrote to him at once his movements were so uncertain, and he was so bad a correspondent, that, as likely as not, the reply might be delayed for weeks.

THE POWER OF MORAL SYMPATHIES.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR APRIL.

By HENRY ALLON, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Romans xii. ; xvi. 17—27.

NO books in the world are so full of golden sentences, proverbial sayings, and condensed wisdom, as the books of the Bible. For lofty sentiment, weighty meaning, and felicitous expression no literature is comparable with them. The sublime themes of the histories, the moral grandeur of the legislative books, the sententious maxims of the Proverbs, the devotional felicities of the Psalms, the medallion-like completeness and symmetry of the Proverbs, the pictorial narratives of the Evangelists, the profound theological thought and spiritual ethics of the Epistles, the individuality of the books, as varied as their authorship—from the broad impersonal wisdom of the Proverbs to the intense presence and spiritual urgency of the apostle Paul—all constitute a collection of writings absolutely unique. Each book is characterised by a wisdom as profound as its moral truth is transcendent. You never in its teaching detect a false note, or are jarred with an incongruous expression. In wisdom, piety, and literary beauty no teachings of human life can be compared with those of the Bible.

And how instinctively religious and practical all its tendencies are! Take, for example, the Epistle to the Romans. It is a theological treatise on the profoundest mysteries of spiritual life—the being, purposes, and spiritual operations of God, the moral responsibility and possibilities of man, the salvation of Jesus Christ, the reality and intensity of God's fellowship with man, the great hopes of the life hereafter. No metaphysic could be more abstruse, no reasoning could lie amid profounder mysteries. Christian theology is expounded on its philosophical as well as on its practical side. And yet, how the doctrine gathers into practical forces of religious life; how the philosophy lends itself to moral duty; how the reasoning passes into exhortation; so that a whole economy of practical ethics,

touching almost every duty of human life, is the practical application of the Epistle!

One particular apothegm we take as a specimen of its practical wisdom: "I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil." (Rom. xvi. 19.) Its occasion is not indicated; it was probably prompted by that subtle feeling of circumstance and occasion which, without precise specification, gives form and tone to so many religious teachings. It is enough that we take it as a self-evidencing maxim of religious culture; singularly penetrating, comprehensive, and felicitous. It gathers into itself an entire economy of religious life.

What an unconscious recognition it is of moral character in man, that we should so speak of "good" and "evil!" that we should thus divide the world of men into classes! Each class has many gradations: a good man's excellencies may be qualified by many defects; a bad man's evil may be relieved by many attemperings of virtue. These distinctions pertain to the practical culture of character. But we never mistake the radical qualities of good and evil themselves. We do not often confound the fundamental characteristics of a man with his inconsistencies. We do not call a man good because he does some good things, nor evil because he does some evil things. We intuitively distinguish between fundamental principles, inherent tendencies, and the aberrations and inconsistencies of temptation and circumstance. And we classify men according to their principles and motives.

Paul had this radical difference before him. Men were simply good or evil, qualifications notwithstanding. No cleavage of human life, indeed, is so marked and so profound as that caused by religion.

Good and evil, too, present themselves for a man's choice; they are "set before him;" they beset and solicit him in every path of his life. Upon his decision and upon his treatment of them his character and his destiny depend. He is therefore so to bear

himself towards both—with keen discernment and practical preference—as that it will be the characteristic culture of his life, that he is “wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil.”

The terms employed are significant. “That which is good.” It is a wide and comprehensive designation. Men have had different conceptions of goodness. Things which an old Roman would have declared good—Stoicism, Roman patriotism, social institutions such as slavery and the relations of the sexes, the doctrine of suicide—are condemned by Christian morality. Many so-called virtues of Pagan life are reprobated as vices by Christian sentiment. The faculty of conscience is one thing, its intelligence is another. All men distinguish between things that they deem good and things that they deem evil. It is the indestructible instinct of our nature to do so; but men do not always rightly designate the things that they call good or evil; that is the result of moral education.

A good man will seek to have the instincts of his conscience rightly instructed. It is no sufficient justification of a wrong thing that it is done conscientiously; there is a previous question—by what processes of inquiry and conviction has the conviction been reached? Saul “verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.” Beyond all doubt he was a sincere religious persecutor; as conscientious in putting the Christians to death, as afterwards in laying down his life for Christ’s sake. The more conscientious an ill-informed persecutor is, the more relentless he will be. He thinks himself bound by fealty to God to suppress even his feelings of human tenderness. His conscience goes over to the side of persecution, “pricks his intent” whenever it relaxes.

A thing is not necessarily good because a man conscientiously does it. Has he availed himself of the highest teaching concerning goodness? Has he diligently sought right notions as well as right motives? Motive is not a sufficient justification of a man if he has not taken every practicable means of instructing it—if he permits it to be determined by prejudices or passions. Nothing is more futile than the plea of simple conscientiousness: that is only saying that the man is not a rascal. A conscientious man is not therefore necessarily acting rightly; he may be a fanatic, a sectarian, a persecutor, an ascetic, an incarnation of superstition and intolerance. Probably the most terrible persecutors of the Romish inquisition, of Pro-

testant intolerance, were among the most conscientious of men.

Paul means the goodness that Christianity inculcates—the lofty spiritual life, the transcendent spiritual ethics, the piety, purity, righteousness, benevolence of Jesus Christ’s teaching:—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.” “Be ye perfect as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.” Hence Paul will no more call the ritualising Judaizers good, than the persecuting Nero.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read 1 Cor. xiii.; Matt. vii.

“Wisdom” is also a comprehensive term, a much larger term than “knowledge.” A man may know a great deal and be anything but wise.

“Wisdom and knowledge far from being one,
Have oftentimes no connection.”

Wisdom is the right estimate and use of knowledge. A wise man discriminates the value of what he knows, and puts it to the best practical uses.

To be “wise unto that which is good” therefore is—

1. To have a keen and cultured faculty for the discernment of goodness, even under anomalous forms, and in incongruous places. Some people are dull in recognising goodness; they are incapable of moral discernment, and defective in moral admiration. They may see the grandest features of moral character exhibited, the grandest deeds of moral heroism done; they have no intuitive power of perceiving their divineness; their recognition is limited by conventional forms or by dogmatic prejudices; they discover it only when newspapers and general laudations proclaim it. Many a man has to die before his intrinsic goodness is discovered. “A prophet hath no honour in his own country.” The familiarity of human nearness, the incompleteness of superficial observation, the mist of subtle selfishness and envy, disqualify us; only when he dies do we “know that a prophet has been amongst us.” “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He.”

It is a great grace to be capable of moral admiration, of instinctive reverence; to discern wherever we see it, and under whatever forms, the moral goodness of men; for the instinct for goodness to be quick and true; so that in the family, in social life, whatever the qualifications, we discriminate and honour traits of goodness.

Some people can recognise goodness only in their own narrow and familiar forms of it; only when it wears the livery of their own sect, worships in their own way, adopts their own forms of speech. How we make accidental, unimportant circumstances tests of character! We test goodness by creeds and attitudes and genuflections, by Quaker bonnets and baptisms, by denominational habits, by conventional speech, by ascetic rules of life. A Ritualist will not exactly say that a Quaker is not a good man, a Congregationalist in his spiritual freedom will not deny goodness to a Sacramentarian; but it is not the instinct that pronounces the verdict, it is reason and logic that compel the reluctant admission. And there is a latent feeling that they are not quite so good and safe as they would be were they with us. We are incapable of testing them by their simple faith and love and spiritual life; we test them by their garb and customs—the manner is more than the man.

How much there is in optimism of feeling, in eager sympathy with goodness; and how largely this may be cultivated! Some people are pessimists; they see only the defects, the worst elements of character, the qualifying circumstance; in describing the sun they would begin with its spots. Instead of "discerning the soul of good in things that are evil," they see the soul of evil in things that are good; instead of being eager and sympathetic in their recognitions, they are critical and depreciating; they are without moral enthusiasm; they do not make the most of your good, but the least. As surely as they open their lips it will be to qualify. What a miserable, meagre soul it is! how utterly inexplicable to it, for instance, the large words of rejoicing commendation with which Paul opens his letter to the very defective Church in Corinth! Like all genuine things goodness rejoices in sunshine and sympathy. No one would say of these eager, critical fault-finders of life that they are "wise unto that which is good." How can they become so if they do not cultivate the faculty and habit of recognising it, of generously commending it? Love is ever an optimist.

No fear of harm in hearty commendation of good, in genial, generous sympathy with it, even in magnifying it. Next to the commendation of God, which is always generous, the commendation of good men is precious and helpful. The habit of keen inquisition for defects, of critical depreciation, of ungracious disparagement rather than of generous recognition and sympathy, hurts no

one so much as it hurts him who indulges it—it effectually disables the keen spiritual discernment of good, which is wisdom.

2. The wise man is he who turns what he knows to practical account. There are people who delude themselves with the mere sentiment of goodness. They play with spiritual ideas and holy sympathies; they are fervent in worship and prayer, and are easily excited by highly wrought spiritual discourse; and in virtue of their sentiment think themselves very religious. There is a kind of sop to conscience even in the way in which a transgressing man will submit to rebuke, condemn himself, and permit others to condemn him. There is nothing he insists upon so much as "faithful preaching." He resents "smooth things," and feels as if he had half condoned his wrong by hearing it denounced. Because the feeling is so far right, he half fancies that he himself is right. Thus the feeling becomes a kind of shield that turns off the darts of conscience. Men are constantly deluding themselves with good feelings, fancying them to be goodness. Thus a man will be devout and fervid in the feeling of public worship and in the sentiment of Christian fellowship who is very doubtful in his ethical conduct; the fervid church feeling does not religiously control his business, compel uprightness, truth, and considerateness, purify his life, sweeten his temper, eradicate his selfishness. Clearly feeling no more constitutes goodness than wishing constitutes doing. A man is not 'wise unto that which is good' who has only sentimental sympathies with it, approving desires for it. To shed tears over a novel is not practical benevolence.

The wise man seeks practically to realise goodness, turns every good thought and feeling into practical life, yields to good impulses, utilises his knowledge, embodies in his character and life the goodness that he conceives. He who possesses knowledge and makes no practical use of it is a learned fool. His knowledge possesses his understanding only, it does not mould his character or regulate his life. The wise man lives to be good; he values knowledge as the means of growing in grace, obeying every precept, practising every virtue, perfecting every grace, subordinating every interest and experience to moral perfectness, "keeping his heart with all diligence," "forgetting the things that are behind and reaching forward to things that are before," watchful in self-observation, learning practical lessons from experience—from failures as well as from successes. He

is wise to note the causes of failure and to remedy them, vigilant in his guard against easily besetting sins, resolute in avoiding circumstances, companionships, books, amusements, the practical influence of which is to dull the moral sense, throw the watchman of the soul off his guard, give the tempter his opportunity and temptation its power. A wise man will regulate circumstance, give advantage to influences of good. "Lead us not into temptation" will be not his daily prayer only, but his daily striving.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Matt. x. 16-42; Phil. iv.

"Wise unto that which is good." I must think that this includes expertness as well as feeling and striving. Many people are good and earnest without being wise. There are awkward, blundering, repellent ways of goodness that hinder its due influence. How utterly destitute of the sense of fitness, of occasion, of facilitating method, of predisposing feeling, of tact, some men are! Their goodness irritates you, provokes resentment; it is hard, conceited, un pitying; it makes no allowance for other circumstances, for other temperaments. It is a pride of goodness hurtful to itself as well as to others. One could almost wish, and perhaps it might be the best thing that could happen to it, that it might, as Peter did, fall under some great temptation. Nothing can cure the Pharisaism of some people's goodness but a shameful failure. Such men's goodness lacks modesty, self-distrust, graciousness. It is self-satisfied and intolerant. "Considering thyself lest thou also be tempted."

How awkward, again, some really good humble people are in their ways! With eager, almost agonising desire, they fail in discernment, adaptation, tact. They do the right thing in the wrong way, or at the wrong time; they blurt out their good sayings in awkward, untimely speech; they proffer their good doings at unfavourable seasons or in adverse conditions. Nothing is more offensive to good men, or more provocative of ridicule and resentment in bad ones, than the cant of religious phrases, the ritual of conventional speech, the indiscriminateness of religious requirement; as if fidelity to Christ consisted in unctuous phrases about Him. A man "wise unto that which is good" will intuitively speak his "word in season," insinuate or suggest his rebuke, or teaching, or appeal, so as to predispose to assent before passion or prejudice discovers what is meant.

How much, too, might be said about doubtful means of doing good things—of raising money to build churches, of employing expedients to fill them when built, of the aims and methods of preachers, of the support of evangelistic and benevolent agencies, of methods for reclaiming men from vices! The end does not sanctify the means. The science of good doing is as much as the zeal for it. It demands an intuitive conscience, a pure feeling, an instinctive delicacy.

"Simple unto that which is evil." This also relates to moral feeling; sensitiveness to good has necessarily for its negative obtuseness to evil. A keen sympathy with the one implies dull apprehension of the other. "Simple;" that is, unmix with it; artless, unskilled; inapt as well as ignorant. It is a great grace to be ignorant of evil in every sense of familiar understanding—I know that it is evil, and I know no more concerning it. We cannot know evil without suffering from our knowledge; without injury to our moral sense; defilement of our moral atmosphere. There are things that are "not so much as to be named amongst us, as becometh saints," of which we are "ashamed even to speak." Evil is a poison; once imbibed it inflicts permanent injury upon our moral constitution. Some kinds of knowledge are intrinsically a curse. Profane, profligate ideas cannot be discharged from our thoughts or excluded from the imagination, however resentfully the heart may repel them. It is not that a man lacks sincerity, guilelessness, pure sympathies; it is that unclean images have entered his imagination and will not be exorcised. Even in our worship what evil thoughts will sometimes come, like the ill-omened birds that "came down upon the carcasses" of Abraham's sacrifice, and which he had to drive away!

Of course it means unpractised in evil, innocent of all its habits, simply earnest in repelling every form of it. "Evil shall not have dominion over you;" not looking with desire upon evil things, and wishing that they were lawful; not parleying with the tempter, and debating with moral casuistry whether the apple really be "good to make one wise." Dallying with the evil suggestion; hesitating whether we may or may not; walking as near as we may on the carnal side of the narrow way—this is not to be "simple unto that which is evil;" it is to be casuistical; to harbour traitorous lust in the very citadel of the soul. A man falls on the side towards which he leans.

Unequivocalness, straightforwardness, entireness, are characteristic of the man who is "simple unto that which is evil." In the domain of neutral things—things which can scarcely be classed as either good or evil—the simple-hearted man will always give the doubt to the virtuous side. He will keep as far from evil as possible; "avoid the very appearance of evil."

Can too great moral importance be attached to simple, unequivocal speech; the absence of ambiguity, casuistry, double meanings, suggestions of what we do not exactly intend, then meanly evading the responsibility of our suggestion?

"Simple unto that which is evil"—incapable, therefore, of base, mean suspicions of other men; thinking evil, imputing mean motives, the absence of noble generosity and faith. Mean souls always suspect meanness in others. Half of our vile suspicions, our base detraction of others, is simply the reflection, the refraction, of our own bad hearts. Noble natures are incapable of mean suspicions; they are "simple unto that which is evil" because evil has no place in themselves.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Col. iii.; 1 Thess. v. 14—28.

So that it is a quality, a temper of life that is meant. To be attained, therefore, only by the general culture of life. It cannot be realised by a mere ritual of things, by a mere sentiment, by mere wishes and resolutions, only by a practical cultivation of sanctity, refinement, elevation in feeling. A ritual homage to goodness, a smirking ignoring of evil, prudery, sanctimoniousness are offensive and unreal. Only the intrinsic quality of a man's nature can realise this temper. Innocence cannot be simulated; you cannot be holy by rubric. You must begin with the sympathies and qualities of your heart itself, seek the "renewing of the Holy Spirit day by day;" "the end of the commandment is, love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and faith unfeigned;" the end of all "means of grace" is grace itself.

The discipline of life will do much—a watchful restraint, so that no evil feeling is permitted to embody itself in action, so that no doing or association shall minister to evil feeling. We cannot become good by merely wishing to be good; strenuous battle must be waged against the evil within and the evil without, "the world, the flesh, and the

devil." We all know the thousand little things that help or hinder holiness—tempers, lusts, casual feelings, incidental doings. We all know that to strive against evil checks and weakens evil, strengthens the power of good, creates habit—"we cease to do evil, learn to do well." The discipline of life re-acts powerfully upon the temper and strength of life.

We may also culture incitements to goodness—impulses, inducements. "I have set God always before me," keeping the thought of God prominent and dominating. Men do not easily sin when they think of God; in all sin there is somewhat of atheism, God is either denied or forgotten. We may do much to fill life with the sense of God, His pure moral beauty, His loving fatherhood.

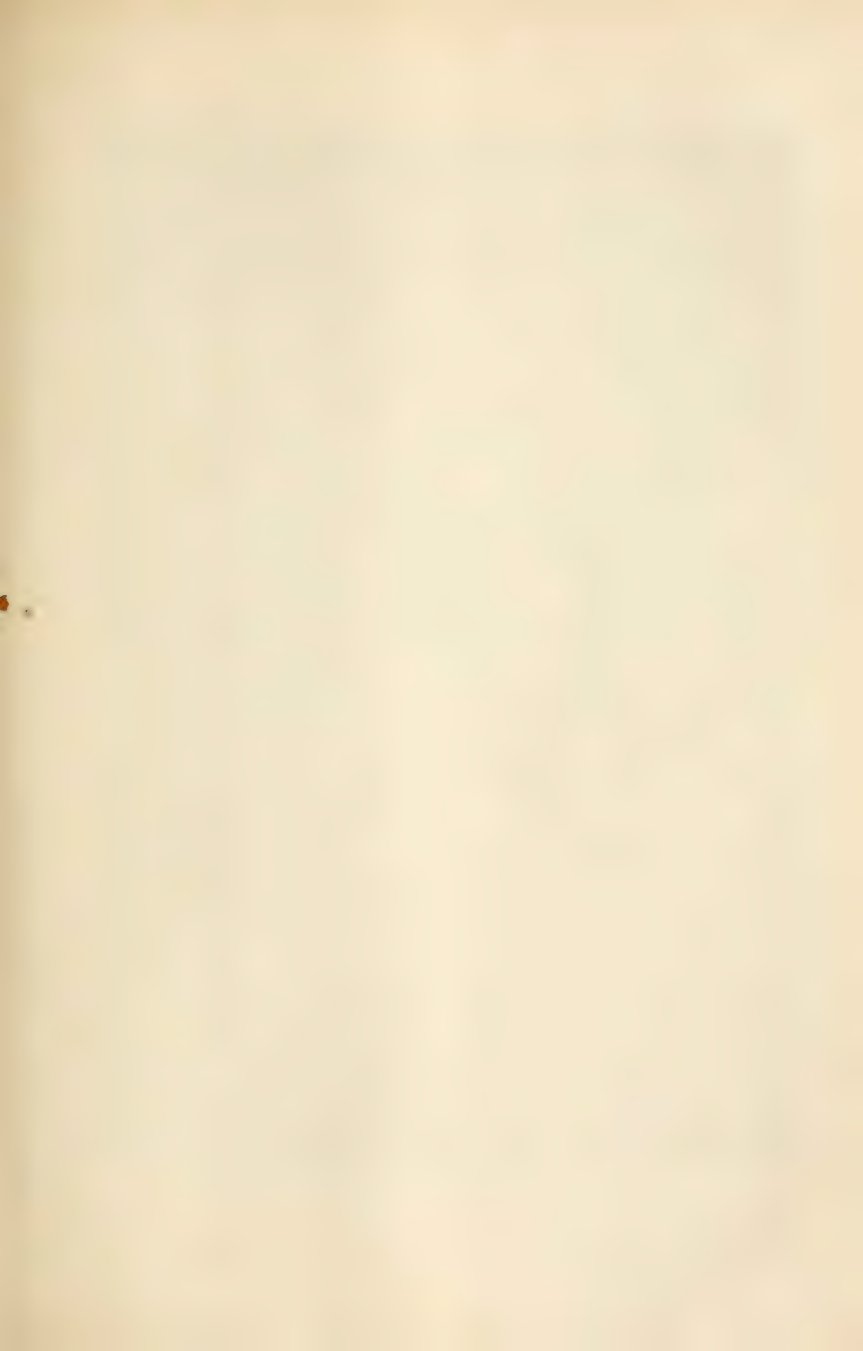
We may make ourselves familiar with large and lofty spiritual ideas, with ideal conceptions, with notable examples of holiness, such as we find in the Bible. What a mighty moral effect upon character the thoughtful reading of such a book has!

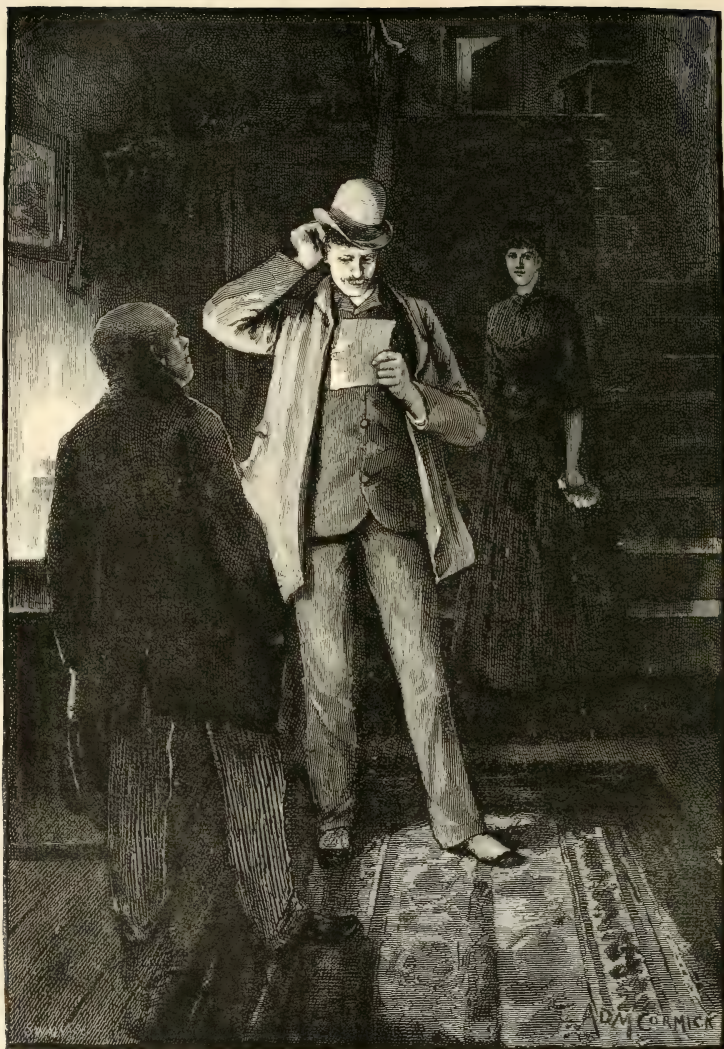
We may utilise the public worship of God, in which the loftiest spiritual thoughts and feelings and things are solicited. It speaks ill for the spiritual tone of a man's heart, when God's house becomes to him a matter of indifference, when it has ceased to be a passionate desire. How mightily the things of worship help goodness when sought for their teaching and impulse!

How can a man grow to spiritual strength and refinement when he is indifferent about things that most conduce to them, when he permits himself to drift into profane companionship and converse, to read impure literature, to saturate mind, imagination, and heart with foul ideas! Only a resolute eschewing of things that are evil, an assiduous following of things that are good, can make a man wise.

And this in the spirit of prayerful dependence for that divine influence which alone can quicken life, which alone can vitalise all ministries to life, which by making a pure and tender atmosphere around us "builds up the being that we are." "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

What a grandeur there is in Christianity! How radical its method of dealing with human ills, how potent its agencies, how transcendent its issues! How blessed human life would be were its processes wrought out, its ideal realised; were men "wise unto that which is good and simple unto that which is evil!"





"Hackett was reading the document Abram had presented to him."

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

PERHAPS, if she had had but time to think of it, there was nobody by whom she would rather have been found in a situation so painful and humiliating, since it was fated that she should be discovered at all. Ned Blane, to her mind, was wise, tender, discreet, and brave—and that is not a combination of characteristics at all to be looked for in every young man who may by chance surprise a woman in distress; and he was an old friend into the bargain. She shrank from him, however, in a new distress so acute that for the instant the pain of it killed the old one, and she seemed almost to recover possession of herself.

"It is nothing," she said. "Go away, Mr. Blane." Leave me. Pray do. I am going home."

At the first sound of her voice he knew her, and the tone seemed to enter his heart like a knife. He discerned a tragedy at once, but his mind outran the facts—distancing them by so much that he found Hackett guilty of a score of villainies before she had spoken her last word.

"Nothing!" he said, in a voice of real anguish. "Oh yes, dear, there is much the matter. Tell me. Can I help you?"

In all her life she had never heard the voice of a heart in pain until that moment. She had heard the voice of little sorrows often enough, but here she was in touch with something terrible. The voice shook her from head to foot with an instant revelation.

"Nothing," she said, breathing unevenly and trembling. "I am not very well, and I am foolish. Oh, pray go away, Mr. Blane. Let me go home alone. I am better. It is all over now."

"Let me see you home," he answered, in a voice suddenly dry and commonplace. "I won't distress you by talking. Take my arm."

She yielded, and walked by his side through the darkness, with a sob catching her breath now and again. There was enough in the encounter to fill both minds. As for the girl, she knew now what she had merely guessed before. The guess had never concerned her greatly. And suddenly she blushed hotly in the dark, and withdrew her hand from his arm so swiftly that the motion startled

him. He had called her "dear." What right had he to speak to her in such a way? What right had she—a married woman—to take the arm of a man who addressed her in such terms?

"I will go home alone, if you please, Mr. Blane," she said. The defensive feminine instinct was uppermost now, and made her altogether mistress of herself again.

"As you please," he said, as coldly as he had spoken last. "Your wish is my law."

There was not a touch of gallantry in the tone. Nothing, indeed, could have been further away from it, but she disliked the words, and slipped away with a chill "Good night," and a "Thank you" murmured with half-turned head when she was a dozen paces from him. He stood stock-still until her figure was just melting into the darkness, and then walked after her, accommodating his pace to hers, and merely keeping her in sight—a moving shadow. When they left the grassy path, and came upon the road of hard-beaten cinder which marked the beginning of the town, she could hear his footsteps at a distance behind her, and knew that he was following. She was warm with indignation against him now, and the unlucky word rankled woundingly. Blane, for his part, was unconscious of having used it.

The new disturbance in Mary Hackett's mind was so much less poignant than the old that it came as a sort of relief from it. It would not have been altogether wonderful if there had been an underlying sense of complacency in it. The sorrow with which a woman regards the sufferings of her hopeless lover—even when she believes in them and can partly understand them—is not all sorrow. If she had cared for the man—if she had had even a remote fear of being in love with him—the case would have been very different. But, being free of any shadow of that sort, she was free also to find any little ray of comfort there might be in the fact that a brave man cared for her. And so, in the human, self-contradictory way, which is all the more marked when the humanity is feminine, she was angry with Ned Blane for being in love with her, and a little comforted thereby at the same time, though vaguely.

To reach home was to go back to all the shames and miseries which had haunted her

throughout the day. The man in possession was in the hall when she entered, and was smoking a meditative pipe there as he walked up and down.

"I know the gaffer to be a smoker, ma'am," he said, touching his bald forehead in token of respect, "and so I thought you'd tek no offence if I took a puff or two here. The night's close, and it's a bit stuffy in the kitchen."

"You may smoke here if you like," she answered in a choked voice, and escaped upstairs.

It was beginning to grow late to her fancy, that is to say, it was nearing ten o'clock—but she resigned herself to a further waiting of two or three hours for her husband's return. She heard his step on the path and his key at the latch with a heart which beat half in relief and half in fear. It was something, though not much, to have him back so early; but the news with which she had to receive him seemed as shameful to tell as it had been to suffer.

"Mary," called the jolly, rollicking voice from the foot of the stairs, "where are you?" Then there was an exclamation, and "Hillo! what do *you* do here?"

Her place was by her husband's side. If her sense of duty could not carry her so far now, how had it led her to the altar? But she moved reluctantly, and came upon the pair pale as a ghost, and with eyes red and swollen with crying. Hackett was reading the document Abram had presented to him by the light of a lamp which stood upon the little hall table, and he had thrust his felt hat on one side to clutch a disorderly handful of curls.

"Will!" she said, laying a hand upon his shoulder. He turned with a grimace intended to make light of the thing, and went back to his reading.

"Old Lowther, is it?" said he, half to himself. "He promised to wait, the villain. Well, who sups with the Lowther should have a long spoon, and mine's of the shortest. I'm afraid he'll get the best of it. Look here!"—he addressed himself to Abram—"you keep dark. I've got two or three gentlemen coming to supper and to take a hand at cards. I don't want *you* in the way. You understand?"

"Right you are, governor," responded Abram. "I'm willing to make things agreeable. You can have the plate in if you like, so long as I see it come out again."

Hackett laughed at this, though rather comfortlessly.

"All right, my lad," he said. "You stick to the kitchen."

"Will," said his wife, when Abram had retired, "you won't have people here to-night?" She laid a timid hand upon his arm, and looked up at him appealingly.

"Why not?" he asked, staring at her in an affected astonishment. "I must. They'll be here in five minutes, my dear, and you must get a bit of supper ready."

"There is nothing in the house," she answered miserably. "It is too late to send out, and I am ashamed to send to the tradespeople already."

He stood gnawing at his moustache for a minute, and bent his eyebrows as he stared gloomily at the floor.

"Oh! I'll put that all right," he said, recovering himself, and turning with his usual jaunty swagger. "I shan't be away more than ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, and you'll tell the fellows to wait. I'm going down to the Chase Arms, and I'll get the landlord to send something up."

"Will," she broke out sobbing, "where is all this to end? You entertain your friends when we haven't even bread to eat ourselves that we can pay for honestly."

"Look here, Polly," said Hackett, turning upon her with an expression which had first surprised her on her wedding-day, and had since then grown familiar, "my business is my business. Leave me to it and mind your own. And don't take that tone with me, for I can't stand it, and I'm not going to try."

She dropped her hands with a gesture of despairing resignation, and turned away. Mr. Hackett was a great deal too desirous of his own good opinion to permit the discussion to close in this manner. When a man is indubitably in the right, and is profoundly conscious that there is nothing in his career for which he can blame himself, he naturally likes to say so.

"I won't have those airs," said he therefore, "any more than I'll have that tone." Miserable as she was she found strength enough for a flash of disdain at this. The scorn in her eyes was weary and sad enough, but it was none the less real on that account. "And I won't be looked at in that way, either," he went on, in a tone more frankly wrathful than he had ever used before to her. "Don't you try that sort of air on me, my lady, or you'll find it won't pay, I can assure you. If you think I married in order to have a perpetual wet blanket in the house, you're very much mistaken, let me tell you. And here's

another thing. You've been pretty shy of my friends ever since we married, and lately, whenever one of them comes into the house, I notice that you go away and hide yourself. Now, I'm not going to stand that either. You'll come in to-night and take your place at the head of the supper-table, where you ought to be. Mind that, now."

She never changed the weary look of anger and disdain which had impelled him to tag this injunction to his list of complaints, and he, growing restless under it, had turned away from her, and, opening the hall door, had delivered the greater part of his speech half in the house and half out of it. The young gentleman not only wanted to stand well with himself, but had, perhaps, even a stronger desire to stand well with other people, and if he had suspected the presence of Ned Blane outside it is likely that he would have moderated his tone; for although it is undeniably a pleasant thing to bully the feeble, and to have one's way with full assurance of courage, where there is no danger, the most triumphant swaggerer would prefer to execute his paces in private.

But, little as his presence was suspected, Ned Blane stood in the darkness, under the shadow of the hedge opposite, and heard more than enough of his successful rival's speech and tone to make his blood boil and his heart ache anew. He was not of the stuff of which listeners are made, and had lingered there with no hope of a glimpse of the family skeleton. He had been unaware of Hackett's entrance, for when he had once seen Mary beyond her own door he had retraced his steps awhile and had then returned. But the tone and the words together rooted him to the place, and he felt such a dangerous flood of rage rise within him that he knew he had only to make one physical movement to give it a chance to break all bounds.

By the time Hackett's diatribe was over, however, the boiling flood had all subsided strangely. He was bitter within until his heart loathed its own bitterness, but he was completely master of himself, and he knew it. The honestly-incensed husband slammed the door behind him at the "mind that now!" and so escaped without retort, and at the same time gave force and point to his injunction. He strode angrily down the little gravel path and fumbled for a moment at the gate. In his wrath he shook at it so noisily that he failed to hear Blane's footstep, and it was something of a shock to him to see the sombre figure looming so closely on him in the dark.

"Hillo!" he said, starting back nervously.

"Good-night, Will!" said Blane, passing an arm through one of his with a singular slow and firm deliberateness. Ned's arm clenched on his old companion's so firmly that Hackett felt as though he were in custody, and made a half-unconscious movement to extricate himself, but the arm which encircled his felt like a bar of iron. Hackett had never had an idea that Blane was so prodigiously muscular as he seemed to be. He began to wonder a little what his old friend might mean by his silence, and the strange captivity in which he held him. Then he remembered the open door, and the recent address delivered to his wife—in the open air, for any passer-by to have the benefit of it!

"Don't you think, Will," said Blane, strenuously but quietly controlling Hackett's footsteps to the measure of his own, "that you'd better keep those little endearments private—eh?"

"Oh!" cried Hackett, gladly seizing on the chance this gave him, "you've been eavesdropping, have you, Ned? Come, now! that doesn't do you any special credit, does it?"

"Now I'll warn you," said Blane, with a curious dryness and coolness of tone which very much chilled his involuntary companion, "there's nothing I should so dearly like at this minute as for you to give me a reasonable chance of quarrelling with you on my own account. Will you take that back, if you please?"

"Well," said Hackett, who liked less and less the iron pressure on his arm, "I don't recognise your right, you know, to make any comment on what you happen to overhear between my wife and me."

"Will you take it back, if you please?" Blane asked again, as if the other had not spoken.

"Haven't I taken it back?" Hackett demanded. "I said you happened to overhear, didn't I?"

"Will you take it back, if you please?"

"I have taken it back," said Hackett.

"Very well. And now for my question again. Don't you think those little endearments between man and wife are best kept private? Tell me now."

"I don't see what it has to do with you at all, Ned. You used not to be a meddling fellow. Let a man mind his own concerns, will you?"

He was a good deal less bellicose than he

had been a while ago with the weaker vessel, but that, of course, was natural. He put more of good-humoured badinage than of remonstrance into his voice, and finished with a half laugh.

"I don't see what it has to do with me either," said Blane. The iron grip on Hackett's arm began to tremble perceptibly, and whilst the captive wondered what this might mean, he found himself suddenly released, but confronted face to face. "I do see one or two things," Blane was saying. "I do see that you've married—one of the best girls in the world, and that you're as worthy of her as I am to be an angel. I do see that you bully her and snarl at her, like the mongrel dog you are. Business of mine? You may thank your stars, my lad, that it's no business of mine, for if it were you'd suffer."

"Now come, Ned," said Hackett in an almost genial, and altogether allowing and friendly way, "you go too fast and too far. You do now, really. I'm in the most abominable heap of trouble. I've had shameful luck lately, and nothing's seemed to go as it ought to go. And I've had news to-night that's enough to put any fellow out of temper."

"Go your way," Blane answered with something very like a groan. "I've done with you."

"I shan't bear any malice for what's passed between us, Ned," said Hackett.

"Very well," said the other. "Least said soonest mended."

"Ned's queer," thought Hackett to himself, as he went on his way. "He's very queer. He used to be prowling a good deal about old Howarth's house himself. Is that it?"

So the one effect of Ned Blane's interference was that it gave Will Hackett a needle to prick his wife with, and that he made up his mind to use it.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARY did not appear at the supper table, in spite of Hackett's injunction, and when the latter went up-stairs to insist upon obedience he found the bedroom door locked against him. He reserved to himself the right to express his opinion with regard to this open defiance later on, and controlling himself without much difficulty—for he was one of those people who need to *say* how indignant they are before they can get up any great force of steam—he descended to his companions. They were easily contented with his apologies, and were, indeed, rather pleased than otherwise to be freed from the

restrictions a hostess's presence would have imposed upon them.

The rosy maid, who waited at table, was amazed at the gaiety of the party, and more than a little frightened by it. She remembered the burdensome gloom, the terror and restraint which had been created by Abram's presence in her father's house, and her master's recklessness had something awful in it, to her simple mind. It even wore a look of impiety, and the rosy maid was in terror of a judgment, and broke a plate or two in her agitation.

Hackett's *convives* were four in number. Two were old cronies of his—by no means the pick of his old acquaintances, but such as fate and his own courses had left to him—and the other two were strangers to him, found in his friends' companionship on that day's race-course.

"My friends' friends," said Will with his own genial and delightful swagger, "are mine. I won't offer you *amontillado* and turtle, gentlemen, but plain fare and a hearty welcome you *can* have."

There are people who do not care for these sudden expansions of the heart, but then, on the other hand, there are people who do, and Mr. Hackett's new acquaintances happened to belong to the latter type. They said they would be delighted, and they accepted with almost as much effusion as Will himself had displayed in his invitation. They were in all the better humour with themselves, and with the world at large, because the day's ventures had been prosperous, and they were all the more pleased with their host because his inspirations had for once in a way led him to choose the right horses, and they had followed his lead.

"And now, Will, my lad," said one of them, when the cloth was cleared away, "before we settle down I've a favour to ask you. This gentleman is a mighty fine judge of music. He ought to be, for he ran the opera in New York for three years—didn't you, Bob?—and I particularly want him to hear you sing. In fact it's a treat I've as good as promised him—haven't I, Bob?"

This gentleman was a bald man in spectacles and evening dress. He had apologised on arrival for the character of his costume by the statement that he had been obliged to look in at the theatre in the great town hard by for an hour or two, and Hackett had been told, with an air of mystery and importance fully equal to the nature of the disclosure, that he had his eye on a singing chambermaid there, and had half a mind to

engage her. The two squireens were mighty proud of their knowledge of this personage, and to be permitted to call him Bob was a glory they would not have exchanged to have been at Waterloo, and barely to have won money from a professional exponent of the three-card trick.

The great man said, with no particular enthusiasm, that he should like very much indeed to hear Mr. Hackett sing.

"I'm not in particularly good voice lately," said Will, "but I'll do my best for you."

The *entrepreneur* leaned back in his chair, drew his glass towards him, and puffing lazily at his cigar prepared to suffer. His experience had made him familiar with the amateur tenor, and he dreaded him as the burnt child dreads the fire. Among the smaller of life's unescapable ills the amateur tenor bulks dark and large, and the gentleman from New York had suffered more from him than most men have; in part, of course, because of his position, which impelled musical incapacities of all sorts to whine and howl and growl and strum and scrape for him, but mainly because he was an uncommonly good judge of music, and bad music was as offensive to his ear as an evil odour is to the average nose.

At this ebb of his fortunes Hackett hailed with all his heart the chance of singing before such a man as this. He displayed no eagerness, but he had too much tact to make the common fuss, and wait for the usual eager pressure. He laid down his cigar upon an ash-tray and sauntered to the piano, and carelessly turned over a heap of music there. If in the whole range of English balladry there was a ditty on the rendering of which he particularly prided himself, it was that sweet old song, "The Thorn." He decided that he would not sing more than once, unless the important personage especially pressed him, and there was no such great difference between his singing of "The Thorn" and any of his other pet ballads that the listener would be likely to note a falling off, and he wanted to create a good impression. So he opened the pages, balanced them on the music rest with a good deal of feminine-looking coaxing and persuading of the limp and well-used pages, and began.

Before he had sung through the first line the man of music rose softly from his chair, and dropping his elbows noiselessly on the mantel-board, suffered his chin to fall upon his hands and put his heart into his ears. From first to last—not a flaw. Tone, phrasing and expression absolutely just. The listener had heard finer voices, but he could count

them on the fingers of one hand. What pleased him, even more than the voice, was the management of it.

The tender, melting rapture of the captivating rascal's voice reached his wife as she lay sobbing in her bedroom.

"No!" I exclaimed, "by Heaven! may I perish,
If ever I plant in that bosom a thorn!"

He warbled on, never thinking of her, and charming all listeners' ears but hers and one other's. And as for her, poor thing, it is not easy to be angry with her, because anger stilled her sobs for a moment at this tuneful lie. The barbed satire of the thing struck through and through her. It had been his pet song in his brief courting days, and though he had always ogled her in precisely the same way and at precisely the same places, she had never pierced to the mechanism of the handsome and devoted eyes he made at her, and had taken the declaration to be as solemn a piece of earnest as if he had spoken it, and it had been in prose. It had been through this chivalrous and devoted tenderness of his that she had hoped to lead him from his erring ways and make a good man of him. So affectionate, so easily swayed, so facile in confession, in repentance, in promise for the future! And now. And now.

Ned Blane must needs torture himself, as happens with most young men who find themselves in similar case. He could have made choice among a score of streets and lanes to stroll in if he had a fancy for getting wet through; and by this time the threatening storm had burst, and the warm summer rain had soaked him to the skin in the first five minutes of its fall. But he must torment himself by being near his suffering idol, whom he had no right or power to comfort, and by the grim hate which was taking root in every fibre of him against the man to whom she was tied. And the song which struck up as he was passing for the fifth or sixth time made such an appeal to him as any man of common sympathy can understand. Perish rather than plant a thorn in that tender breast? The song itself was an unimaginable insolence of cruelty. Perish? *He* would have done it! Ay, a thousand times. The desolate heart ached as it had never ached before.

Young men exaggerate this love trouble at times, no doubt, and in a year or two Jane consoles for Sarah's want of feeling. And if Mary Howarth had married well and had been happy, Ned Blane could have put up with his trouble as many a stalwart, worthy fellow had done before and has done since,

is doing now, and will do. But it was not a tithe of his trouble that he was left out in the cold. It would have been hard that another man should make her happy, and not he; but he was man enough to have borne that quietly. But to have that pure soul throw herself away on such a man as Hackett—that queen of womanhood degraded, that sweet heart wounded, the delicate, sensitive, weak thing rated and scolded—oh! all this was hideous and too bitter to be borne. His eyes burned dry with anger and his whole frame ached with pity.

When the song was over three of the singer's guests were noisy in approbation. The important man turned his back to the fireplace, flicked off the ash of his extinguished cigar behind him, struck a light, took a meditative puff or two, and for awhile said nothing. By-and-by, when the others had done with their compliments, he spoke.

"Mr. Hackett," he said, "will you be so good as to tell me where you studied?"

"Oh," Will answered, "I never studied at all, to speak of. My grandfather went through three or four years in Italy. He taught my father, and my father taught me, what little bit he knew."

"Ah," said the stranger; "you come of a musical family. What was your father's name?"

"Hackett, of course," said Will. He knew very well what the other meant, though he would not seem to do so.

"Of course," the other answered smilingly. "But his stage name?"

"My father had no stage name," said Master Will, rather haughtily.

"He was the biggest landowner for some ten miles around," said one of the young squireens.

Will had relied upon one of them to say this for him; but, in default, he would have said it for himself.

"I beg pardon. Did you ever think of carrying that fine voice of your own to market, Mr. Hackett?"

"No," said Hackett carelessly, fingering the pages of his music and looking round upon his questioner as he did so. "I'm not a rich man, but I've never had need to do that yet. And I'm not sure that I should care to do it. They're not a very gentlemanly lot," he added, with a very gentlemanly air, "that get their living that way."

"There are all sorts," said the spectacled man, smoothing his head placidly with a hand all over rings; "Mario's a nobleman, as you know."

"Of course, of course," said Will. He was not ill-pleased to let it be thought he knew it.

"There's a good two thousand a year in the voice if you cared to use it," said the stranger guest.

"Oh?" said Hackett lightly. "That's a bait, if I could see it to bite at."

"Is it?" asked the other, still polishing his head and placidly puffing. "It's there to bite at if you like to bite. Will you sing us another song, Mr. Hackett?"

This judgment from a man who ought to be competent warmed the vocalist's heart. He had been thinking of little else than of carrying that fine voice of his to market for a month or two past; but his habit of putting things off was native and rooted by habit, and what with that, and his pride, and his not quite knowing how to begin, his thinking had led to nothing.

"Do you sing in Italian?" asked the manager, turning to the canterbury and fingering the pile of music there. "What's this? 'Spirito gentil?' Try that, Mr. Hackett."

"No," said Will; "I'd rather not. I can sing it in a way when I know there's nobody by to see where I go wrong in the lingo. Here's 'My Pretty Jane.' I'm not afraid of that, if you like it."

"'My Pretty Jane,' by all means," said the manager.

So Will sang "My Pretty Jane," and confirmed the good opinion the important personage had formed of him. The man in possession stole into the hall to listen, and so the vocalist had three more auditors than he counted on or thought about.

"And now," said Hackett, when his song was finished and the applause was over, "let us have a turn at the pasteboard." And the others assenting, they sat down to the table and began to play.

It was the host's style to play wildly, and so it almost always happened that he lost or won with great rapidity. To-night the run of the cards favoured him, and he won a great deal more than two at least of his guests could have desired to lose. At last, what with his winnings on that day's racing and his run of luck at cards, he had more than enough in hand to discharge his unwelcome visitor in the morning. He grew radiant, and he laughed louder and drank more than all his guests together.

There is a gambler's superstition, which, like all superstitions, will fulfil itself at times, to the effect that it is a fatal thing for a winner to count his gains before the end

of the game. Mr. Hackett went on plungingly, carrying all before him, until he had made the calculation just mentioned, and then his luck turned. His play was no less scientific than it had been—that was impossible; but the seeming magic had gone out of his hand and the fortune that had rained aces and kings of trumps upon him began to dole out twos and threes of worthless suits, and the pile before him dwindled, dwindled, dwindled, and vanished. Then he was for playing on credit; but somehow his friends were all very tired and sleepy on a sudden, and protested with unanimity that it was really time to be off, and that they could hardly see the cards. Really, now, upon their separate and united words of honour they were so sleepy they could hardly see the cards. There was no holding them there by force, and they went their way. And when they were outside, the theatrical manager laid a hand on the shoulder of the squireen who had called him Bob, and, said he,

"Your friend seemed rather hard hit at losing, didn't he?"

"Well, you see," said the friend, in friendly excuse, "he's on his last legs, poor beggar!"

"Oh! What's become of the family land?"

"Like grandfather, like father. Like father, like son."

"Ah! Does he drink? Seemed to take his whiskey rather too kindly to-night I thought. That fine voice won't last long if he drinks."

"Oh, he takes his glass like the rest of us," said the squireen, who was his own enemy but nobody else's and could guess in what direction the manager was driving. "That's all."

"There's money in that voice," said the manager after a minute or two of reverie. "Not so much as I said at first perhaps, but money. He wants a practical man behind him. On his last legs, is he? What does he do for a living?"

"Nothing."

"M—m. I think I'll give him a look-up to-morrow."

Meantime Hackett sat staring at the ornamental fire-paper in the grate. Three months married. Not a half-crown in the world. And then the Man in Possession. Well, he was told by a man who ought to know that his voice was worth two thousand a year to him. How could a man with a treasure like that come to grief? He sat sipping and smoking until he fell asleep. The Man in Possession snored stertorously on his com-

fortless couch of two chairs in the kitchen. Hackett snored from his arm-chair in the dining-room. The hapless wife listened in the intervals between the sobs she could not altogether quiet, and looked at the future.

CHAPTER IX.

THE Man in Possession remained in possession for the space of three days, and at the end of that time departed, his claim being satisfied. News travels fast in little places, and there was not a creature in the town who was of an age and nature to understand who did not know that the newly-married pair had been in trouble. The auctioneer currently employed by Mr. Lowther in affairs of this kind was cheerful in the rostrum but apt to be low spirited when trade was slack. He had brightened perceptibly at the prospect of disposing—partly to his own profit—of the garniture of that commodiously furnished residence Green Bank House, and had already dwelt in fancy on the graceful allusions with which it would be possible to introduce the well-known amateur's piano to a purchasing public. He was the first to learn that the Man in Possession had been paid out, for he had met Abram on his return journey, and the news was something of a blow to him.

Mary Hackett did not know how the money had been paid.

"It's been got honestly," said Will in answer to her inquiry. "And that ought to be enough for you."

She made it enough, but it was a day or two before she so far conquered the shame with which this public disgrace had filled her as to face the streets again.

It happened on the third morning that Mary, coming down-stairs an hour or two before her husband, found a letter addressed to him in a strange handwriting, and without knowing why, was a little effrayed by it. The envelope was long and narrow. It was made of blue paper. Its contents, whatever they might be, were rather unusually bulky for a letter, and altogether, for a woman of her recent experiences, it had a legal and disturbing aspect. Lying on the table before her, beside her husband's plate, it spoiled her breakfast, but when Master Will came down, looking rather fishy about the eyes and rather dull and ill-tempered as was his custom of a morning, he brightened at the sight of the envelope and pounced upon it almost gaily.

The document he drew from it looked no less legal than the envelope had done, but

Hackett having merely glanced at it thrust it into his pocket and sat down smilingly to breakfast. His morning appetite was pretty generally languid, and now, though he ate with heartiness for a mouthful or so, he fell by-and-by to trifling with the viands before him, and bit by bit grew gloomy again. Suddenly he looked up at his wife, who was gazing at him with an anxious and distressed expression.

"My dear," said he, "you are looking like a ghost this morning. Why don't you go out? A walk in the fresh air would do you good."

This solicitude for her welfare, which would have seemed quite natural a month earlier, was surprising now, but Mary was still more surprised when her husband arose from his seat, and taking his place behind her chair, caressed her cheeks with both hands. The surprise grew when he stooped down and imprinted a kiss upon her forehead.

"Take a walk, my darling," he said, "it will do you all the good in the world."

She rose and looked at him timidly for a moment, then being easily touched by kindness and greatly craving for it and in need of it, she put both arms about his neck and leaned her head upon his shoulders. Will patted her gently, kissed her again, pushed back her face a little and laughed at her quite brightly.

"Take a walk, my dear," he said again. "You want it. You haven't been out for a week."

She hardly cared to face her little world again after what had happened, but Will's changed manner aroused new hopes and made her eager to obey him.

"Take a good long walk, my dear," said Will, "and get the roses back to those pale cheeks of yours."

He was so gracious and affectionate and gay that she knew not what to make of him, but she obeyed him, and in spite of the timid reluctance with which she ventured into the street, the broad summer sunshine without was answered by some uncertain and feeble gleams within. She drew down her veil and hurried towards the fields, and once there sauntered in quiet solitude, thinking of many things, but most of all of Will's changed manner.

She had begun to know, quite a long time back it seemed, that her husband's nature afforded but a sandy and precarious soil to build upon. But if only she could woo his short-lived affection back to life again, could

gain some gentle permanent influence over him—awake his better instincts, and justify her own dreams!

She accused herself of despairing too easily, of being too harsh in judgment and too quick in temper. She vowed and prayed to be more charitable and more patient. She would be wise as the serpent, also. Little things that had wounded her prejudices—which she began to feel had been sectarian and narrow—should wound her no more. Will was a man of the world, and he and she had been bred so differently! There was no real harm in many of the things which she had somehow felt to be shocking, and she resolved to be shocked no more. Her attempts at weeding that disorderly garden should in future be confined to those plants within its boundaries which were undoubtedly harmful. And so she dreamed her dreams and prayed her prayers and went home again, comforted.

In the meantime her husband was likewise engaged in preparations for the future. When the door had closed behind his wife he drew the legal-looking document from his pocket, and read it keenly. He had had, of course, no business training, but he read this particular document with a shrewd business mind, and in spite of certain numerous and bewildering legal technicalities mastered every word of it. He managed this by dint of dropping every unnecessary word from each sentence, and then combining the scattered passages of plain English, which for aught I know may be the fashion of lawyers themselves.

When he had mastered the contents of the paper he took pen and ink and set his signature at the foot of it, doing this, as he did most things, with a mighty flourish. Then having pen in hand he wrote a note:

"MY DEAR POLLY,

"I have had a sudden call from home. It is quite on the cards that I may be away for a week. I leave you a five-pound note for immediate expenses, and all the tradesmen's bills are paid and receipted. You will hear from me again in a day or two, and I think we are going to be prosperous.

"Always your affectionate husband,
"WILL HACKETT."

He enclosed with this the five-pound note he spoke of, then went up-stairs, spent a vigorous half-hour in packing his belongings together, took a good look round to be sure that nothing had been left behind, and with

his own hands carried his portmanteaus into the hall.

Next he rang the bell for the maid.

"A man will call to carry these down to the coach in half an hour's time from now," he said, consulting his watch. "Wait a minute." He stood still to consider, poring upon the floor. "I shall be late. I'll carry them a part of the way myself. I shall meet somebody who wants to earn a shilling, I dare say. And there's a letter on the breakfast-table; see that your mistress has it when she comes in."

The maid opened the door for him, and he walked out, carrying a portmanteau in either hand. He looked right and left as he went, with an air which would have given an observer a right to imagine that he was not anxious to be seen. The portmanteaus were heavy, and the summer sun was powerful, and Will Hackett was neither accustomed to exercise of this character nor fond of it. He hailed therefore with great pleasure the appearance of the man late in possession, who was lounging along with his hands in his pockets, and a general air of having nothing to do upon him.

Will was conscious of no *mauvaise honte* in accosting the dethroned functionary.

"I suppose you're willing to earn a shilling, Abram?"

"I've got to earn what I can lay my hands on, Mr. Hackett, whether I'm willing or not," said Abram, with a superfluous air of philosophy. "What's the job? Carry them leather boxes? How far?"

"To the Chase Arms!" said Hackett.

"All right," responded Abram, and seized upon the luggage Hackett had relinquished.

When Hackett entered the cool and shaded bar-room of the Chase Arms he saw a sight which surprised him more than a little. The sober and respectable Ned Blane was there alone, at that hour of the morning, and what was more, he had a glass of spirits and water before him.

"Hillo, Ned!" said the new-comer, "I didn't know you did that sort of thing so early."

Blane gave him no answer, but drained his glass, and walking into the stone-paved hall, stood there with his back turned to his successful rival. Hackett shrugged his shoulders, smiled meaningly at the landlady, and nodded his head in Blane's direction.

"Changing his ways a little, isn't he?"

"It isn't my place to talk, Mr. Hackett," said the elderly landlady, "but I'm sorry to see it, and I'd a deal rather not have his

custom than have it. I like the young gentleman too well to want to see him comin' here too often. I'd say the same to you if I thought there was any use in it."

"Don't cry bad fish, Mrs. Warden," cried Will, with that captivating laugh of his. "Good wine is a good familiar creature, and so is brown brandy. I'll take a little, if you please."

The elderly landlady filled his glass and set it before him with no very gracious air, and Hackett, taking up a besmeared and tattered copy of last week's journal, feigned to glance over its contents as he sipped.

In due time Abram arrived with the baggage, received his shilling, and lingered at the portal to watch the arrival of the coach, which was naturally an event for unemployed people.

Blane stood stolidly in the vestibule as if he awaited Hackett's departure, and the latter lifted his eyes from the dog's-eared journal a score of times to look at him through the bar-room window.

Now Mrs. Hackett's walk had lasted for perhaps an hour, and when she re-entered the house, full of grave and tender thoughts, the maid handed a note to her, and she, without so much as looking at it, carried it absently up-stairs into her bedroom. The aspect of the place recalled her from her reverie at once. Two or three disordered drawers were stacked one upon the other on the floor, and a hundred articles were lying loosely scattered on the bed. She stood for a moment in wonder, and then, her eyes falling upon the note, she saw that its superscription was in her husband's handwriting. She tore the letter open and made herself mistress of its contents at a glance.

What did this clandestine departure mean? Was Will deserting her? Had he cajoled her from the house in order to get away in secret?

She shrank from the fancy, and pushed it away from her with all her force. She would not give houseroom to so terrible an imagination for a second. But the door was barred too late. The thought had found an entrance and insisted on remaining, let her blind her eyes to it as she might. She ran hurriedly down-stairs and questioned the maid.

"Who gave you this letter?"

"The master, ma'am."

"When?"

"Not quite half an hour ago."

"Has any one called since I went out?"

"Nobody, ma'am. The master took away two portmantles with him, ma'am, and said

he'd send a man to carry them to the coach, but he said afterwards that there wouldn't be time for that, and he carried 'em himself."

"You are sure," her mistress asked her, disguising to the best of her power her own pain and terror; "you are sure that nobody came to the house whilst I was out?"

"Quite sure, ma'am," said the maid.

"That will do. You may go."

The maid left her, and she stood for a little while quite still, looking straight before her with the letter in her hand, and then, suddenly rousing herself, she left the house and walked at a brisk pace towards the town.

She would understand this strange procedure—and at once. It was her right to understand it. Will had evidently known before he advised her to leave the house, with all those false caresses and all that pretended gentle brightness, that he was going to leave her. She drew her figure unconsciously upright, and trod the pavement like an indignant queen. Then, becoming aware of her own aspect, she essayed to calm herself, and succeeded at last in assuming a more ordinary manner. But whilst she was yet at a considerable distance from the main road, she heard the sound of the coach horn. She was wont to be conservative of her dignity, and at ordinary times would have thought it

quite a disgracefully hoydenish thing to run in the streets, but this was a moment to banish small scruples, and she ran her hardest.

Hackett was swaggering on the steps of the hotel, delaying to mount the coach until the last moment, and Ned Blane was watching him with eyes of hatred and contempt. Master Will, who was smiling along the street, turned pale suddenly, and made an active dash for the box seat. Blane strolled down the vestibule, and looked out sardonically for the emissary of law.

The coachman's whip cracked, the guard's horn sounded, the coach went off in a cloud of dust; and Mrs. Hackett came to a standstill in the middle of the High Street, and turning, retraced her steps. Blane burst into a great laugh, which sounded so oddly that the little crowd of idlers stared at him. His merriment endured for a space remarkable for its brevity, and he looked back surlily and almost fiercely at the people who looked at him, and went back into the hotel.

"There's summat very queer come o'er Mr. Blane these late days," said one of the loungers.

"Yes," answered Abram, to whom this observation was addressed. "It's to be feared as Old Blazer's Hero is on the road downhill."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

By FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, it is said, was one day talking with a friend about favourite poems, and repeated with deep feeling the well-known classic stanza—

"The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has preest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb."

"That verse," he said, "was written by a *man by the name of Holmes*." If the manner of referring to the authorship was little flattering, the honest admiration of the great-hearted President might atone for it. An attorney in a country town in Illinois might well have been unacquainted with the reputation of a poet away in Massachusetts, whose lines, perhaps, he had seen only in the newspapers.

No reader of feeling ever passed that simple stanza unmoved. It is for all time, not to be forgotten. Not a word could be

changed any more than in "The Bugle Song." Its pathos is all the more surprising in connection with the quaint humour in the description of the old man who is the subject of the poem. There is a delicious Irish character in this, as in many other pieces of Holmes, reminding us of the familiar couplet of Moore—

"Erin, the smile and the tear in thine eyes
Blend like the rainbow that hangs in thy skies."

"The Last Leaf," from which the stanza is quoted, was written over fifty years ago, when the author was a little more than twenty-one. There are a few others of the same period which may have been considered trifles at first, but which seem to have slowly acquired consistence, so that while they are still marvels of airy grace, they are as firm as the carved foliage on a Gothic capital.

Not many writers live long enough to see themselves recognised as classics; the benign judgment is more frequently tardy; and then it happens, as De Musset says, that "Fame

is a plant which grows upon a tomb." It takes years of repetition to impress new ideas in literature into the hearts and memories of men; and, as literary cycles move, the age of Holmes is still new. The noblest poetry in the language, from the unborrowed splendour of Shakespeare to the sparkling reflections of Gray, doubtless gave to contemporaries a sense of strangeness at first. Time was needed to harden the fresh lines, as well as to win for them a place among the elder and accepted models.

Holmes's father was minister of the Congregational Church in Cambridge, a man of ability and author of some historical works. He lived in a venerable house of the ante-revolutionary period, which stood near the college grounds and was demolished a few years ago to make room for a new academic building. One of Holmes's most characteristic articles is his description of "The Old Gambrel-roofed House." In the time of his youth there were people in Cambridge who remembered the march of the British troops on their way to Lexington and Concord in 1775. The speech and the manners of the colonists long retained the old English stamp, and the earliest of them had been contemporaries of Bunyan and almost of Shakespeare; and so Holmes must have heard, as I when a boy heard in another county, phrases and tones which could not have differed much from those of Shakespeare's common people. The influence of this is seen in his mastery of what is called the Yankee dialect, a development of old chimney-corner English. For the same reason there is visible in his writings also some of that homely astuteness which seems to have died out with the polish of modern manners.

After completing his classical and medical studies, Dr. Holmes spent two years in Europe, principally in Paris, and then settled in Boston as a practising physician. Later he became professor of anatomy, and remained in service until within a few years. Thus his duties took him away from his native Cambridge—although his heart never migrated—and turned him from the pursuit of poetry, except as a recreation. His recreation, however, must have been quite steadily indulged in, since his occasional poems had grown to a goodly volume before he was forty years of age. The great popularity of his later works has somewhat overshadowed the early poems, but there is ample evidence of genius in these first-fruits. None of them are meant to be thrilling or profound, but they all have some characteristic grace, some

unexpected stroke of wit, some fascinating melody. I do not know any poems of a similar class which afford such unflinching delight. It is true they are mundane, and their wit has often a satiric, "knowing" air; but the pleasantry is never mocking or malevolent; and the exuberance of spirit is contagious. Such a poem as "Terpsichore" (1843) is inimitable in its suggestions. The lines have a springing movement, an elastic pose. To appreciate it the reader must "wait till he comes to forty year." "Urania" has also many fine passages, grave as well as gay; many of its hints were developed later with brilliant effect in the "Autocrat." This "rhymed lesson" touches with felicity the prevailing vulgarities and solecisms in manners, dress, and pronunciation, and suggests, by anticipation, the jovial reign of a monarch who at his breakfast-table lays aside his robes of majesty and sometimes plays the rôle of his servitor, the merry philosopher in motley.

Naturally, our author's reputation and his well-known brilliancy in conversation made him a great favourite in society; but he kept the judicious mean, and fairly avoided the perils of a diner-out. On one occasion he wrote in rhyme to excuse himself, and this is a fragment of his epistle:—

"Besides—my prospects—don't you know that people won't employ
A man that wrongs his manliness by laughing like a boy?
And suspect the azure blossom that unfolds upon a shoot,
As if wisdom's old potato could not flourish at its root?"

For many years he was virtually the laureate of Boston and Cambridge, and produced a great number of odes and hymns for public occasions. He of all men seemed to have the invention, the dash, and the native grace which give to occasional verse its natural and spontaneous air. This facility is surely not a cause for reproach. Such verse may seem easy, but it is easy only for a genius. In the lightest of his odes there is stuff and workmanship far removed from the negligent ease of *vers de société*.

A reputation for wit may be as injurious to a poet as to a would-be bishop. People could hardly be persuaded to take Sydney Smith seriously, and the world has been slow in recognising the solid qualities, the keen insight, the imagination, and poetic feeling of Holmes. Wit is only one of the facets of his brilliant mind.

One of the most finished of his earlier poems is the "Song of Other Days." It is not often sung, and perhaps it is not singable; for, judging from the songs one hears, the melody is usually relied upon to cover the poverty of the thought. But this is the bright

soul of song, and its lines sparkle with reflections from classic ages. Even a teetotaler might (under protest) own himself bewitched by its beauty.

"If one bright drop is like the gem
That decks a monarch's crown,
One goblet holds a diadem
Of rubies melted down.
A fig for Cæsar's blazing brow!
But, like the Egyptian queen,
Bid each dissolving jewel flow
My thirsty lips between.

"Methinks o'er every sparkling glass
Young Eros waves his wings,
And echoes o'er its dimples pass
From dead Anacreon's strings;
And, tossing round its beaded brim
Their locks of floating gold,
With bacchant dance and choral hymn
Return the nymphs of old."

At the dinner where the twelve original contributors of the *Atlantic Monthly* met, the part which Holmes was to take was a matter of lively anticipation. The magazine had been projected for the purpose of uniting the literary forces of the North in favour of universal freedom; but Holmes had no part in its direction. Lowell prophesied at the time that the doctor would carry off the honours. In the first number there was an article by Motley, a fine poem by Longfellow, one by Whittier, a piece of charming classic comedy by Lowell, a group of four striking poems by Emerson, some short stories, articles on art and finance, and the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." What would not modern publishers give for a similar combination to-day! Still, the enterprise might have failed but for the immediate interest awakened by the original thought and style of Holmes. The sensation was new, like that of a sixth sense. The newspapers quoted from the "Autocrat;" it was everywhere talked about, and in a short time its fame went through the nation.

The "Autocrat" was succeeded by the "Professor" and the "Poet." The talk of the "Professor" was somewhat more abstruse, though equally interesting to cultivated readers. The "Poet" attacked the dogma of the endless duration of future punishment. The "Autocrat" was easily superior in freshness as in popularity.

Two novels also appeared—"Elsie Venner" and "The Guardian Angel." They have undoubted merits, showing the keen thought, the descriptive power and the play of fancy which are so characteristic of the author, and each has a subtle motive to which the characters and incidents are made subservient. But Dr. Holmes is not great as a novelist as he is great in other things. The

stories in one aspect are ambulatory psychological problems, rather than fresh studies of characters conceived without favouritism, with blended good and evil, wisdom and weakness—as God creates them. To produce new types, of universal interest, is given to few novelists. There have been scarcely more than a score of such creators since Cadmus.

It was with some surprise that I read lately a lament that Dr. Holmes had not written "a great novel"—a task which would have been as unsuitable to him as to Dr. Johnson or to Montaigne. It is not a question of a greater or less talent, but of a wholly different talent—as distinct as metaphysics and portrait-painting. The same critic complains because Holmes has not been "in earnest" like Carlyle. While the genius of that great writer is indisputable, I submit that one Carlyle in a generation is enough; another is impossible. That rugged Titan did his appointed work with fidelity. But is *every* author to lay about him with an iron flail? Is there no place for playful satirists of manners, for essayists who dissolve philosophy and science, who teach truth, manliness, and courtesy by epigram, and who make life beautiful with the glow of poetry? The magnolia cannot be the oak, although unhappy critics would have a writer be something which he is not. It is enough that Holmes has charmed myriads of readers who might never have felt his influence if he had been grimly in "earnest," and that he has inculcated high ideals of taste, character, and living.

By the time Holmes had reached his fiftieth year he was nearing the summit of fame. His readers were the cultivated classes of the whole English-speaking world, and he was not merely admired, his genial humour had won for him universal love; his unique personality was as dear as his writings. There is not room in the limits allowed me to dwell upon the style of the "Autocrat;" fortunately neither analysis nor eulogy is necessary. The variety of topics, the sure, swift touches in treatment, the frequent gleam of imagery, and the lovely vignettes of verse, altogether form an attraction for which there are few parallels in literature.

From the gay and jaunty verse of the poet's youth to his strong and passionate lyrics of the war there was a surprising change, and it will be interesting to trace it in his life and in the course of historic events.

In his early manhood he took the world

as he found it, and did not trouble himself about reforms or *isms*. He had only good-humoured banter for the abolitionists, just as he had for non-resistants and spirit-rappers. When progressive people were in a ferment with the new transcendental philosophy (deduced from the preaching of Channing and the essays of Emerson) and were fascinated with the monologues of Alcott and the sibylline utterances of Margaret Fuller; when young enthusiasts, in their socialistic home at Brook Farm, dreamed of the near reign of human brotherhood; when Lowell was writing "The Present Crisis," a poem glowing with genius as with apostolic zeal; when feeble brethren, blown upon by new winds of doctrine, imagined themselves spiritual and profound, and felt deep thrills in pronouncing the words Soul and Infinite with nasal solemnity, Holmes, fully master of himself, and holding instinctively to his *nil admirari*, trained his light batteries on the new schools, and hit their eccentricities and foibles with a comic fusillade.

"With uncouth words they tire their tender lungs,
The same bald phrases on their hundred tongues;
'Ever' 'The Ages' in their page appear,
'Alway' the bedlamite is called a 'Seer.'"

And O what questions asked in club-foot rhyme
Of Earth the tongueless, and the deaf-mute Time!
Here babbling 'Insight' shouts in Nature's ears
His last conundrum on the orbs and spheres;
There Self-inspection sucks its little thumb,
With 'Whence am I?' and 'Wherefore did I come?'
Deluded infants! will they ever know
Some doubts must darken o'er the world below,
Though all the Platos of the nursery trail
Their 'clouds of glory' at the go-cart's tail!"

Elsewhere in the same poem he mentions:—

"Poems that shuffle with superfluous legs
A blindfold minuet over added eggs,
Where all the syllables that end in *ed*,
Like old dragons, have cuts across the head;—
Essays so dark Champollion might despair
To guess what mummy of a thought was there,
Where our poor English, striped with foreign phrase,
Looks like a zebra in a parson's chaise."

Holmes was a shining mark, and the platform orators did not spare him. The "non-resistants" were specially violent towards opponents, and some one of them drew from our poet one of the most caustic satires printed since Pope. Witness these closing lines of "The Moral Bully":—

"Has every scarecrow, whose cachectic soul
Seems fresh from Bedlam, airing on parole,
The right to stick us with his cut-throat terms,
And bait his homilies with his brother worms?"

From this bellicose time it was nearly forty years to the appearance of Holmes's admiring

* From a poem before the ♀ B.K. Society, Cambridge, 1843.

and reverent life of Emerson, and in that long and stirring period there was much for him to learn, and something to unlearn. Who does not learn much in forty years? For one thing, the character and mind of the poet-philosopher were at length clearly revealed, and the uneasy swarm of imitators had shrunk out of sight. And as to slavery, the eyes of all men had been opened. Not only Holmes, but the majority of well-meaning men, hitherto standing aloof, were taught by great events. Many who admitted the wrong of slavery had believed themselves bound to inaction by the covenants inserted in the Federal Constitution. Some had felt the weight of party obligations. Some resented the fierce denunciation of the Church for its indifference to a vital question of morals. But I believe more were deterred from siding with the abolitionists by reason of their intimate connection with other causes. They were nearly all believers in "woman's rights," and at that time those "rights" were chiefly to wear short hair and loose trousers, and talk indefinitely. Everything established was attacked, from churches and courts to compulsory schools and vaccination. The most vivid of my recollections of forty years ago are the scenes at the anti-slavery Conventions. There were cadaverous men with long hair and full beards, very unusual ornaments then, with far-away looks in their eyes in repose, but with ferocity when excited, who thought and talked with vigour, but who never knew when to stop. There was one silent and patient brother, I remember, whose silvery hair and beard were never touched by shears, and who in all seasons wore a suit of loose flannel that had once been white. There was a woman with an appalling voice, and yet with a strange eloquence. And there was one who *always* insisted on speaking out of order, and who *always* had to be carried out of the hall, struggling and shouting as she was borne along by some suffering brother and a policeman. Not all the moral earnestness of Garrison, the matronly dignity of Lucretia Mott, the lovely voice and refined manners of Lucy Stone, nor the magnificent oratory of Wendell Phillips, could atone for these sights and sounds. Lowell had written:

"Then to side with Truth is noble, when we share her
wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to
be just."

But to men of delicate nerves it was not sharing Truth's crust that made the difficulty so much as the other uncongenial company

at her august table. The political anti-slavery men, who came later, and who won the triumph, had none of these uncomely surroundings, although at the beginning they encountered as much odium.

When the first gun was fired on Fort Sumter the cause of the slave and of the despised abolitionists became the cause of all. Then could be felt the force of the sentiment which long before had won the pitying muse of Longfellow, which had inspired the strains of Lowell, and which had led the Quaker Whittier—minstrel and prophet at once—into the thick of the strife. Then it could be seen that the cause of eternal justice was not to be confounded with the vagaries of half-crazed agitators who were bent on curing all human ills by moral suasion and bran bread. The thunder of cannon cleared the atmosphere. The querulous voices of sectaries were hushed. The hearts of the loyal North throbbed as one heart. There was but one cry, and it was "Union and Liberty."

In a high sense this was a decisive period in the life of Holmes. From the outbreak of the war he took an enthusiastic part as a patriot for the preservation of the union. His eldest son, now a Justice of the Supreme Court of Mass., went out with the volunteers as a captain, and the father's "Hunt" for him after a battle is well remembered by readers of the *Atlantic*. At the time when the best and bravest of all classes were going forward to form new regiments and to fill up the shattered lines of the older ones, his lyrics came to the souls of loyal men with thrills of exultation. No man in those gloomy days could read them without tears. I have often seen suppressed sobs and eyes glistening in tear-mist when they were sung in public assemblies. The people of these isles have had no such time of heart-ache, of alternate dread and solemn joy, since Waterloo. When the fate of a nation was in suspense, when death had claimed a member from almost every family, and when the bitter struggle was to be fought out, man to man, the phrases we might idly read in time of peace had a new and startling meaning. The words flashed in all eyes and set all hearts on fire. These songs of the war by Holmes will take their place with the grand and touching ode of Lowell, and with the stately and triumphal *Laus Deo*! of Whittier.

There is no American national hymn, known and accepted as such, but Holmes's "Union and Liberty" is quite frequently sung.

"Flag of the heroes who left us their glory,
Borne through their battle-fields' thunder and flame,
Blazoned in song and illumined in story,
Wave o'er us all who inherit their fame!
Up with our banner bright,
Sprinkled with starry light,
Spread its fair emblems from mountain to shore,
While through the sounding sky
Loud rings the Nation's cry,
UNION AND LIBERTY, ONE EVERMORE!"

The most perfect of Holmes's smaller poems are probably those that appeared in the "Autocrat." "The Chambered Nautilus" is a fortunate conception, wrought with exquisite art. Equally striking is "Sun and Shadow," a poem which brings me delightful associations, as I saw it while the ink was still wet upon the page where it was written.

It is interesting to notice that the chief American poets have all paid heart-felt tributes to the genius of Burns. There are two of these by Holmes which are full of meaning, but they are so *entire* in structure that they do not allow the separation of stanzas for quotation.

There is no need of dwelling upon his comic poems, such as the logical catastrophe of the "One-Horse Shay," as they are fully appreciated, so much so that they have doubtless led to the undervaluing of his more serious efforts.

"The Iron Gate" (1880) shows that the gathering shadows of age have scarcely dimmed our poet's faculties. Among the brightest of the pieces in this volume is "My Aviary," a picture of the frolics of ducks and gulls upon the river, seen through the north window of his library. "The Silent Melody" is a most touching dream of "the voiceless melody of age."

"Sweet are the lips of all that sing
When Nature's music breathes unsought,
But never yet could voice or string
So truly shape our tenderest thought
As when by life's decaying fire
Our fingers sweep the stringless lyre!"

"The School Boy" is a reminiscence of his own boyhood, reminding us of Goldsmith's tranquil manner. The verses "For Whittier's Seventieth Birthday" contain charming portraits of Longfellow, Emerson, Lowell, and Whittier. This is a good specimen of his witty, tender, graphic, and affectionate style of after-dinner poem, a species of verse which no man (certainly of this generation) has equalled.

I had the pleasure of hearing him read his poem for the Centennial Celebration of Moore. There was a large company, and naturally most of them were Irishmen. He was in great spirits and read the musical stanzas with singular impressiveness. The

effect upon the generous and excitable *convives* was something to be remembered. They greeted every point with applause, and at the end everybody rose and gave a round of cheers—three times three. It is difficult to cull, but these stanzas are the ones that have dwelt in memory :—

"Ah, passion can glow mid a palace's splendour;
The cage does not alter the song of the bird;
And the curtain of silk has known whispers as tender
As ever the blossoming hawthorn has heard.

"No fear lest the step of the soft-slippered Graces
Should fright the young Loves from their warm little nest,
For the heart of a queen, under jewels and laces,
Beats time with the pulse in the peasant girl's breast!"

At the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Harvard College in November last, Dr. Holmes read a poem of considerable length, in deliberate and stately measure, and containing many brilliant passages. His reference to Jonathan Edwards was scarcely calculated to please ultra-Calvinists; but the religious world has moved since Edwards's time, and the serenity of few guests was disturbed. The two *bêtes noires* of Holmes are Homœopathy and Endless Punishment, and he never lets an opportunity pass of giving a thrust to either.

He has never been under the influence of the school of Wordsworth; and as regards form and method, has remained loyal to eighteenth-century models. Perhaps this is not to be regretted, as there are others to give us landscapes in verse who cannot give us men. This very conservatism in regard to models may be a guaranty of enduring fame, especially when their charm is still fresh after the changes of a century.

Holmes has not produced a great number of highly-wrought poems, but upon how many rests the fame of Gray, or Collins, or Goldsmith? It is rash to prophesy, but I cannot believe that poetry which sometimes suggests the compact and rounded elegance of Horace, and sometimes the frank and joyous movement of Béranger; which has points of resemblance to the best art of Campbell, and which breathes the spirit of a great and proud people, is likely soon to fade out of memory.

Mr. Appleton, a Boston wit, said that "good Bostonians when they die go to Paris;" but an exception must be made for good authors—they will want to go to London. For a successful author, full of years and of honours, a pilgrimage to the ancient capital of his race, followed by an almost royal progress through the realm, with the homage of universities, the applause of the

press, the attentions of the great, and the incense of turtle soup, must be like anticipatory glimpses of a superlative epitaph. The recent welcome given to Holmes, however, was only natural. It was instant and hearty, for the reason that his works, besides giving keen intellectual enjoyment, have put him in intimate personal relations with all readers of refined feeling. A Newton, Spinoza, or Laplace, or a grand, cold, and reserved poet, might attract the homage of the learned and the vague admiration of the multitude, but he would stir the hearts of few. It would be difficult to name another author now living whose presence would awaken such vivid and grateful recollections and call forth such a spontaneous welcome. The rare combination of qualities in Holmes makes him a distinct if not a unique figure in the world of letters. There have been men as witty—though not many—and others as acute, or as gay, pathetic, humorous, graceful, fiery, reflective, or trenchant; but who, in our time at least, has united all these attributes—has made them all effective in charming verse and brilliant prose, and based all upon an understanding that might have served a sage? What a marvellous intellect, with a faculty for every form of use, and resources for every contingency! This facile and changeful movement gives the charm of surprise to whatever he does. In his open and frank merriment there comes some wise reflection; in his poetic fancies there are hints of the highest knowledge; and in his gravest discourse there are sudden gleams of wit. One may take the dimensions and gauge the force of most minds, but in that of Holmes there is always an unknown *plus* that holds the observer in delighted expectation.

It will be a pleasure to read the author's account of his trip in this country which he is writing for the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Holmes lives in Beacon Street, in Boston, somewhat west of the State House. His house fronts the new and fashionable "Back Bay" district, while in the rear it commands a fine view of Charles River. As you enter you find the vestibule, reception-rooms, and walls of the staircase hung with pictures and engravings. There is a prevailing simplicity, and you feel that the house is a *home*, filled with souvenirs of affection, and not a mere literary workshop. The library at the head of the staircase is an ample room with bookshelves; a writing-table with papers in perfect order, an open fireplace, and a deep bow window, mentioned in "My Aviary:"—

"Through my north window, in the wintry weather, —
 My airy oriel on the river shore, —
 I watch the sea-fowl as they flock together
 Where late the boatman dashed his dripping oar."

It is this stretch of water which Longfellow saw when he "stood on the bridge at midnight"—the bridge from Boston to Cambridge. I used to think, on still summer evenings as I crossed it, that the sun nowhere went down in such glory as when it was sinking behind Corey Hill, casting golden beams on that glassy expanse, while some white-shadowed schooner drifted with the tide into the purpling haze, and a red-shirted sailor skulled athwart her bows, giving the providential high point of colour.

He who saw Dr. Holmes twenty years ago at leisure in his library will not soon forget his impressions. In his mature manhood he was short and slender without being meagre, erect, and firm in his shoes. His hair was abundant, if somewhat frosty; his forehead fair but not full; his eyes bluish-grey; and his mouth as changeable as Scotch weather. If in front his head seemed small, in profile its capacity was evident, for the horizontal measure from the eyes backward was long. If the base of the brain is the seat of its motive power, his should not be wanting in force. An axe that is to fell an oak must have weight back of the socket.

In repose his clear-cut and shaven lips indicated firmness and prompt decision, a self-contained nature, well-reasoned and settled opinions; but when he spoke, or was deeply interested, and when his eyes began to kindle, his mouth became wonderfully expressive.

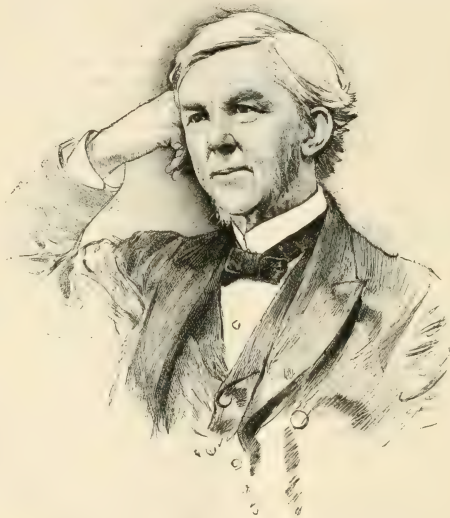
There was a swift play upon his features, a mobility which told of a sensitive and delicate nature. And those features were so sharply designed, free from the adipose layers and cushions that round so many faces into harmonious vacuity. His smile was fascinating and communicative; you were forced to share his feelings. His welcome was hearty, and sometimes breezy; you felt it in his sympathetic hand-grasp as well as in his frank speech. When conversation was launched

he was more than fluent; there was a fullness of apt words in new and predestined combinations; they flowed like a hillside brook, now bubbling with merriment, now deep and reflective, like the same current led into a quiet pool. Poetic similes were the spontaneous flowering of his thought; his wit detonated in epigrams, and his fancy revelled in the play of words. His courtesy, meanwhile, was un-failing; a retort never became a club in his hands to brain an opponent, nor did he let fly the arrows

which sting and rankle. His enunciation was clear, but rapid and resistless. Whoever heard him at his best came to wonder if there had ever been another man so thoroughly *alive*; in whom every fibre was so fine and so tense.

Time has been merciful—he was born in 1809—but the outward man is scarcely what it was twenty years ago. Still, in his beautiful old age he keeps a stout heart, and is keenly alive to the intellectual and moral movements of our time.

"Call him not old whose visionary brain
 Holds o'er the past its undivided reign,
 For him in vain the envious seasons roll
 Who bears eternal summer in his soul."



Oliver Wendell Holmes.



A SONG FOR MAY.

THERE is power in England still,
Strength to do & strength to bear,
Faith, that trusts a Higher Will,
Hope, that wrestles with despair,
Peace, that knows no anxious strife,
Love, the richest wine of life !

Do not say that life is vain,
Never falter on the road,
Though its roughness give you pain,
Yonder are the hills of God ;
And among the flints are flowers,
Happy thoughts for restful hours.

Look ! the sun is in the sky,
Listen to the lark's glad voice,
And the stream that rushes by
Bids the o'er-wearied heart rejoice ;
The poet's month is ours to day,
Gladly let us greet the May.

Sing out, Children, loud and long,
Let our England merry be !
Doing right and hating wrong,
Warriors for the truth are ye ;
And the future of the race
Rests upon the children's grace.

England holds your fathers' dust,
By your fathers' deeds it stands,
And the living-dead in trust
Leave its riches in your hands :
Wealth of poet, patriot, sage—
Nelson's blood and Shakspeare's page !

Martyrs died for you in fire,
Died to make our island free,
Brightly from their funeral pyre
Flashed the sparks of liberty,
And by God's good help that light
Never shall be quenched in night.

Children of a kingly line,
Firm as oak and keen as flame,
On your cheeks the glow divine
Of a thousand years of fame—
Christ our Captain claims your sword,
Fight the battle of the Lord !

So the joyful morn of May
Will be bless'd with fruitful showers,
And the burden of life's day
Bravely borne through sultry hours—
So when clouds and darkness come
You shall see the light of home !

JOHN DENNIS.



A NEST HUNT AMONG THE GRAMPIANS.

"Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

FOR the last fifty years the summer haunts and nest of the Snow-bunting in Scotland have been eagerly sought for by field-naturalists. Gamekeepers and shepherds have also been offered large rewards for the eggs, but as yet, as far as the writer is aware, without success.

This beautiful little creature, no larger than a skylark, is a well-known winter visitant. Many of our readers must have seen flocks of them flitting, with graceful and fitful flight, about the snow-covered ground in winter, their peculiar plumage usually striking the attention of even the most unobservant.

It is a bird of very wide distribution, extending all over the northern half of the northern hemisphere.

Captain Markham, in his account of the late Arctic Expedition, relates that a single snow-bunting was seen, evidently quite at home in the dreary wastes of snow and ice, within a few miles of the most northern point reached by his sledge-party. And when the North Pole itself is reached, if reached it ever be, an individual of this species will doubtless be seen gravely searching for food in the near vicinity.

Seven years ago I began to search the summits of the highest Grampians during the breeding season for these birds. For the first two seasons I climbed hills and lay about in cold places without being fortunate enough to find them. But at the beginning of June in the third year, after a fortnight's hunting, I found two pairs of snow-buntings in a dreary spot called the "Barren Hollow," near the summit of one of the highest hills in the western corner of Aberdeenshire. Since then, each succeeding June has seen me lying shivering among the rocks in the "Barren Hollow," trying to watch the birds to their nests, though, on account of the nature of the ground and wariness of the birds, as yet unsuccessfully. But, although successful only as far as finding the birds, still I think an account of my last snow-bunting hunt may interest some of those who cannot undertake such expeditions.

It was sunrise on a June morning as I emerged from a little railway-station on the banks of the Spey. The Cairn Gorm mountains seemed in the clear morning light to be quite near. As my destination lay in the heart of the mountains some thirty miles away, I set out at once. After crossing the

Spey the path led through plantations of odorous firs and graceful birches. How beautiful are those Highland roads, with low, roughly-built walls on either side all moss-grown, with delicious vividly-green and delicate little ferns peeping out of the crannies, surmounted by dilapidated-looking wooden fences, all encrusted with scarlet and yellow lichens, while overhead the silvery branches of the birch-trees clad in bright green mingle their crisp, tremulous, rustling leaves; or among the pines, where you walk noiselessly, as in some cathedral aisle, in a dim religious light and cool refreshing shade, while as you look before you down the long vista, little streams of sunshine may be seen here and there bursting in golden splendour through rifts in the thick foliage, and lighting up into life and beauty the thick layer of withered pine-needles which carpets your path! A crash is heard among the neighbouring pine-tops, and for an instant you see the strong direct flight of a wild cushat-dove, resplendent in purple and fine linen, as he sweeps away; or there, in the fork of that tree, can be seen the sharp black eyes and long erect ears of a russet-coloured squirrel as it looks down curiously on you from above!

After two hours' walking, thinking that the path was not leading me as directly as it might, I determined to leave it and make straight for the opening between the hills. Before doing so I sat down for some little time on a heathy knowe at the roadside to rest.

The day was hot and clear, the sky cloudless, except for some lovely layers of fleecy cumuli floating on its bosom, rendering the deep blue more attractive by the contrast. Some little distance in front a small stream ran between steep wooded banks. At this distance its noisy rush over granite boulders fell on the ear with a sweet murmur, and mingled harmoniously with the distant "mooing" of cattle and the near and tender "cooing" of the wild doves as they fed their young among the branches of the trees. My eyes began to close involuntarily under the influence of this drowsy music. In truth it was pleasant to sit there looking over the well-wooded plain to the distant hills, and listen to the gentle sounds which scarce disturbed the summer air. The chaffinch with his brilliant plumage enlivened the dusty road, now and then a sooty blackbird would

skulk off with loud chuckle, the little jenny-wren seemed as busy as ever among the loose stones of the low dyke, while above, in some thick firs, a family of long-tailed tits could be heard twittering impatiently, as they flew actively about searching for food.

After a short rest I started, but before proceeding far, had cause to regret having left the path, as I found myself floundering among deep heather, which tripped me up, or obliged me to make wide detours to escape the numerous patches of peat bog. Tired of this I made for the stream, and began struggling up along its margin. It was stifling hot in the deep glen, and I was faint with heat and fatigue. But still I struggled on, until at last, after hours of painful toil, I got well up into the glen. Well has this glen been named the Devil's Pass, for a wilder or more rugged exists nowhere in Scotland. A narrow defile, with black precipitous sides, rising on either side full a thousand feet: the summit of the precipices riven and rent into a thousand fantastic and uncouth shapes—at one place bearing a striking resemblance to the outline of a ruined cathedral; at another the grim turrets of a dilapidated keep are traced against the sky.

The day, which had been growing sultrier and sultrier, now suddenly darkened. A cold wind blew in fitful gusts down the narrow ravine. In its eerie cries I could hear the weird laughter of the spirits of the storm. It grew darker and darker, and I saw from the lurid appearance of the clouds, which seemed to rest on the summit of the precipices, that a thunderstorm was imminent. A black raven flew by uttering his deep uncanny croak. Then all grew still and silent as the grave, and the blackness of night seemed to settle noiselessly on the crags overhead.

Suddenly the gloom was rent by a vivid flash of forked lightning. It passed in a slightly downward direction between me and the dark precipice in front, and seemed to scorch by its nearness. I cowered under a large overhanging mass of granite like a ptarmigan frightened by the rush of an eagle. Never shall I forget the hideous crash of thunder which immediately followed on the lightning, reverberating from side to side, and breaking up into scarce less horrid echoes. It seemed as if mountains had been rent, and were tumbling in wild confusion into the deep ravine.

Then the floodgates of heaven were opened, and there followed a deluge of rain.

In a few seconds every little runlet was transformed into a mimic torrent.

Hundreds of these, churned into white spray, came tumbling down the steep hill-side, and lighted up the black rocks into a scene of the wildest and most savage confusion. This continued for several minutes, and then almost as suddenly the rain ceased, blue sky appeared overhead, a glint of sunshine fell into the dark pass, and in a few seconds nature lay smiling tranquilly, and all the face of the land looked as bright and pure as on the first day of completed creation.

Soon after this I reached the summit and keystone of the pass. Here for several hundred yards my way led over a chaotic heap of granite blocks, fallen from the rocks above. Burdened as I was with a knapsack, progress was slow and laborious. At either end of this huge heap of stones a stream gushes out as if glad to escape from further durance, presenting the curious appearance of a large body of water bubbling up out of the earth. I plucked up courage as I now saw, some miles down the glen, the termination of my long, weary tramp.

Three hours' more struggle, and my destination is reached.

With what a feeling of relief then did I stagger up to the hut, and throwing off my knapsack sit down thoroughly dead beat!

This hut, if I may dignify so rude a shelter by the name, lies in a hollow among lofty hills, near the birthplace of the Dee. It is meant to afford shelter during the deer-stalking season to any benighted sportsman or gamekeeper. Built under the shelter of a bank it rises little above the surrounding peat. Its walls, a few feet in height, are formed of rough granite stones, and are innocent of mortar. The roof is rudely fashioned, and covered with peaty turf cut from a neighbouring bank.

Entering by the low door-way, I found the interior dark, damp, and miserable, and by no means inviting to a wearied wanderer. Glad, however, of the opportunity of resting, I lit a fire and surveyed the premises. The furniture consisted of a rough wooden table and a three-legged stool, both thickly encrusted with green mould. The space between the wall and the turf roof served as shelf, with a collection of culinary utensils, comprising a tin drinking-vessel, much rusted, and one earthenware bowl. The floor at the end of the hut farthest from the doorway was used as fireplace, on one side of which was a pile of peat, and on the

other a few pieces of damp wood. Chimney there was none, the smoke escaping as it best might through a hole in the turf roof. Lastly, in another corner was a pile of heather which served as bed.

I now proceeded to the nearest spring to fill my camp-kettle with water. Into this was tumbled a handful of coffee and two eggs. In this way coffee is made and eggs boiled at the same time. And, moreover, the eggs acquire a rich brown colour which is rather pleasing than otherwise.

Soon afterwards I performed my simple toilette for the night, which consisted in pulling my shooting-cap well down over my ears; and retired to my resting-place among the heather. It was very cold and lonesome, and the night wind swept through the hut most dismally. All the weird legends I had heard from the peasantry of the district recurred to my memory. Wrapping myself up, head included, in the rug, and coiled somewhat into the shape of a frightened hedgehog, I soon fell asleep.

At daybreak I started for the haunts of the snow-bunting. It was raining heavily, and a thick mist blotted out everything beyond a few yards. But the weather in the highlands is *incertum et mutabile*, and I hoped it would clear up by mid-day. My way at first led up a steep corry. Many a time had I plodded up this same steep hill-side on the same errand, but never on a stormier morning.

Having reached the top of the corry after an hour's hard climbing I found a cold gale blowing from the east. Rain, alternating with hail, drove pitilessly along the bleak mountain-side. Guided by the compass, I struck in a slanting direction up the shoulder of the neighbouring hill, and reached the other side after two hours' more laborious scrambling. Here I sat down and hoped for a momentary lifting of the mist to show me my position, and the direction of the hill; for in a hollow near the summit was the only spot I knew of in the whole district frequented by the snow-bunting in summer.

A drearier picture cannot well be imagined. In the foreground a large misshapen block of granite. Sitting behind it a dripping figure with knees bent up to chin. A few yards of dimly seen grey stones, and the rest driving mist.

An hour afterwards I found out my position by coming suddenly on the steep precipitous edge of a corry well known to me. Here I disturbed a family party of ptarmigan cowering behind a rock. The young birds were well grown but unable to fly. One of

them, startled by my sudden appearance and trusting too much to its powers of flight, flew over the edge of the cliff, and I could see it falling through the air like a tiny parachute, till it disappeared in the mist. The others with more prudence ran and hid themselves in crevices, while the mother flew unwillingly away.

Skirting the edge of the crags, another hour's climbing brought me to the now well-known haunts of the bunting.

In vain did I watch all day, trusting more to the sense of hearing than sight to discover the whereabouts of the birds. At last, wearied and disappointed, I gave up the quest and made my way back to the hut, which I reached about nightfall.

Next day, five hours after daybreak, I again stood in the "Barren Hollow." The day was clear but cold. After two hours' lying about I suddenly heard the sweet unobtrusive song of the bunting coming from the stony hill-slope near me. I at once rose and began scrambling over the stones in the direction of the sound, and soon caught sight of a beautiful male bird, crouching on the sloping side of a large lichen-encrusted boulder. Gently creeping within a few yards I lay down behind a rock and watched his movements. These birds in their breeding haunts are very shy and cunning. I have never, for example, seen one boldly perch on a topmost point or ridge of a boulder, but always on the sloping side. It is sometimes very difficult to catch sight of it in this position on account of its remarkable similarity to its surroundings. The stones among which it sits are of a grey colour, often having little patches of black-coloured lichen growing on them. A snow-bunting sitting close against the sloping side looks exactly like an oval patch of black lichen hanging to the grey stone. Every now and then it utters its short twittering song, and, especially when the sun shines out, the clear sweet notes fall gently on the ear, and enliven the grey voiceless solitude.

After watching the male for some time I was delighted at catching a glimpse of the more dusky coloured hen-bird quietly threading her way among the stones near her mate.

Soon after this both birds disappeared, and I began to examine carefully all the crannies and fissures in the rocks round about, but with no result. This went on all day with the same want of success. Once I saw as many as three male birds at the same time at some little distance from each other.

On making my way back to the hut in the evening I came on a ptarmigan and her young ones, and as the mother ran off and the youngsters scuttled away in different directions I managed to capture one of them.

Sitting down on a low stone I examined my prisoner, when much to my surprise the old bird came running towards me till within a few yards. She then ran round in narrowing circles, with wings trailing on the ground, until at last she ran right up and lay down close beside me, looking up in my face as if saying, "Take me, and let the little one go." I looked about me to see if it were a reality. There was the wild hillside stretching above and below. And here close beside me, within a few inches of my hand, was the wild creature, whose love for her young had overcome all her fears for her own safety. After enjoying this strange companionship for some little time, I gently placed the soft, hairy, little creature in front of its mother. The young one at once ran off and disappeared under a large rock. The instant the old bird was assured of the little one's safety she too left me; running at first and then taking to her wings, she swept round the shoulder of the hill and disappeared.

On the following day I again started at daybreak for the "Barren Hollow." As on the previous day I found the birds in the same place, and continued my search, climbing up and down the stony slopes, poking into all the likely places, and expecting every minute to disturb the female and so find the nest. But all to no purpose.

Tired at length of this fruitless work, I climbed to the summit of the hill and examined the magnificent line of cliffs. Descending sheer down for more than a thousand feet, they extend in a slightly curving direction for about a mile. As far as the eye could reach on all sides were huge upheaving mountain masses, looking quite unreal as they stretched their massive shapes in the bright midsummer sunshine.

While walking along the edge of the cliff there occurred one of the finest displays of bird flight it is possible to imagine. A raven flew out from the crags uttering its deep croak. Before he had proceeded far, two peregrine falcons, with loud, fierce cries, dashed out from the same cliff and rapidly followed. In vain did the sable bird rise high into the air. The peregrines speedily overtook him, and then ensued in mid-air a most exciting fight.

Foiled by the sharp, strong bill of the raven in their direct attack, the two falcons

changed their tactics. While one remained below to divert the attention of their antagonist, the other, by a few strong impulses of its powerful wings, mounted vertically some two hundred feet. From this height with closed wings it descended with lightning rapidity. I looked to see the raven dashed headlong. But no, just as the peregrine had almost reached him, the wary bird suddenly presented its pointed beak to the onslaught, and it was only by a rapid swerve on the falcon's part that it was saved from transfixion.

As the bird of prey recovered from its swoop, its mate seemed to mount as swiftly as the other had descended, repeating the same manoeuvre.

It was most exciting to watch the three birds as with loud cries and much croaking the fight went on high up in the blue sky. How it ended I know not, as they continued their aerial evolutions till quite out of sight.

On the three following days I renewed my chase, and watched the buntings with great but steadily decreasing ardour. The nest seemed as far from being found as ever. The birds paid little attention to my presence, nor could any excitement be detected in their behaviour however much I wandered about. On the third day, as I was lying behind a boulder, I suddenly heard a shout, and looking up was delighted to see the head keeper making his way over the stones towards me. He told me he had received a letter from the laird on the previous day, informing him that I was coming. Thinking I might be at the hut he had started that morning at daybreak to find me, and seeing signs of my presence there, had come up the hill, guessing that I would be in the "Barren Hollow." After we had talked for some time, and the buntings had disappeared, he proposed that we should walk over the hills to a neighbouring glen to inspect an eagle's nest built in a tree. As this position for the nest of the golden eagle is extremely rare, I gladly embraced the proposal, and we set out at once.

The golden eagle being strictly preserved in this district is undoubtedly increasing in numbers. It owes its preservation in the deer forests, not as a rule to the notion that it is a crime to render extinct such an interesting member of our fauna, but to the fact of its usefulness in keeping down the grouse, ptarmigan, and blue hares, which are the natural enemies of the deer-stalker.

For the same reason, the peregrine, the raven, and the hooded-crow are unmolested.

On the neighbouring grouse-shootings these birds are unmercifully shot down. But for whatever cause the golden eagle is protected, I trust the day is far distant which will see the last of its kind destroyed.

After four hours' very tiresome tramping, we reached the glen where the eagle's nest was situated. Here, in a hollow, surrounded by three large mountains, is a remnant of the ancient Caledonian pine-forest which once covered the whole surrounding country. Noble trees these survivors are, rising to a great height, with glittering bronze-like trunks, and crowned by masses of dark green foliage.

When about a mile distant, as we were making our way slowly through the deep heather, an eagle rose from the trees and, after a few bold circles, sailed off towards the nearest hill, over the crest of which she soon disappeared. Even at this distance we could make out the huge nest placed near the summit of a dead pine-tree. This tree, stripped of leaves and bark, and bleached white by the action of the sun and rain, stood like a gaunt skeleton among its fellows. Near the summit and about fifty feet from the ground was the nest. It was built of goodly sized pine-branches, and measured about eight feet in depth. It had evidently been the work of many years, as the layers at its base were much older-looking than those near the top. The topmost layer was quite fresh, the branches being still covered with half-withered leaves.

Being desirous of a closer inspection, I

managed, with the keeper's aid, and after some hard work, to reach the nest and clamber into it. I was much delighted to find that it was occupied by two well-grown eaglets. Savage-looking fellows they were as they hobbled off towards the edge of the nest farthest from that on which I sat, and menaced me with their sharp claws and beaks. The nest was some seven feet across and almost flat, except in the centre, where it was slightly hollowed out. The larder contained a partially-devoured blue hare and remains of ptarmigan and grouse. As I sat there enjoying the unwonted position, and trying in vain to induce the young eagles to come nearer, they all at once looked fixedly in one direction and set up a loud clamour. In a little while I heard a loud yelp, and looking up saw the old eagle wheeling round and evidently much excited at this invasion of her home. After circling about for some little time and making the valley re-echo with her loud screaming, she flew off and disappeared. Soon after this I descended, and loth to leave such a picturesque scene, we sat talking for an hour at the foot of the tree. This is, as far as I am aware, the only instance in Scotland of the golden eagle nesting in a tree. We then made our way back to the hut, which we reached at midnight.

After two more days spent with the keeper in the "Barren Hollow," I gave up the quest, and so ended my seventh unsuccessful attempt to find the nest of the snow-bunting.

DAVID BRUCE.

BIBLE CHARACTERS.

BY THE LATE CHARLES READE, D.C.L.
AUTHOR OF "IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND," ETC.

II.—AIDS TO FAITH.

OF a remarkable phenomenon the cause or causes must be remarkable. Any humdrum explanation of a marvel denounces itself; in the matter of solution "inadequate" means "unscientific."

Perhaps the wisest plan will be not to hurry to an explanation, but examine the phenomenon in detail, and that may give us glimpses of a real and sufficient solution.

THE CHARACTERS OF SCRIPTURE ARE A PART OF ITS TRUTH, AND AIDS TO REASONABLE FAITH IN A MATTER WHERE FAITH IS A BOON AND DISBELIEF A CALAMITY.

The Bible contains many things that were hard to believe at the time, and many things that are very hard to believe now. It was the prophecies, I think, that encountered the most reasonable incredulity at the date of their delivery; but now it is the histories, or portions of them; for in our day so many of the prophecies, minute and improbable at the time, have been fulfilled to the letter, that old prophecy tends to convert the reason to faith. Well, in a minor degree the close study of character in Scripture commends to our reason the truth of many strange inci-

dents with which these true characters are indissolubly united.

This is mere preliminary discourse, so an example or two must serve. Many more will follow, if God should enable a broken old man to complete the work he has had the hardihood to begin.

Well, then, we are told in Judges, chapter xiii., that an angel, in the likeness of a man, foretold to Manoah, and also to his wife, that they should have a son, who should deliver Israel. The hospitable pair desired to feast this friendly prophet with a kid. But he declined, and advised them to offer it to God. So they offered the kid as a burnt-offering. Lo! as the fire rose high, their visitor went up in the flame, and then melted into the air. They fell trembling on their faces, quivering with terror.

This is a miracle; we never see miracles nowadays; and as it is natural, though fallacious, to think our narrow experience is the experience of all time and place, we find it very hard to believe them.

But please follow this narrative into character.

"And Manoah said unto his wife, 'We shall surely die, because we have seen God.'

"But his wife said to him, 'If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these.'"

A great emergency always reveals people's characters, and here are two characters suddenly developed in a pair that looked alike till then; but now one is all blind, superstitious terror, the other all clear logic and good sense. Was this invented, and blind superstition assigned to the male, clear logic to the female? And that in the East, where women were deemed inferior, and by sure consequence made inferior.

Youth has its difficulties; but so has scepticism. Learned reason cannot readily believe that an Oriental writer invented this un-Oriental dialogue.

Reason suggests that this character-dialogue was really spoken by some superstitious man and logical woman.

Well, but if so, apropos of what were both speeches spoken?

Clearly it was apropos of something strange and thrilling that had *stirred* these two characters to their depths, and elicited the hitherto unsuspected superiority of the wife, though Oriental.

It is hard to find a fact that could fit this

character-dialogue so thoroughly as the recorded miracle does with all its details; yet the character-dialogue bears Truth engraved on its face, and so it becomes one of the aids to Faith—a humble one of course.

John relates that Mary Magdalene told Peter and the other disciple Christ's sepulchre was open, and his body risen again, and immediately both those disciples ran to the sepulchre; the other disciple outran Peter, and got there first, but hesitated at the entrance; then Peter came up and rushed in at once, and the other followed him.

Now John did not trouble himself to account for this apparent inconsistency in the rapidity of those two disciples; he merely recorded the facts. But we, who study his lines far more than he ever studied them, come to this passage with the knowledge (1) that Peter was not a youth, and (2) that he was the most ardent and impetuous of all the apostles. We therefore see what John does not indicate, the true significance of the two seemingly incongruous facts he records so simply; it was just this—the younger *legs* got first to the outside of the tomb; the more ardent and impetuous *character* rushed first into the awe-inspiring place where his Lord had lain. This stroke of character, unconsciously revealed by simple statement of fact, lays hold of our reason and aids it—so far as it goes—to believe a thing that would be utterly incredible but for the weight and variety of the evidence, cotemporary, continuous, and monumental.

Mary and Martha of Bethany are presented to us in three fragments of narrative—one by Luke, two by John, and no apparent concert between the writers—indeed, a clear absence of it.

In the first passage, which is by Luke, they appear, one as a bustling housewife, the other a pious student; very distinct characters, though both thoroughly feminine; and there Luke leaves them (Luke x. 38—42).

In the second passage, which is by John, bereavement effaces their superficial distinction for a time, and they are all tender woman (John xi. 21—25).

In the third passage the key-note, struck by Luke, is returned to by John, and the women seem to differ entirely in his page as they had done in Luke's (John xii. 2, 3).

BEFORE THE SICKNESS OF LAZARUS.

"And a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had

a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, 'Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her, therefore, that she help me'" (Luke x. 38—40).

Mary, not a word.

WHEN LAZARUS WAS LYING DEAD.

Martha, who was the greater gossip, and heard news soonest, ran to meet Jesus outside the village, and at sight of him the first cry of her true woman's heart was, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died."

An hour later Mary heard he was in the village, and she ran, the gentle Mary, and clung passionately to his knees; and what was the first cry of her woman's heart? "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died."

The very words Martha had spoken: and if you ask me why such opposite characters said the same thing, I must reply out of Molière: "*Ne voyez vous pas que c'est la Nature pure qui vous parle?*"

Calamity effaces even broad distinctions, if they lie above the hearts. Behold the bustling housewife and the gentle student equally merged in loving, trusting woman! (John xi. 21—32).

AFTER LAZARUS WAS RESTORED TO LIFE.

Jesus came to Bethany, and supped with that family he had made the happiest in Judæa. Lazarus was amongst those who sat at meat.

Martha served.

Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard—very precious—and anointed the feet of Jesus (John xii. 2, 3).

Now, did physician Luke sit down in one place and coin these two names, and invent their characters, so opposite in household matters?

Did fisherman John sit down in another place, and adopt Luke's names, yet out of his own invention present Luke's bustling housewife and his absorbed student as one woman in the depths of the heart?

Did this same John afterward go back in his invention, Heaven knows how, to Luke's key-note, and present his one-hearted mourners as women differing greatly in every-day life, and especially in their way of honouring a beloved guest?

This solution is incredible, and no man sees its absurdity more clearly than a veteran writer of Fiction; such a man knows the artifices of art and the limits of art. Now here the artifices are absent, and the limits surpassed.

No, the sisters of Bethany were real creatures, written piecemeal by two independent writers, who each recorded what little he knew about them.

Thus handled, they differ from each other in domestic character, but agree in the deeper affections, and they never differ so much from each other as they both do from the male of our species.

But in truth nobody doubts that these were real characters that differed, and real hearts that agreed.

What has not been universally observed is that the reality of the characters is inseparable from the truth of the narrative, and stands or falls with it.

The whole record occupies only five verses in Luke and fourteen in John, and the characters are not created on the modern plan; they exist only by the facts. Try to believe the characters, yet doubt the facts; you will find you cannot really do it. If you are as honest and resolute as the thing deserves, you will come to this: either both the characters are a daring fiction concocted miraculously by a fisherman and a doctor, writing in different places and at different times, or else the facts, which exhale the characters like a rose its perfume, are as true as those characters are.

If the Old and New Testament, looked into, should be found to teem with examples of this sort, was I wrong to say that "the characters of Scripture are a part of its truth, and aids to reasonable faith in a matter where faith is a boon and unbelief a calamity?"

But if the characters of Scripture are both a marvel of the mind and also aids to faith, surely we ought to give up skimming them, and study them. Put them at their lowest, they are a gold mine; and in that mine surface-washing has been productive; but to dig is better.

I begin purposely with one of the smaller characters. A place is not vouchsafed him in the old collections of Bible characters, and even of late he has been disposed of in a page or two as one of "the lesser lights." But who knows? we may rate him higher if we study, not skim him.

(To be continued.)

GLOOM AND GLEAM.

I HAVE my times all dull and grey,
When life crawls maimed and slow,
And not a sunbeam marks the way
Which I am forced to go.

But I have times—God sends them me,
And on them sets His seal—
When every moment laughs with glee,
And woe smiles into weal.

And then I mount on airy wings
Which quiver in the sun;

I look on all these men and things,
And love them every one.

Or else I climb up at my will,
With hope and gladness shod,
Until I stand upon the hill
Wrapped in the arms of God.

God sends them me, and makes them mine,
And takes them then away.
I could not, if I would, repine
When times are dull and grey.

ROBERT F. HORTON.

WALKS IN OLD PARIS.

By AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE.

III.—THE MARAIS.

THE Marais is, as a whole, the oldest part of Paris, and the Place des Vosges is the heart of the Marais. Imagined by Sully, carried out by Henri IV., in its early existence as the Place Royale, this was one of the most celebrated squares in Europe. The site had been previously occupied by the palace called Hôtel des Tournelles, a

name derived from the endless turrets with which its architect had loaded it, either for ornament or defence. Pierre d'Orgemont, chancellor of France, built the first stately house here in 1380, and bequeathed it to his son, who was bishop of Paris. The bishop sold it, in 1402, to Jean, Duc de Berry, one of the uncles of Charles VI., from whom it passed to his nephew, the Duc d'Orleans, and from him to the king. In its original state, the hôtel stood like a country-house in a wood called the Parc des Tournelles, which has left a name to the Rue du Parc-Royal. "En cet hostel," says Dubreul in his "Théâtre des Antiquitez de Paris," "s'alliaient récréer souventefois nos Roys, pour la beauté et commodité dudit lieu." The Duke of Bed-

ford, regent of France after the death of Henry V., lived in the Hôtel des Tournelles, and kept flocks of peacocks and multitudes of rarer birds in its gardens. There also he established the royal library of the Louvre, of which he had become the possessor, and which he afterwards carried to England, and there he lost his beautiful wife,



Place des Vosges.

Anne de Bourgogne, buried close by, in the Célestins, under an exquisite monument. Whenever Louis XI. visited Paris, the hôtel was his residence, and it was there that, in 1467, he received his queen, Margaret of Scotland. In his later life, however, Louis XI. only cared to live in Touraine, where he died at Plessis les Tours, and his son, Charles VIII., made his home exclusively at Blois, of which he had watched the building. But Louis XII. always liked the Hôtel des Tournelles, where he spent his happiest days with his beloved Anne of Brittany. Thither he returned after his third marriage with Mary of England, the young wife who so entirely upset all his old-fashioned ways—forcing him to dine at 12, instead of 8 o'clock A.M., and to go to bed at

midnight, instead of at 6 P.M.—that she caused his death in a few months. He expired at the Hôtel des Tournelles on January 2, 1515, where the *crieurs du corps* rang their bells round the hotel where the dead king lay, and cried lamentably, “Le bon roi Louis, père du peuple, est mort!” The two successors of Louis, François I. and Henri II., were so occupied with the building of their country châteaux at Fontainebleau, Compiègne, Rambouillet, St. Germain, Chambord, &c., that they only came to the Hôtel des Tournelles for the tournaments, which, in earlier days, had taken place in the grounds of the Hôtel de St. Paul, but were now transferred to the Rue St. Antoine. It was in a tournament of this kind, held in honour of the marriage of Elizabeth of France with Philip II. of Spain, that Henri, bearing the colours of Diane de Poitiers, in tilting with the Comte de Montgomery, captain of the body-guard, received a wound in the eye, of which, ten days after, he died in great agony, in the old palace, through which the people of Paris poured for many days, to visit his body, lying in a *chapelle ardente*.

After this catastrophe the kings of France abandoned what they considered the ill-omened Hôtel des Tournelles. The insistence of Catherine de Médicis, widow of Henri II., even procured an order for the destruction of the hôtel, but it was only carried out as regarded that part of the building where the king had died, and a fragment of the palace was still existing in 1656, when it was sold to the Filles de Sainte-Croix. In 1578 a horse-market occupied part of the grounds of the hôtel, and it was there that the famous *Combat des Mignons* took place, and was fatal to several of the unpopular favourites of Henri III.

Henri IV. had used the last existing remains of the palace to hold two hundred Italian workmen, whom he had brought from their own country in the beginning of the seventeenth century that they might establish the manufacture of stuffs woven with gold and silver tissue in France. At that time Henri had already formed the idea of making the Marais the handsomest quarter of Paris. The plans adopted for the Place Royale were those furnished by the austere Huguenot Antoine du Cerceau. The king built the side towards the Hôtel de Sully (in the Rue St. Antoine) entirely at his own expense, and then conceded plots of land on the other sides to his courtiers, on condition of their erecting houses at once, according to the designs they received, each landowner only being required

to pay an annual tax of a golden crown, so that only 36 gold crowns were received for the 36 pavillons surrounding the square. At the same time the king opened the four streets leading to the square; the Rue du Parc Royal, the Petite Rue Royale, afterwards called the Pas-de-la-Mule, and the Rue de la Coulture St. Catherine, and he erected the two central pavillons on the south and north, which were called respectively Pavillon du Roi and Pavillon de la Reine. Every day, whilst he was at Paris, Henri IV. came himself to visit and stimulate the workmen, and when he was at Fontainebleau he wrote constantly to Sully to beg him to urge them on. “Je vous recommande la Place Royale,” he would add to his letters on other subjects. Coming one day to look at the work, he was mortified to find that one of the private individuals to whom he had allotted a site was vaulting in stone the portico under his house, which the king in his own building had only ceiled with wood. Mortified to be outdone by a subject, he consulted his mason, who cleverly propitiated the royal pride by promising to imitate the superior work in plaster so well that no one would find out the difference. Henri declared that as soon as it was ready for him he should come and inhabit the Pavillon du Roi, but the square was unfinished at the time of his death in 1610, and it only opened with great magnificence five years later, on the occasion of the marriage of Elizabeth, sister of Louis XIII., with the Infant of Spain. It was the splendid court fête then given which made the new square become at once the fashion, and the Place Royale remained the centre of all that was most aristocratic till the financial world invaded it at the end of the seventeenth century. In the proudest time of the square, however, the celebrated Marion de Lorme inhabited the pavillon which had been purchased by the Duc de la Meilleraie, and there she died in 1650, and, in the words of Tallemand des Réaux, “On la vit morte, durant vingt-quatre heures, sur son lit, avec une couronne de pucelle.”

With the comparative lawlessness of the times, though Louis XIII. had issued severe ordinances for the repression of duelling, not only were duels of frequent occurrence in the Place Royale, but the balconies and windows of the square used to be filled with spectators to witness them, like a theatrical representation in broad daylight. Six of the noblest young gentlemen of the court fought thus, with fatal results, on May 12, 1627. The last duel in the Place Royale was that of the Duc de Guise and the Comte de

Coligny, in December, 1643, to decide the hereditary quarrels of their two houses, which ended fatally for the latter. As a warning and a menace to duellists Richelieu erected a statue of Louis XIII., by Biard fils, in the centre of the square, the figure being placed upon a horse which had been unemployed for three-quarters of a century, but which was the work of Daniele Ricciarelli da Volterra. This famous statue, which stood on a pedestal with proud inscriptions by the cardinal in honour of his master, was melted down for cannon in the Revolution of 1793. In 1701 a magnificent iron grille, bearing the emblems of Louis XIV., had been placed around the gardens. Even the Revolution itself respected its beauty; but, in spite of the eloquent remonstrances of Victor Hugo (who was then living at No. 6, the house where Marion de Lorme died), it was removed in the reign of Louis Philippe to make way for a cast-iron railing in the commonplace taste of the time.

Many of the hôtels of the Place Royale were like museums of historic relics and works of art, especially that of Richelieu and that of the Marquis de Dangeau. The ceilings of the hôtel of M. de Nouveau were painted by Lebrun and Mignard. Houses were furnished with the utmost magnificence by the Comte de Tresmes, the Marquis de Breteuil, and the Marquis de Canillac; but most of these hôtels were already abandoned by their aristocratic owners at the time of the Revolution, when the Comte de Favras, who had only lately settled in the Place Royale, was accused of plotting against the Government, and hung like a common malefactor. Many think that the golden period of the Place did not arrive till it became the centre of the Society of the *Nouvelles Précieuses* (deserters from the superior literary atmosphere of the Hôtel de Rambouillet), which Molière satirises in his comedy of the *Précieuses ridicules*. One of the leaders of this society was Mademoiselle de Scudery, authoress of the long allegorical romance of *Cyrus*, who came to settle in the Rue de Beauce, and whose Saturdays soon became the fashion, "pour rencontrer des beaux esprits." For thirty years, under the name of Sapho, she ruled as a queen in the second-class literary salons of the Marais, which was known as *Léolie* or *l'Eolie* in the dialect of the *Précieuses*, and when the *Place Dorique*, as they called the Place Royale, was inhabited by *Artémise* or Mademoiselle Aragonois, *Roxane* or Mademoiselle Robineau, *Glicérie* or the beautiful Mademoiselle Legendre; whilst *Le grand*

Dictionnaire des Précieuses (1661) informs us that *Crisolis* or Mademoiselle de Chavigny, and *Nidalie* or Mademoiselle de l'Enclos, lived close by. Molière had full opportunity of studying the eccentricities of this society whilst living in the quarter of the Arsenal in 1645.

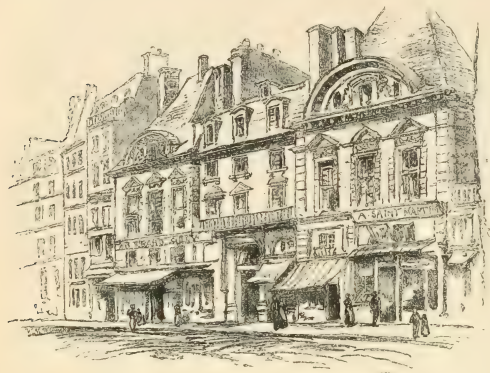
The Place Royale, with its high-roofed houses of red bricks coped with stone, has never changed its ancient aspect. No. 21 was the house of Richelieu. In No. 9, which she had furnished splendidly, the great comédienne Madame Rachel lay in state. A statue of Charles X. by Carot, on a horse by Dupaty, now takes the place of the statue of Louis XIII. in the centre of the square. Many of the old contemporary hôtels which occupied the precincts of the Place have been destroyed. Nothing remains of the Hôtel Nicolai, at the entrance of the Rue de Turenne, or of the Hôtel de St. Geran, in the Rue du Parc Royal. The Hôtel de Guémené can no longer be distinguished from an ordinary house. But on the further side of the Rue des Tournelles we may still visit (No. 28) the handsome hôtel of Ninon de l'Enclos—l'Eternelle Ninon—the friend of St. Evremont and the Duchesse de Mazarin, at whose beautiful feet three generations of the proud house of Saligné knelt in turn, and who may be regarded as the last of the *Précieuses* of the Marais and Place Royale.

Of all the ancient hôtels which still remain in the neighbourhood of the Place Royale, the finest is that of the great minister who superintended its erection. The Hôtel de Sully or de Bethune was built from designs of Androuet du Cerceau for Maximilian de Bethune, Duc de Sully, the friend and minister of Henri IV., upon part of the site of the Hôtel des Tournelles. Its rich front still looks down upon the Rue St. Antoine, and the four sides of its stately court are magnificently adorned with sculptures of armour and figures of the Four Seasons; masques and leaves decorate its windows. Two other ancient hôtels remain in this part of the Rue St. Antoine. One is the picturesque Hôtel de Beauvais (No. 62), built by Antoine Lepautre for Pierre de Beauvais. His wife Catherine Bellier, who was first waiting-woman to Anne of Austria, is commemorated in the heads of rams (*têtes de bélier*) which alternate with those of lions in the decorations. A staircase, with Corinthian columns, bas-reliefs, and a rich balustrade, leads to the principal rooms on the first floor, from one of which, on August

26, 1660, Anne of Austria watched the triumphal entrance into the capital of Louis XIV. and Marie-Thérèse.

Close to the former church of the Visitation, now, as Temple St. Marie, given to the Calvinists, is the Hôtel de Mayenne, or d'Ormes-

abuted, being the place where all the boats coming from the upper Seine and the Marne were moored for the lading and unlading of their merchandise. The great Port de St. Paul took its name from a church, which dated from the seventh century, and it was divided into several smaller ports, each of which had its own name and destination, under the superintendence of the confraternity of *Marchands de l'eau*. In this mercantile quarter, three great religious establishments were situated—the church of St. Paul, the Convent of Ave Maria, and the Convent of the Célestins. The church was founded in 633, by St. Eloy, prime-minister of the Merovingian King Dagobert I. But his building, which contained the tomb of the sainted abbot Quintilianus, was only a chapel on the site of the existing Rue de St. Paul, in a spot once called Grange de Saint-Eloy. Its cemetery, which extended as far as



Hôtel de Sully.

son, which was built by Du Cerceau for the Duc de Mayenne, and was afterwards inhabited by the President d'Ormesson. The graceful domed church of the Visitation itself was begun by François Mansard in 1632, and dedicated, in 1634, to Notre Dame des Anges. The minister Fouquet, celebrated for his sudden disgrace and imprisonment, was buried in one of its chapels. The church occupies the site of the Hôtel de Boissy, where for thirty-three days Henri III. watched by his dying "Mignon" Quelus, mortally wounded in the great duel of April 27, 1578, promising 100,000 francs to the surgeons in attendance, if they could save the life of one to whom he bore "une merveilleuse amitié." But it was no use, and when Quelus had breathed his last, crying out—"Oh, mon roi! mon roi!" it was the king, who with his own hands, took out the earrings he had given him, and cut off his long chestnut hair.

Opposite the Hôtel de Sully, the Rue de St. Paul leads from the Rue St. Antoine into the ancient Quartier de St. Paul, which, with the adjoining Quartier de l'Arsenal, were suburbs of the city before they were included within the walls of Charles V. and thus united to the northern part of the town. The quarter was chiefly inhabited by those who were "*hommes d'eau*," or persons whose interests lay in the part of the Seine upon which it

the Rue Beautreillis, was intended as a burial-place for the nuns of the great monastery of St. Martial, which St. Eloy had founded in the Cité, for, at that time, in accordance with the pagan custom, all burials took place outside the towns. It was only at the end of the eleventh century that the church of St. Paul les Champs became parochial. Charles V. re-built it in the severe Gothic style, and it was reconsecrated with great magnificence in 1431. Its entrance, on the Rue de St. Paul, had three Gothic portals, beneath a tower surmounted by a lofty spire. Its windows were of great beauty, and were not finished till the close of Charles VII.'s reign, for amongst the personages represented in them was the Maid of Orleans, with the legend, *Et moy le Roy*. Through its neighbourhood to Vincennes and afterwards to the Hôtel de St. Paul and the Hôtel des Tournelles, the royal church St. Paul was for several centuries the *paroisse du roi*. All the dauphins, from the reign of Philippe de Valois to that of Louis XI., were baptized there, in a font which still exists at Medan, near Poissy, whither it was removed by one Henri Perdrier, Alderman of Paris, when the old church was rebuilt. It became a point of ambition with the illustrious persons of the court to be buried either in its cemetery, or in its side chapels, which they had themselves adorned with sculpture, hangings, or

stained glass. The cloisters were approached by an avenue (the present Passage St. Pierre) and exhibited in themselves all the different periods of Gothic architecture, as these buildings were only completed in the sixteenth century: decorations were even added to them under Louis XIV. Their galleries had stained windows by Pinaigrier, Porcher, and Nicolas Desangives. In the church, the earliest recorded epitaph is that of Denisette la Bertichiere, laundry-maid to the king, 1311. The splendid Chapelle de la Communion was the burial-place of the House of Noailles. In the choir lay Robert Ceneau (Cenalis), Bishop of Avranches, who died, April 27, 1560, "en expurgant les hérésies."

Nicole Gilles, the historian of the *Annales de France*, was buried in the chapel of St. Louis, which he had built *de ses deniers*. Pierre Biard, sculptor and architect; the famous architect François Mansart, and his nephew Jules Hardouin; Jean Nicot, ambassador of France in Portugal, and the importer of tobacco, called at first *la nicotiana* in his honour; the philosopher Pierre-Sylvain Régis, and Adrien Baillet, the learned librarian of the President de Lamoignon, were also buried here. Under an old fig-tree, in the cemetery, was the grave of François Rabelais, Curé of Meudon, who died (April 9, 1553) in the Rue des Jardins, and was laid

here because he was connected with the parish as priest or canon of the collegiate church of St. Maur des Fossés. The "Man with the Iron Mask," who died in the Bastille in 1703, was brought hither, and here also were buried the four skeletons which were found chained in the dungeons of the Bastille, in June, 1790. One year more, and both church and cemetery were closed; they were sold, as national property, in Dec., 1794, and two years afterwards they were demolished for house-building. The crowded bodies which formed the foundation were not removed before the hurried erection of No. 30, 32, 34, of the Rue de St. Paul, for fifty years later, the proprietors, making new cellars,

came upon masses of bones, and even entire coffins, in lead and wood.

The Convent of Ave Maria only received that name under Louis XI. It was originally occupied by Beguines, brought by Louis IX. from Nivelles in Flanders in 1230. Gradually the number of these uncloistered nuns (who took their name from St. Bague, daughter of a *maire du palais* of king Sigebert) amounted to four hundred, known in Paris as *Dévotés*. When they afterwards dwindled in numbers, Louis XI. gave their convent, under the name of Ave Maria, to the Poor Clares, who flourished greatly under the patronage of his widow, Queen Charlotte. Their house was entered from the Rue des Barrés by a gate-

way bearing statues of Louis XI. and Charlotte de Savoie, and their church was full of tombs of great ladies, including those of Jeanne de Vivonne, daughter of the lord of Chastaigeraie; of Catherine de la Tremoille, and Claude Catherine de Clermont, Duchesse de Retz. The President Molé and his wife, Rénée de Nicolai, reposed alone in the chapter-house. At the Revolution the convent was turned into a cavalry barrack; this gave place to a market; now nothing is left.

Opposite the main entrance of the Ave Maria, was the Jeu de Paume de la Croix Noire, on the ramparts of the town. After the Jeu de

Paume became unfashionable, at the end of the reign of Louis XIII., its place was taken here for a short time by the *Illustre Théâtre*, where Molière was chief actor, and whence, having made himself responsible for the debts of the company, he was soon carried off to prison in the Grand Châtelet. The site occupied by the Jeu de Paume had originally been a convent of Carmelites, called Barrés, on account of their long mantles divided into checks of black and white. It was these nuns who gave a name to the Rue des Barrés.

The Carmelites were removed by St. Louis to the Rue du Petit-Musc, and afterwards they moved to the Quartier St. Jacques, selling their land in the Quartier de St. Paul to



In the Rue de St. Paul.

Jacques Marcel, merchant of Paris, whose son, Garnier Marcel, bestowed it, in 1352, upon the Célestins, established here under the patronage of the dauphin Charles, during the captivity of his father, King Jean, in England. As Charles V., he built them a magnificent church, whose portal bore his statue and that of his wife Jeanne de Bourbon (now at St. Denis). Henceforth the Célestins became the especial royal foundation, and its monks were spoken of by the kings as their *bien-aimés chapelains et serviteurs de Dieu*. From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century benefactors of the convent were dressed in the Célestin habit before receiving the last sacraments, and thus they were represented upon their tombs in the pavement of the church. Amongst the sepulchral inscriptions here were those of the family of Marcel; of Jean Lhuiller, counsellor of parliament; and of the famous doctor, Odo de Creil (1373). In the choir were many cenotaphs, containing only the hearts of the princesses of France buried at St. Denis, but it was also adorned by the tombs of Jeanne de Bourbon, wife of Charles V., 1377 (now at St. Denis); of Léon de Lusignan, last king of Armenia, 1393 (at St. Denis); and of Anne de Bourgogne, Duchess of Bedford, 1432 (now at the Louvre). Annexed to the church in the fifteenth century by the *Confrérie des dix mille martyrs*, was the chapel which became the burial-place of the united families of Gesvres and Beaune, and contained the body of Jacques de Beaune, lord of Semblançay, controller of finances under François I., unjustly hung on a gallows at Montfaucon in 1543. Near his forgotten grave rose the magnificent monuments of the Potier des Gesvres and de Luxembourg, with their kneeling figures. Three little chapels, communicating with the Chapelle des Gesvres, belonged to other families—that of Rochefort, which produced two chancellors of France in the reigns of Louis XI., Charles VIII., and Charles XII., of whom one, Guy de Rochefort, had a curious tomb; that of the family of Zamet, which began with the financier Sebastian Zamet, who died in 1614 in his magnificent Hôtel of the Rue de la Cerisaie, and which ended with his son Jean Zamet, Governor of the Château of Fontainebleau, who died in battle in 1622; and that of Charles de Maigné, gentleman of the chamber to Henri II., with a beautiful statue by the Florentine Paolo Poncio, now in the Louvre.

A more magnificent building, like a succursale to St. Denis, rose attached to the

Célestins—the great Chapelle d'Orleans, built in 1393 by Louis d'Orleans, the younger son of Charles V., who was murdered in the Rue Barbette, in fulfilment of a vow of his wife, Valentine de Milan, for his escape from perishing by fire in the terrible masquerade called *le ballet des Ardents*. Here, in the monastery which he had richly endowed, he was buried with his wife, who only survived him a short time, and all his descendants; and here his grandson, Louis XII., erected a magnificent monument (now at St. Denis) to his memory and that of his sons. Beside it stood the urn (also at St. Denis) which contained the heart of François II., and the beautiful group of the three Graces by Germain Pilon (now at the Louvre), which upheld the bronze urn holding the hearts of Henri II., Catherine de Médicis, Charles IX., and his brother, François de Maine, Duc d'Anjou. Near this rose a pyramid in honour of the house of Longueville, and two sarcophagi which contained the hearts of a Comte de Cossé-Brissac and a Duc de Rohan. Here also was the tomb, with a seated statue, of Philippe de Chabot, and that of the Maréchal Anne de Montmorency, by Barthélemy Prieur (both now in the Louvre). All the precious contents of the Célestins, except the few statues now in the galleries, perished in the Revolution. Its church served as a barn and stable for half a century, and was destroyed in 1849. Amongst the coffins thrown up at this time was that of Anne, Duchess of Bedford, daughter of Jean-sans-Peur. She was buried here, because after her death her husband recollected how, one night, "qu'elle s'esbattoit à jeux honnestes," with the gentlemen and ladies of her household, she heard the bells of the Célestins sound for matins, and rising up, and inviting her ladies to follow her, went at once to the church, and assisted at the holy office, by the tomb of that Duc d'Orleans whom her father had caused to be assassinated.

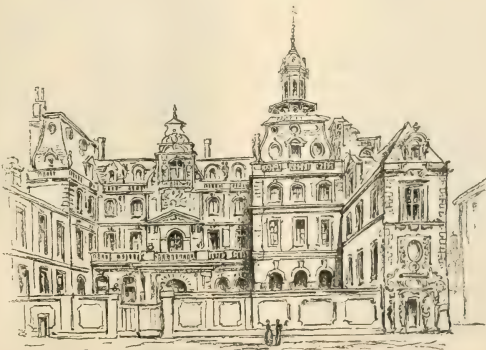
Whilst Jean le Bon was a prisoner in England, his son, afterwards Charles V., was oppressed by the growing power of the *Confrérie des Bourgeois*, the municipal authorities of Paris. Under their formidable provost, Etienne Marcel, they had broken into the Louvre and murdered his two favourite ministers in his presence, his own life only being saved by his consenting to put on the red and green cap of the Republican leader, and giving him his own cloth of gold, arrayed in which he showed himself triumphantly to the people. The king for the time escaped from Paris, and after Marcel had been killed, July 31, 1358, at the Bastille St. Antoine, he deter-

mined to seek a more secure residence with the *Association de la Marchandise de l'eau*, which had always been submissive and devoted to the royal authority. Every preceding king had held his court either in the Cité or at the Louvre, but Charles now bought, near the Port de St. Paul, the hôtel of the Comte d'Étampes, which occupied the whole space between the Rue St. Antoine and the Cemetery of St. Paul. In 1363 he added to his purchase the hôtel of the Archbishop of Sens, with gardens which reached to the Port, and he had also become the owner of the smaller hôtels d'Estomesnil and de Pute-y-Muce, and of that of the abbots of St. Maur, who built another for themselves in the Rue des Barrés. By an edict of July, 1364, Charles V. after coming to the throne, declared the Hôtel de St. Paul to be for ever part of the domain of the crown—the hôtel where “he had enjoyed many pleasures, endured and recovered from many illnesses, and which therefore he regarded with singular pleasure and affection.” No plan of the Hôtel de St. Paul has come down to us, but we know that it was rather a group of palaces than a single building, the Hôtel de Sens being the royal dwelling-place; the Hôtel de St. Maur, under the name of Hôtel de la Conciergerie, being the residence of the Duc d'Orleans, Duc de Bourgogne, and other princes of the royal family; the Hôtel d'Étampes being called Hôtel de la Reine, afterwards Hôtel de Beautreillis; whilst, on the other side of the Rue du Petit-Musc, were the Hôtel du Petit-Musc, and Maison du Pont-Perrin, probably occupied by court officials. The palace, as a whole, was surrounded by high walls, enclosing six meadows, eight gardens, twelve galleries, and a number of courts. We know many of the names of the royal dwelling-rooms, such as the *Chambre de Charlemagne*, so called from its tapestries; the *Galerie des Courges*; the *Chambre de Théséus*; the *Chambre Lambrissée*; the *Chambre Verte*; *Chambre des Grandes aulnoires*, &c.

The garden walks were shaded by trellises covered with vines, which produced annually a large quantity of *Vin de l'Hôtel*. In their shade Charles V. amused himself by keeping a menagerie, and many accounts exist of sums disbursed to those who brought him rare animals.

From his twelfth year to his death at fifty-four, Charles VI. lived constantly at the Hôtel de St. Paul; there he found himself practically a prisoner in the hands of the provost of the merchants, whom his father had come thither especially to avoid, and there, in 1392, he showed the first symptoms of the insanity, which returned, with intervals of calm and sense, till his death: there his twelve children by Isabeau de Bavière were born, most of them during his madness; there he several times saw his palace attacked by a mob, and his relations and courtiers arrested without being able to help them; and there, abandoned by his wife and children, he died, Oct. 20, 1422, being only cared for by a mistress, Odette de Champdivers, nicknamed *la petite reine*. For thirteen years after her husband's death, Isabeau de Bavière remained shut up from the detestation of the French, in the Hôtel de St. Paul. “Even her body was so despised,” says Brantôme, “that it was transported from her hôtel, in a little boat on the Seine, without any kind of ceremony or pomp, and was thus carried to her grave at St. Denis, just as if she had been a simple demoiselle.” From this time the Hôtel de St. Paul was deserted by royalty. When Charles VII. returned victorious to Paris he would not lodge even in the Hôtel des Tournelles, contaminated for him by the residence

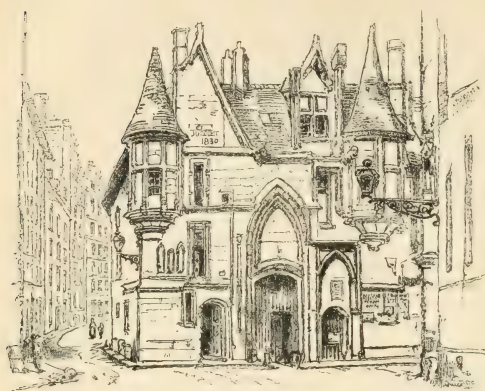
of the Duke of Bedford, and, whenever he was in Paris, he stayed at the Hôtel Neuf, which is sometimes supposed to have been the same as the Hôtel du Petit-Musc, afterwards (when given by Charles VIII. to Anne of Brittany) known as Hôtel de Bre-



Hôtel de Lavalette.

tagne. In spite of the letters patent of Charles V. declaring the Hôtel de St. Paul inalienable from the domains of the crown,

stables, which still exist. Its entrance from the Quai des Célestins, much altered, is perhaps the main entrance to the royal palace. Turning along the quai, at the angle of the Rue du Petit-Musc, is another hôtel (Hôtel de Lavalette), rebuilt under the regency of Anne of Austria, by her chancellor Gaspard Fieubet, counsellor of State during the reign of Louis XIV. It is a stately and beautiful building, though overcharged with ornament by a later possessor, M. de Lavalette. Upon the destruction of the rest of the palace, that part which Charles V. had bought from Guillaume de Melun, archbishop of Sens, returned to its former owners. In the beginning of the sixteenth century their old hôtel was rebuilt by Tristan de Salazar, archbishop of Sens.

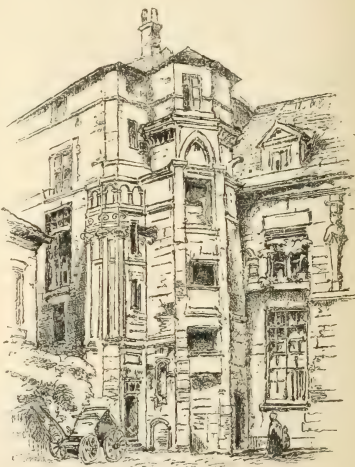


Hôtel de Sens.

Louis XI. bestowed several of the satellite hôtels dependent on the palace upon his friends, and during the reign of François I. the Rues des Lions, Beautreillis, and de la Cerisaie, recalling by their names the ancient sites they occupied, had invaded the precincts of the palace. A great part of the buildings and land extending from the Rue des Barrés to the Rue du Petit-Musc, with the great royal palace "fort vague et ruineux," was alienated in 1516 for the benefit of Jacques de Genoilhac, grand master and captain general of the artillery of France, in reward for his public service, especially at the battle of Marignan: finally, in 1542, all the rest of the royal domain in the Quartier de St. Paul, comprising a great number of hôtels under different illustrious names, was sold, and the sites were soon occupied by fresh buildings. Scarcely any fragments of the vast royal palace remain. At the corner of the Rue des Lions is a tourelle, which may have belonged to one of the minor hôtels of the royal colony. The Hôtel de Vieuville, the courtyard of which opens on the left at the angle of the Rue de St. Paul and the Quai des Célestins, picturesque as it is in its high dormer windows, only dates from the time of Henri III.

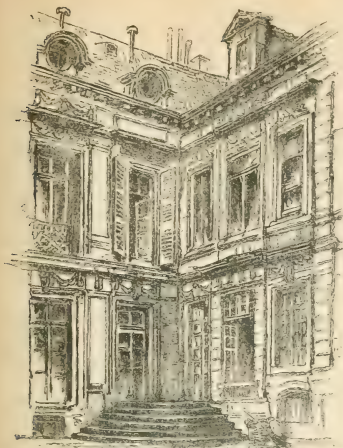
The old hôtel behind the Hôtel de Vieuville is the Hotel des Lions du Roi, which was appropriated by Jacques de Genoilhac as his residence, in his quality of *grand écuyer*, because it adjoined the vast royal

The palace was afterwards inhabited by Marguerite de Valois—la reine Margot—when, after her divorce, she obtained the



Hôtel de Jassaud.

king's permission to establish herself in Paris. It was within its walls, additionally decorated by Cardinal Dupont, that Cardinal de Pellevé,



Hotel d'Aumont.

archbishop of Sens, one of the principal chiefs of the Ligue, united the leaders of the Catholic party, and there he died, March 22, 1594, whilst a *Te Deum* was being chaunted at Notre Dame for the entry of the king to Paris. In the last century the Hôtel de Sens became a diligence bureau, but it is still a beautiful and important specimen of the first years of the sixteenth century, and no one should fail to visit its Gothic gateway defended by two round tourelles with high peaked roofs. A vaulted porch, brick chimneys, great halls, the square donjon tower at the back of the court, and the winding stair of the tourelle, remain entire; only the chapel has been destroyed. On the left of the entrance is an eight-pounder ball, which lodged in the wall, July 28, 1830.

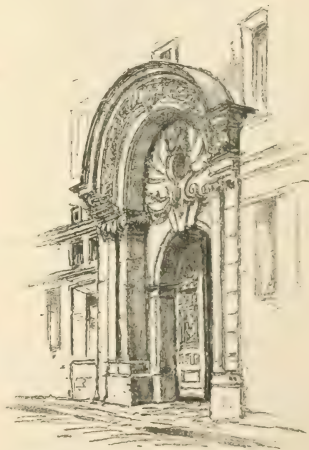
Lovers of old houses and picturesque street architecture will be well repaid by examining carefully the streets between the Hôtel de Sens and the church of SS. Paul and Louis. On the right of the Rue Charlemagne (reached from the Rue St. Antoine by the Passage Charlemagne) is the courtyard of the Hôtel de Jassaud or d'Aguesseau. The buildings are of the time of François I. They are very little known and have therefore happily escaped "restoration," so that their colour is glorious. In the dark arcades of the court, the delicate friezes, broadly overhang-

ing eaves, arched doorways, twisted staircase, brilliant flowers in the windows, bright glints of green seen through dark entries, and figures and costumes full of colour—for such are still to be seen in the Marais—an artist may find at least a dozen subjects worthy of his skill.

Close by, crossing the Rue des Nonains d'Hyères, so called from an offshoot of the Abbey of Hyères established here in 1182, we reach the Rue de Jouy, where the Abbot of Jouy had his residence. Its site is now occupied by the Hôtel d'Aumont, with a magnificent courtyard by Mansart, and several richly decorated rooms, now occupied by a school of chemistry. Altogether this is one of the finest hôtels of the period in France.

On the left opens the Rue Geoffrey d'Asnier, where we find the Hôtel de Chalons-Luxembourg, of the seventeenth century, with an entrance gate of noble proportions. Its little courtyard of brick and stone is very richly decorated with masks and pilasters after the fashion of the time.

Almost opposite, down a narrow entry, we have a most picturesque view of the back of the old Church of St. Gervais: but at the end of the alley, as we emerge into sunshine, we leave the narrow historic streets of the Marais, and enter upon a younger Paris.



Gate of Hotel de Chalons-Luxembourg.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

BY WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.—MADEMOISELLE LEONINO.

"WHO will go to the inaugural fête of the Hôtel Rousseau?" said Gibson one morning, as he came into the sub-editor's room with two large, gaily got-up cards in his hand. "That big hotel at the other end of the lake, you know. I dare say it will be a very grand affair. The proprietors want something saying about it, I suppose; and as they have given us a good advertisement we must try to oblige them. Will you go, Balmaine?"

"Certainly," said Alfred. "It will be a new experience, and, I have no doubt, a very pleasant one."

"I am sure it will; and as these people want a notice they are sure to make much of you. But here's a second ticket. Will you go too, Delane? I dare say we can spare you both for a day."

"No, I thank you, Mr. Gibson. There will be dancing; I don't dance, and, to tell the truth, I have not such a thing as a dress-coat."

"Would Milnthorpe go, do you think?"

"I am sure he wouldn't. I don't think he has more than one pair of shoes, and they are bursting in all directions. You must send somebody who will be a credit to the paper."

"But Milnthorpe is not so desperately poor as all that comes to. I have got his salary raised to fifty francs. It is not much, perhaps, but it should afford a new pair of shoes."

"I cannot make Milnthorpe out," observed Delane thoughtfully. "From the way he lives, he should not be spending more than twenty francs a week. He is saving money; that's what Milnthorpe is doing. I wish I could save some."

As this remark was made the door opened, and Corfe appeared on the scene.

"Perhaps Corfe will have the second ticket," said Gibson. "Will you, Corfe?"

"If it's anything very jolly, I say yes. With thanks," was the answer.

Gibson explained.

"I cannot do much dancing with this game leg of mine, but I suppose they will put us up and give us something to eat and drink."

"Not a doubt of it—something very good too, I should say."

"Then I will go. I dare say I can while away the time somehow while Balmaine is doing the light fantastic," said Corfe laughing

at his own conceit, "and a fellow can always smoke, you know."

"It is understood that we go together, then," put in Alfred; "by water, of course?"

"Of course. Going by water is a delight, by rail an infliction—heaven and hell. I vote for heaven. We meet at the *embarcadère* at what time?"

"I think we had better go by the two-o'clock boat."

"I shall be there. It will bring us just in time for the table d'hôte. And now I must be off and arrange about my lessons. *Au revoir*."

"Corfe seems to be in good spirits to-day," remarked Gibson as the door closed.

"Very much so. He is rather freer with his money, too, than he was a little while ago. Perhaps he has got another good-paying pupil. I wonder who that ill-looking Italian is that he talks so much with at the Café du Roi?"

"Why don't you ask him?"

"No, thank you. If you show too much curiosity about Corfe's private affairs he has a way of dropping on you that is not very agreeable, and I don't want to fall out with him."

Whatever may have been Corfe's faults of temper, or otherwise, he showed none of them on the voyage up the lake. He chatted pleasantly all the way, and his manner to Alfred was so cordial that the latter almost resolved that, as they went back, he would ask him whether, during his travels in Italy, he had heard or seen anything of the Hardys. His family had been in the habit of visiting the Baths of Lucca every year. Vera was born at Lucca, and, as appeared from Philip's letter, they had often been there since. What more likely than that Corfe should know something of them? At any rate, there could be no harm in asking him, and, if a good opportunity offered, he could put the question as they went home. He might put it now, but experience was making Alfred cautious. He did not want to take Corfe too much into his confidence, or let him know the extent of the Hardy fortune. It would be better, he thought, to introduce the subject as it were accidentally, and apropos of something else. To lug it in by the head and shoulders might excite Corfe's suspicion, and cause him to keep something back, as Bevis had done; for, besides being half

Italian by education, Corfe was quite as sharp as the Colonel, and probably less scrupulous.

They arrived, as they expected, just in time for dinner, and were treated by the proprietor of the hotel with a politeness so excessive, with so much bowing and scraping and offers of this, that, and the other, that Alfred was half amused, half annoyed; but Corfe evidently liked it, bowed condescendingly to the master, and ordered the servants about as if he owned them. Everybody thought he was the proprietor of the *Helvetic News* and Balmaine his secretary.

At dinner the head waiter asked Corfe, with much deference, what wine they would have, whereupon Corfe ordered a bottle of old Margaux and a bottle of Napoleon Cabinet. This annoyed Alfred.

"These people are giving us a good dinner," he said, "and treating us otherwise very handsomely. It seems hardly fair to drink their most expensive wines."

"They will respect you all the more for it," replied Corfe with an air of calm superiority. "I know these people better than you do, my dear fellow. If we ordered *vin ordinaire* and Swiss gooseberry they would set us down as fools. And it is a good rule to take of the best when you have the chance. You remember the Irishman's advice to his son—'Never drink water when you can drink wine, and never kiss the maid when you can kiss the mistress.' This Margaux is a very fair wine. We shall be able to tell our friends, Jules" (turning to the head waiter), "that the Hôtel Rousseau is starting with an excellent cellar."

"Oui, monsieur, we have some very good wine. It is only old-established hotels that can afford to give their guests inferior *crués*. We have also some superb liqueurs—cognac fifty years old. Would monsieur like to have a *petit verre* of it?"

"I think I would. Bring me one after the fish. Will you have one, Balmaine?"

Alfred declined. He did not know whether to be amused by Corfe's *aplomb* or vexed with his assurance.

After dinner they went into the garden and watched, while they smoked, the completion of the preparations for the fête. The Hôtel Rousseau was finely situated in the grounds of an ancient château, of which the central part had been preserved, and ingeniously incorporated into the new structure, built in the same style of architecture, and the old tower being covered with ivy, the general effect was pleasing and picturesque. The house was long and double fronted,

approached on one side by a magnificent double avenue of chestnut-trees, and on the other by a broad flight of steps, which led directly from the lake. On the opposite shore a huge mountain, its black and splintered summit powdered with fresh-fallen snow, rose sheer from the water, while behind it Alp was piled on Alp, each loftier than the other, until the last was lost in the evening haze. The landward front faced a range of vine-clad slopes, dotted with fairy-like villas, green meadows sweeping upwards towards dark pine-woods and naked promontories of rock, which seemed to be hanging in mid-air.

Then the curtain of night fell; the ivy-clad tower glowed with hidden fires, the entire front of the hotel was illuminated, the Chinese lanterns that hung among the trees were lighted up, some of the larger trees carrying a lantern on every branch. There were fountains in which Neptunes and mermaids bore flaming torches above fleeting rainbows; and two lines of boats, each with a lantern fore and aft, and rising and falling with the swell of the lake, made a waterway nearly a mile long. The effect was weird, charming, and fantastic; the Rousseau gardens had been converted into fairyland, and "when music rose with its voluptuous swell," Balmaine felt like dancing all over.

"Come along!" he exclaimed with honest enthusiasm; "let us walk round. I never saw anything like this before."

"It's not so bad for Switzerland," returned Corfe with a half-sneer. "But you should see the *fêtes des fleurs* at Nice, or Versailles illuminated, and the grand fountains playing."

"Bother Versailles and its grand fountains! What is Versailles, with its stucco and paint and square-cut garden to compare with those mountains and this lake? The Chinese lanterns don't amount to much, perhaps; but the scene altogether is superb."

"Are you going to dance?" asked Corfe, who seemed rather taken aback by this outburst.

"If I can get a partner I will, certainly. Who could resist that music?"

"I'll get you a partner fast enough. Come this way. Isn't that Fastnacht (one of the managers)?"

"Can I do anything for you, gentlemen?" said Fastnacht, rubbing his hands deferentially and making a low bow. "I hope you like the illumination."

"My friend—" began Corfe.

"The illumination is superb, M. Fast-

nacht," broke in Alfred—he was beginning to resent Corfe's constant patronage. "I think I never saw anything so beautiful. I have been watching it for some time, and now I feel as if I should like a dance. Do you think you could find me a partner?"

"Perfectly, M. Balmaine, as many as you like. Will you give yourself the trouble to step this way?"

The avenue of chestnut-trees was fitted up as a ball-room. Boards were laid on the space reserved for the dancers, the orchestra being partitioned off by a low curtain of red drapery; and the flags of Switzerland, England, the United States, and other nationalities, were festooned in graceful folds from tree to tree.

Fastnacht led Balmaine to a group composed of a middle-aged lady and gentleman and two or three young girls.

"How do you do, M. Senarcles?" said the manager. "Behold M. Balmaine, an English gentleman from Geneva; he would very much like to dance. Perhaps one of your young ladies would oblige him?"

"Not a doubt of it," returned M. Senarcles pleasantly. "Here is Mademoiselle Leonino; I am sure she will be happy to dance with monsieur."

Balmaine, bowing to the demoiselle thus designated, asked in his best French if she would do him the pleasure. The demoiselle smiled, rose, bowed, and the next moment they were whirling among the Chinese lanterns at the rate of twenty miles an hour. Alfred had seen at once that his partner was a sweet and graceful girl; but it was only when he was leading her back to her friends that he had an opportunity of examining her in detail, waltzing not being favourable to minute observation.

Mademoiselle Leonino was tall, slim, and well-shaped, but perhaps rather too square-shouldered. Her oval, slightly olive-tinted and sunburnt face was mobile and expressive, lighted up with a pair of bright black eyes, and surmounted with a mass of golden hair—some would have called it red; but red or golden, no fitter setting could have been desired for the girl's winsome and intelligent countenance.

But she seemed to have no tongue, and though he asked her several questions and made sundry remarks, she answered nothing save yea and nay.

"That is a deuced nice girl you have been dancing with," said Corfe, when he next met his companion; "who is she?"

"Except that she is with a certain M.

Senarcles and that her name is Leonino, I cannot tell you."

"Leonino is an Italian name, and she has an Italian look, too. But there are lots of people in this part of Switzerland with Italian names. I know half-a-dozen myself. Yes, she is a very pretty girl. I like red hair, don't you?"

"If you call that red hair, I don't; I call it golden."

Balmaine danced with several other demoiselles in the course of the evening, but he liked his first partner so well that he danced with her twice again, and would have danced with her a fourth time if she and her friends had not suddenly disappeared.

On the second occasion she was less reserved. She answered some of his questions, and even made one or two original observations. On the third occasion he ventured to ask her, in a roundabout fashion, where she lived.

"I suppose you live in this neighbourhood?" he said.

"My home is up there in the mountains," she replied, pointing towards the Waadtland Alps.

"It must be very lonely. Do you like your life up there?"

"I love the mountains, oh, so much! What would life be without them?" she answered eagerly. "Even in winter they are glorious; more glorious, I sometimes think, than in summer. But mountains are not all; there are other things—" and then a shadow fell over her face, and she stopped abruptly, as if she feared that she might be committing an indiscretion.

Alfred would have liked to ask her what the other things were, but he felt that would be presuming too much, and he asked her instead whether she ever went to Geneva.

"I have only been there once," was the answer. "I rarely leave home, and should not have come to the fête if M. Senarcles had not asked me."

"M. Senarcles! Is he the great M. Senarcles of whom one has heard?"

"Yes, he is the great French historian. He lives down there by the lake, but in the summer he comes up to the mountains."

"But you are not French?"

"No, I am not French. I don't know exactly what I am. My father was—"

"Pardon, Monsieur. I hope you have enjoyed yourself, and you also, Mademoiselle. The fête is a great success, I think. The dancing will now cease for half an hour for

the display of fireworks. You will see it best from the terrace."

The speaker was the indefatigable Fastnacht, and almost at the same moment Madame Senarclens came up, and Alfred saw no more of Mademoiselle Leonino that night, nor for some time thereafter. Another moment, and she would have told him that her father was English and her mother Italian, and he would have known that the girl by his side was her whom he sought—Philip Hardy's daughter.

In the rush for the terrace, Balmaine lost sight of the Senarclens, and though he sought for them afterwards they were nowhere to be found. He danced a few times more, but with little spirit or enjoyment. The glamour of the fête seemed to be past, the candles in the Chinese lanterns began to gutter and go out, the music was less lively, and he noticed for the first time that some vulgar men and tawdry-dressed women were among the dancers, and that several of the guests appeared to have taken more wine than was good for them. So without saying anything to Corfe, who was playing at cards in the hotel smoking-room, he went quietly off to bed, wondering what Mademoiselle Leonino would have said if she had not been interrupted, for the expression, "I am not French; I don't know exactly what I am," was too singular to be easily forgotten.

Corfe came down very late to breakfast next morning, but in excellent humour, due probably to the fact, which he imparted to Alfred, that he had "picked up" several napoleons at play. But as he did not want to impress the young fellow unfavourably, or have it known at the office that he had been gambling, he said whist, albeit the game was baccarat.

"Did you see any more of that pretty girl with the red hair and black eyes?" he asked. "Leonino, isn't she called?"

"Very little," said Balmaine, rather coldly. "She went away early. I saw nothing of her after the fireworks."

"I should not wonder if she belonged to one of those Swiss families of Italian origin that settled in Switzerland about the time of the Reformation. She has evidently both Northern and Southern blood in her veins. I do not think I ever saw such a combination of blonde and brunette in the same person. Yes, Mademoiselle Leonino is very good-looking. I wish I knew where she lived."

There was something in the manner in which this was said, even more than the words themselves, that grated on Alfred's

feelings. He did not like to discuss Mademoiselle Leonino with Corfe, but as he had no right to resent the remark, even if it had been expedient to do so, he said something about its being nearly time to start, lighted a cigar, and strolled out on the terrace.

Half an hour later they were speeding towards Geneva. The sun was right above them, and Balmaine was watching the effect of light and shade on the hills and dales of the Savoyard side, and wondering when—if ever—he should have the opportunity of climbing the glaciers which crowned the summits of the Pennine Alps, and looking down from them on the historic land of which he had heard and read so much.

"I wish I were on the other side," says Corfe, pointing to Mont Blanc.

"You like Italy?"

"Better than any other country. If some good soul would leave me five hundred a year—a fellow may exist on five hundred a year in Italy—I should live nowhere else. You have not been to Chamouni yet?"

"No."

"You must go. I have been there several times. I once crossed over the Col du Géant to Courmayeur, and then footed it to Turin. That was one of the pleasantest tramps I ever had. You should go to Italy, Balmaine."

"I am going."

"Soon?"

"In a few days, I think."

"It is a bad time now; too hot. You should wait till September, or better still, October."

"I must go when I can get off, and I rather like heat."

"You will get what you like, then. You won't take much harm, though, if you keep about the lakes."

"That is what I mean to do, but I should like to see Turin, Milan, and one or two other places. I want to make a few inquiries about a missing Englishman, though I do not suppose it will be of much use."

"A missing Englishman! Who is he? a relative of yours?"

"Oh, dear, no. Some people I know are anxious to ascertain what has become of him. He lived in Italy, and has not been heard of for ten years or more."

"What is his name? I may perhaps have met him or heard of him. I used to meet a good many English when I was in Italy."

"His name was Hardy."

"Was he married?"

"At one time he was; but when last heard

of he was a widower, with a little girl about seven years old."

Alfred said, further, that Philip Hardy went sometimes under another name, mentioned the places he was in the habit of frequenting, and a few other facts.

"Hardy!" said Corfe thoughtfully, "I don't think I ever knew anybody of that name, at any rate in Italy. I suppose the aliases he used were Italian?"

"I should think so."

"Is there money in it?" asked Corfe abruptly, after a long pause, which seemed to be grave and reflective.

Alfred looked as if he did not quite understand. Corfe was drawing conclusions much faster than he liked, and he wanted time to think.

"I was merely thinking why these people you speak of are so anxious to find him. I have lived long enough in the world to know that when a man who has been missing ten years is wanted, money is generally at the bottom of it."

"Money is not my motive, at any rate. It is partly curiosity, partly a desire to oblige a friend. Whether Philip Hardy be alive or dead I am not likely to profit a penny. Most people think he is dead."

"And if he is, who will get his money?"

"It is a question whether he had any money. If he died before his father he had none."

"Did these Hardys live in London?"

"Yes."

"When did the old man die?"

"John Hardy died about ten years ago. But I really don't see what all this has to do with it, Corfe. I don't want you to take any trouble in the matter. I thought you might possibly have met Hardy somewhere, more especially as the Baths of Lucca seem to have been a favourite resort of his, and you were often there, you say."

"I don't think I ever met anybody called Hardy, either at Lucca or elsewhere, and you don't know his Italian name. Have you any idea what he was like?"

"I never saw him, or even a portrait of him; but he has been described to me as a handsome, powerfully-built man, rather above middle height, with reddish hair and beard, light complexion and blue eyes, and a look half-soldier, half-artist."

"And he had a little girl with him?"

"Yes, but what she was like I have no idea."

"No," said Corfe, slowly, as if he was searching every nook and cranny of his me-

mory. "No, I cannot tell you anything about them. Never met a man and a little girl like that, I am sure; and I don't think there is the least chance of finding a clue—unless you can ascertain by what name they generally went."

So Balmaine learnt nothing whatever from Corfe, and he could not help thinking that he had possibly made a mistake in mooted the matter to him; yet why should he think so? Although Alfred had told him more than he intended, Corfe had, after all, not got to know very much; and the facts concerning the Hardy fortune were no secret; whoever chose to take a little trouble could easily learn all about the case. If Corfe thought he had some sinister motive in making the inquiry, what then? He cared nothing about Corfe. Yet though Balmaine argued thus, he could not shake off the vague feeling of uneasiness with which the conversation had inspired him. He did not like the keen way in which Corfe had questioned him, and his eagerness to know if "there was money in it" was not pleasant. No harm might come of it—he did not see how there could—but for all that he wished he had kept his own counsel.

CHAPTER XXIV.—CORFE IS CURIOUS.

TEN days later Balmaine started for Lucca, *en route* for Italy, and almost at the same hour Corfe called on an *avocat* who was much consulted by members of the English colony. His object was to inquire if the *avocat* had an agent in London, and on receiving an answer in the affirmative, he instructed him to obtain an abstract of the will of John Hardy, who had lived in London and died there about ten years before. If the will of more than one John Hardy should be found at Doctor's Commons, the agent was to send abstracts of each of them.

"I am sure that beggar Balmaine did not tell me everything," muttered Corfe, as he left the *avocat's étude*. "We shall soon see whether there is money in it or not—money is at the bottom of everything in this world I think, or ought to be. If there is, I shall try to profit by the opportunity. No, no, Mr. Balmaine, you don't pick my brains for nothing—not if I know it. I do believe it is the same. That description answers perfectly to the Leonino we knew at Lucca—little girl and all. If it had not been for that girl Balmaine danced with, though, I should never have known. The moment I heard her name it seemed to recall something, but I could not tell what—one may

forget a good deal in twelve years. But when Balmaine described what a sort of fellow Hardy was it all came back to me. He was rather friendly with my father, I remember, and one evening when we were leaving the Café Cartoni—that was in Lucca itself—the governor whispered to me, as a sort of secret, that Leonino, in spite of his Italian name, was an Englishman, and member of a revolutionary society, and afterwards I saw him and his little girl and her *bonne* walking on the ramparts, and again at the baths. I have not a doubt he is the very man Balmaine is inquiring about, any more than I have that he is as dead as Moses. I suppose they want to prove the fact in order that somebody may get hold of his leavings. Well, if they want my help they must pay for it, that is all. I shall know more when I get a copy of the old man's will, if he made a will. By-the-bye, Balmaine said very little about the girl—she must be a woman by this time. If the father is dead she will inherit, naturally. Oh, oh, Mr. Balmaine, I see what you are after; you are after the daughter. But after all this time you won't find it easy to trace her, I'm thinking. I did not ask him her Christian name, that was a mistake. I wonder—no, the thing would be too absurd, and Leonino is not an uncommon name. Mademoiselle Leonino is a very fine girl, all the same, and I mean to cultivate her acquaintance. Fastnacht asked me to go down again and spend a few days at the Rousseau. I have half a mind to go on Saturday and stay till Monday. And when I get the abstract of the will what shall I do?—write to the trustees or heirs-at-law, or whoever they are?—they can be found out, I suppose—and ask them to give me the job of finding out what has become of this man—and I'll make 'em pay too."

On this idea Corfe acted; the following Saturday he revisited the Rousseau, and for two days lorded it over the servants and lived on the fat of the land. He liked hotel life, and had it been in his power would have lived in hotels altogether. When he asked Fastnacht about Mademoiselle Leonino the manager gave him a knowing look.

"A fine girl, isn't she?" he said; "a very fine girl. You are not the first man by any means, Mr. Corfe, who has asked questions about Mademoiselle Vera Leonino."

"She is called Vera, is she?"

"Yes."

"And she lives at Clarens, I suppose, or is it Vevey?"

"Neither; she lives up in the mountains,

near a village called—let me see—I forget just now, but I shall remember afterwards, and if I don't I can get to know for you."

"Who are her people?"

"Peasants."

"Nonsense. She has quite a lady-like air and good manners."

"It does seem rather strange, doesn't it? But it is what M. Senarclens was telling me on the night of the fête. I am afraid, though, I had my head too full of other things to pay proper attention to all he said. But the peasant family she lives with are no relations."

"No!"

"No, the daughter was her *bonne* when she was quite a little thing, and Mademoiselle Vera's father left her in the *bonne's* charge, and money enough to pay for her bringing up."

"A strange story," said Corfe, who began to see that he was in a fair way for making an important discovery. "What is the *bonne's* name?"

"That I forgot, too; but if you like I will inform myself."

"Thank you," said Corfe carelessly. "I wish you would when you have an opportunity—if it is not too much trouble."

Corfe's idea in going to the Rousseau a second time had been simply to spend a day or two pleasantly and, if he could, make the acquaintance of Mademoiselle Leonino, a design that boded the girl no good, for he had strong passions and no scruples. But the story told him by M. Fastnacht suggested quite a new order of ideas. The theory which he had conceived, only to dismiss as absurd, that Mademoiselle Leonino was the daughter of the man whom he had met at Lucca, and whom Balmaine was so anxious to find, seemed now plausible enough. The girl lived with a family of peasants, to whom she was in no way akin; her father had left her in charge of her *bonne*, probably the very *bonne* that he had seen at Lucca; and, finally, her name was Leonino. True, these might be merely fortuitous coincidences, and Mademoiselle Leonino might not be the daughter of Philip Hardy after all. On the other hand, the matter was well worth inquiring into, and when Fastnacht had got to know with whom the girl lived and where, he would go forthwith and look her and the *bonne* up. But he was too crafty to press Fastnacht—he did not want the manager to suppose that he had any other motives than idle curiosity and admiration of the girl's beauty; and as Fastnacht, being

much occupied with his own affairs, quite forgot to make the promised inquiry, Corfe, much to his chagrin, was obliged to leave without learning anything further. But he resolved to return on an early day and by hook or crook find out what he wanted to know.

Shortly afterwards the abstract of John Hardy's will arrived. The reading of it seemed to set Corfe's brain on fire. When he saw that the personality had been sworn under £800,000, and that there was much landed property besides, all left to "my son Philip," and that Philip being dead, his daughter would inherit all this wealth, he felt for a moment as if the emotions that swept through his mind and the golden dreams which rose tumultuously before his mental vision would suffocate him. This vast fortune was before his eyes—nearly within his grasp!

"Why," he almost shouted, "why should I not marry this girl before she knows herself how rich she is, and so become at one stroke a millionaire—a millionaire, not in beggarly francs, but in pounds sterling? Heavens! what might not a man do with a million—twenty-five million, perhaps fifty million francs!"

But was this girl he had seen at the Rousseau really and beyond any sort of doubt Philip Hardy's daughter? That was the question. If so, why should she be living with a family of peasants in a remote Swiss village? There was a story behind all this; what could it be? He must ascertain, and he could only ascertain by personal inquiry in the place where Mademoiselle Leonino lived. Not yet, however; circumspection was now more necessary than ever, and to present himself at the Rousseau before a reasonable time had elapsed, and without any other apparent motive than to ask where the girl lived, might excite suspicion, and his game was to keep the facts he had discovered absolutely to himself. If Mademoiselle Leonino were to find out that she was a great heiress it might not be so easy for him to marry her. The foster child of a Swiss *bonne* was one thing, a millionaire maiden quite another. There were good reasons, moreover, why he should keep himself in the background and his whereabouts unknown. Yes, he must remain in Geneva and keep quiet until, at any rate, that beggar Balmaine came back. He was a straightforward, unsuspicious young fellow, and it would not be difficult to ascertain from him the Christian name of Philip Hardy's daughter without letting it be seen that he had any particular object in making the inquiry. If it were "Vera" there

could not be a shadow of a doubt that Vera Leonino and Vera Hardy were one and the same person. His next move would be to find out where she lived and make her acquaintance. It would not be difficult, he thought, to persuade a girl in her position to accept an English gentleman of good family, willing to take her without a portion. As to that he had no fear; he was always successful with women, and girls of seventeen or eighteen were great fools; they believed everything you told them.

So Corfe awaited with what patience he might Balmaine's return; but there was hardly a day on which he did not call at the office of the *Helvetic* to inquire when the assistant editor was likely to be back, hardly an hour that he did not mentally curse the young fellow's dilatoriness. The prospect of coming into a million sterling, possibly twice as much, for in the circumstances there would naturally be no question of settlements, excited him almost beyond endurance. "To miss it," he said to himself, grinding his teeth and clenching his hands at the mere thought, "would be hell."

How, meanwhile, was Balmaine faring? As touching the main object of his journey badly enough, yet hardly worse than he expected, for he did not disguise from himself that, after so long a time, and ignorant as he was of Hardy's aliases, the chance of finding a clue was exceedingly remote. On that chance he went, and if it failed him he should be in no worse position than before. He would still have Bevis and Martino to fall back upon, and in justice both to Warton and Artful and Higginbottom he was bound to do his best.

After walking over the St. Gothard, as well for reasons of economy, as the better to survey the scenes of the campaign of 1799 in which he took a great interest, Alfred changed to wheels at Airolo, and descended the gorges of the Ticino to the shores of Lago Maggiore on the top of a diligence. It was one of the pleasantest bits of travel he had ever enjoyed, and when the lake in all its unmatched loveliness rolled out before him he was in an ecstasy of delight. He saw evidence everywhere that he had crossed the Alps. Though the mountains were the same, the landscape was softer, and the vegetation different. The vines were trained in another fashion, the hills were rounder and more wooded, the buildings more spacious, the people more picturesque. At Locarno he stayed all night, and made a few fruitless inquiries. The Hotel Martino no longer

existed; the money-changer who had cashed Philip Hardy's drafts was dead, and when he asked mine host of the inn at which he put up, if he had ever heard of an English gentleman of the name of Hardy, who frequently visited Locarno some ten or twelve years before, the man, who belonged to canton Uri, told him that he had lived in Locarno but six years, and recommended him to see the postmaster, an old fellow that had lived there all his life. The postmaster, whose temper seemed none of the sweetest, said that during the last thirty years he had seen and spoken to about a hundred thousand Englishmen, who were either staying in or passing through Locarno, that he did not remember the name of one of them, and had never heard the name of Hardy before.

Balmaine almost laughed at himself for asking so absurd a question, and only the feeling that it was his duty to make an effort to earn his travelling expenses induced him to go on. But it was the same everywhere else, and at Milan he came to the conclusion that unless he could obtain an introduction to some old revolutionist, and devote months to the task, it would be useless to persevere. He even abandoned his intention of going to Luca, which in one respect was a misfortune, for if he had heard nothing about Philip Hardy he might have heard something about Vernon Corfe, which would have been almost as valuable.

He returned over the Simplon, and from Domo d' Ossola wrote to Artful and Higginbottom, apprising them of his failure, expressing the opinion that until he could see Martino there was no use attempting anything further, and adding that he expected to have news of him through Colonel Bevis on his arrival at Geneva. He did in effect find a letter from the Colonel at his lodgings, but it contained nothing very satisfactory. Bevis said he was much obliged for Alfred's offer to defray any expenses he might incur in prosecuting the inquiry about Martino, and that he would forward particulars of what he might spend in due course. As for obtaining his address, he could only repeat that it was quite impossible for him to do so until he went to Italy. He would if he could, but it was really quite out of his power.

With this assurance Alfred was obliged to be content. There was nothing for it but to possess his soul in patience and wait. The day after his return he met Corfe on the Island Bridge.

"When did you get back?" says Corfe in his most affable manner.

"Last night."

"I hope you enjoyed yourself."

"Thank you. I enjoyed the journey immensely, though it was so warm."

"Did you go to Venice?"

"No."

"What a pity! You should not have missed the Queen of the Adriatic on any account. However, you are sure to go to Italy again. Nobody ever visits Italy once without wanting to see it a second time. How did you succeed with your quest?"

"Not at all."

"You have heard nothing of the missing Mr. Hardy then?"

"Nothing."

"Nor of his daughter, the missing Miss What's-her-name. You did tell me, I think, but I forget."

"Vera."

"Ah!" Try as he would, Corfe could not keep down that exclamation, nor prevent the blood from rushing to his head and suffusing his face.

"What?" asks Alfred with a look of surprise.

"I was struck with the coincidence, that's all," returns Corfe with admirable presence of mind. "One of my sisters is called Vera; strange, isn't it? I was afraid you wouldn't succeed when you told me about it. So many things may happen in ten years, you know. In my opinion both father and daughter are either dead or lost for ever. However, if I can do anything to help you, you have only to speak. I will do my best."

Alfred thanked him, and then each went on his way.

"It is all right, no mistake this time," thought Corfe exultantly, as he leaned on the parapet of the bridge and watched the Rhone as it swept clear and blue towards the rapids of St. Jean. "She is the Vera, my Vera, for she shall be mine, let who will say nay. I'll go to the Rousseau on Saturday, and make old Fastnacht tell me where she is, and before two months are over I'll marry her; and then won't I astonish some of their weak nerves?"

But there was a mistake this time, and before two days were over Corfe experienced the truth of the adage that there's many a slip between the cup and the lip.

CHAPTER XXV.—AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL.

"WHAT sort of a post had you this morning?" asked Gibson, one afternoon as he passed through the sub-editor's room to his

own. This was a more important question than it may seem, for the extent of an editor's correspondence is no bad sign of the influence of his paper.

"Very fair," answered Delane, whose duty it was to open all letters directed to the editor; "but there is a letter here which I did not venture to open. It is marked private."

"From a woman," said the editor, tearing open the envelope. "Poetry, I suppose, with a private appeal for favourable consideration. No, it isn't. Queer this. What do you make of it, Delane?" (throwing the letter on the sub-editor's table). "It is about your friend Corfe."

The letter, which was dated from London, ran as follows:—

"DEAR SIR,—*May I ask you to do me a slight favour, for which I shall be greatly obliged, and tender you my best thanks beforehand. I believe that Mr. Vernon Corfe is at present in Geneva and a contributor to your paper. If he is not, kindly let me know at your earliest convenience. If, on the other hand, he is at Geneva, you need not take the trouble to write. I shall consider your silence as equivalent to a reply in the affirmative.*

Yours faithfully,
"ESTHER CORFE."

"What do I make of it?" replied Delane. "It is from somebody who wants to know whether Corfe is here or not."

"How very sharp we are! You should have been a detective, Delane. Your talents are quite thrown away as a journalist. The fact is, I suppose, you don't want to give an opinion. But have you no idea who this Esther Corfe is?"

"His sister I should say, or his mother."

"Is it possible, do you think, that his people are ignorant of his whereabouts?"

"I should not wonder. Corfe is rather a strange fellow, and from hints he has occasionally dropped, I fancy he is not on the best of terms with his family."

"That is likely enough, I should say. He does not seem to have a very angelic temper. Or this lady may be his wife."

"Oh no, that is out of the question."

"Why is it out of the question?"

"I never heard him say that he was married."

"That proves nothing. Many a man has run away from his wife before now, and if it be so with Corfe he is not likely to tell you anything about it. I shall watch for the *dénouement* with curiosity."

"Will you take any notice of the letter?"

"Why should I? Corfe being here no answer is required."

"You won't say anything about it to him?"

"Certainly not; why should I? Nor to anybody else, and I would not advise you to do either."

"I shall take care I don't. He would very likely take it amiss. Not that I don't always get on very well with him, but he is a very nasty fellow to fall out with."

The *dénouement* anticipated by Gibson was not long in coming to pass.

A fortnight later, that is to say, exactly two days after Alfred's return from Italy, a *voiture*, with a big box outside and a young woman inside, was driven up to the office of the *Helvetic News*, whereupon the *cocher* descending very deliberately from his seat (he was rather fat) opened the carriage door.

"*Voici, Madame, le bureau du journal anglais!*" he said in a husky voice, and his breath was unpleasantly suggestive of absinthe and garlic.

On this his fare, gathering her skirts about her, alights cleverly on the *trottoir* and enters the business department of the paper. She is perhaps twenty-five years old, and neatly, but far from extravagantly dressed. The cast of her features is Jewish, and though her cheeks are hollow and her expression careworn, she has evidently been a handsome woman and is still eminently good-looking. Those large and occasionally flashing dark eyes, that mass of lustrous black hair would redeem any face however insignificant from the charge of plainness, and this young woman's face is both intelligent and refined, a face that wins on you, and, when she smiles, of a Madonna-like sweetness.

Pushing open the great swinging door of the office rather timidly, she finds herself before a wide mahogany counter and in the immediate presence of a hairy-faced and spectacled young man, who is smoking a cigarette and turning over the leaves of a very big visitors' book.

"I beg pardon," she says timidly, "do you speak English?"

"Dees is an English newspaper, Madame, and we all naturally speaks ze English language," answers the young man feelingly, as if he was hurt by the implied doubt of his linguistic capacity. "Vod can I do for zu; vod you like a baper?"

"No, I thank you, I bought one at the station. I beg pardon for troubling you,

but can you tell me, please, if Mr. Vernon Corfe is here?"

"I do not think he is; he does not call every day."

"Then he does live here, he is in Geneva now. He—I can—" she exclaims eagerly, almost breathlessly, and then comes to a full stop.

"Yes, he does live here; he is in Geneva," answers the German stolidly, but staring at her wonderingly. "Vod zu like me to shout up ze sbout and ask if he is in ze sub-editor's room? He is sometimes."

"Thank you very much, please do," returns the lady; on which the German goes a few yards away and applies his hairy mouth to what he called the "sbout." "I do hope he is not in though," she murmurs with trembling lips; "it would not be nice to meet him here before so many people."

By this time all the clerks are staring at her.

"No, he is not ub-stairs, Madame," says the German, returning from his excursion to the spout. "Can I do anything else for zu, Madame?"

"Thank you very much. If you could give me Mr. Corfe's private address I should be much obliged. The fact is, I omitted to write to him, or he would have met me at the station."

"I am sure he vod have done, anybody vod have done," answers the youth gallantly. "I do not know M. Corfe's brivat address, but I can get it for you in a wink."

As he speaks he goes away to the other end of the office and in about five minutes comes back with a piece of paper which he hands to the lady. On it are written the words, "Chez Madame Marequart, rue du Chat Rouge 17, au troisième."

"If you will show this to the *cocher*," says the polite German, "he will take you direct to M. Corfe's lodgings."

The rue du Chat Rouge was some distance away on the other side of the river. It ran at right angles to a main thoroughfare, and though the buildings were ancient and lofty they were not inhabited by old or high-class families. The house before which the carriage stopped was large, slabsided, and pierced by a large archway. The ground-floor rooms were used as shops; one was a café; the upper floors were dwellings, and as largely populated as a small cotton factory in full work.

"*Au troisième*," says the *cocher*, pointing upwards, "that is very high; shall I mount your box?"

The lady nods assent, whereupon the man shouldering the trunk precedes her up a wide stone staircase, the worse for wear, and neither very clean nor very well-lighted. There are two doors on every landing, and on reaching the third the *cocher* deposits the trunk before a door which, as a brass plate over the bell-handle denotes, belongs to Madame Marequart. Then, holding out his right hand, and holding up his left with finger and thumb outspread, he says in a hoarse whisper:

"*Cinq francs, Madame; je demande cinq francs.*"

"*Trop*," answers the lady; and compressing her lips firmly, and putting on a resolute look, she lays three francs on his extended palm.

"Not at all," returns the man, breathing defiance and absinthe, and then firing off a volley of *sacrés* he points to the big box.

This appeal produces a fourth franc in coin, and "not another penny" in words, whereupon the driver, who, though he understands them not, understands the gesture by which they are accompanied, pockets his money and goes away sorrowful, for he has got only double his legal fare.

When Madame Marequart, a tall, dark-visaged woman of a certain age, found at her door a young lady, with a big box, who asked for Mr. Corfe, she looked very much surprised and answered that he was not in.

"*Je l'attendrirai*. I am a near relation, and have come from England to see him," said the stranger slowly and hesitatingly, as if she had got off the sentence by heart; and without waiting for Madame Marequart's answer she backed into the *appartement* dragging after her the box.

Madame eyed this proceeding askance, and looked as if she thought her visitor more free than welcome; but instinctive courtesy overcoming momentary distrust, she opened the door of her *salon* and invited the owner of the box to give herself the trouble to enter.

The room was comfortable enough and much better furnished than, from the outside appearance of the building and the condition of the staircase, might have seemed likely. The floor was highly polished; there were two or three fauteuils; a vase of fresh flowers adorned the old-fashioned table, and the window commanded a fine view—over chimney tops—of lake, mountain, and forest.

"At last!" moaned the newcomer as, with a deep sigh, she sank into one of the fauteuils.

"*La pauvre petite !*" exclaimed Madame Marquart compassionately, as she looked on her visitor's weary face and dusty dress. "Madame must be very tired, she has travelled far, shall I get her a cup of tea?"

M. Corfe's near relation bowed her head in token of grateful acquiescence and then, leaning back in the fauteuil, closed her eyes.

When her hostess returned with the tea the stranger inquired in set phrase, as if she had learnt it out of a conversation book, how soon M. Corfe would be in? Madame Marquart was not at all sure. It might be soon, it might not be soon. When M. Corfe had writing to do he often came in about this time; when he had not writing to do he was generally very late. He had been her lodger only a week or two. She had no other lodger. This was her salon, but she allowed M. Corfe, when she had not need of it herself, to use it as his workroom. That was his *sousmain* on the table. M. Corfe was very *gentil*, she liked him much, and he spoke French extremely well, almost without accent. His chamber was there, on the other side of the passage; would Madame like to go in and arrange herself before he came?

Of this offer the young woman gladly availed herself, and after a while came out of the chamber feeling very much better and looking, as Madame Marquart put it to her solitary domestic, "altogether ravishing." Then, resuming her seat on the fauteuil, she tried to brave herself for the coming struggle, and listened with beating heart for the footstep which should announce the arrival of Vernon Corfe. But she had been travelling for twenty-four hours, her eyes were heavy, and after an hour of strained expectation she fell into a doze from which she was roused by a sound of voices in the corridor.

Madame Marquart was telling Corfe that somebody waited for him in the salon.

"Who is it?" he asked carelessly.

"Go in, and you will see."

The next moment the door opens, the stranger rises from her fauteuil, and the two are face to face.

If he had beheld a ghost, Corfe could not have been more surprised, and he would much rather have seen ten ghosts than this woman of flesh and blood.

"Oh, Vernon!" she exclaims, stretching out her hands beseechingly towards him, "at last!"

"D—n you! What fiend sent you here?" he hisses fiercely, his eyes gleaming savagely and his face aflame with rage.

"Vernon, Vernon! you will break my heart. Oh, this is a cold welcome after so long a separation," and the poor thing presses her hands wildly to her head and the tears start to her eyes.

"Serve you right. I did not ask you to come. Why the devil have you come?"

"Out of love for you. For, oh, in spite of all that has passed, I love you still; I love you with all my heart, Vernon!"

"That's all stuff! Anyhow you will have to go back. I cannot do with you here."

"I shall never go back alive, Vernon," she answers, looking strangely into his eyes, which lower before hers. "You may desert me, as you have done before, but I shall never desert you."

"But I will make you go; do you hear? I will make you go," and he raises his hand menacingly, as if he were minded to put his threat into instant execution.

"Oh, no, Vernon, you don't mean that! You cannot turn your wife from your door."

"You are not my wife."

"In the sight of God I am!"

"I don't know anything about God. But you are not my wife in the sight of man, and that is all I care for. Will you go? I ask again, or shall I make you?"

"No, I will not go! and you shall not make me!" she cries, raising herself to her full height, and eyeing him almost with scorn. "I am a fool, I know, for caring for you—for pleading here for the love you once vowed to cherish for me all your life. But there are limits even to my endurance. Dare to send me away, and I will tell everything. I will go to the British Consul, the British chaplain, and the editor of the *Helvetic News*. They shall see my marriage lines, and know who you are and what you have done. How will that suit you, Vernon?"

And then, with head thrown defiantly back, she paused for a reply. A great many thoughts passed through Corfe's mind just then. He was wild with rage at the shattering of his scheme to marry Vera Leonino; but to let Esther carry out her threat would be worse still; he should lose all his engagements; Geneva would be too hot to hold him. Whatever happened there must be no exposure, and perhaps—who could tell?—there might still be a chance. And Esther, her cheeks flushed and her eyes bright with excitement, looked deuced pretty, almost as pretty as she looked the first time he saw her in the goldsmith's shop at York.

"Can it be true—can you really, after all that has passed, still love me, Esther?"

"Some natures love only once, Vernon, and they love for ever. Mine is one of them. Even when they hate they love, and I felt just now as if I could hate you. It is cruel—to threaten to send me away."

"Do you believe I could, Esther—that I was in earnest?"

This in a voice so changed, so soft and caressing, that it seemed hardly possible it could be that of the man who a moment before had so brutally repulsed her. But Corfe understood women, and the pluck with which Esther had met his menaces, her beauty and her distress were rekindling his passion, if they had not touched his heart.

"You looked as if you were in earnest," she answers hesitatingly, "and I did think you meant it."

"No, I did not. I spoke to you like a brute, I know. But I could not believe that you still loved me. I thought you had come to annoy me, reproach me, and perhaps to importune me for money, and I lost my temper, for I am very poor. Esther!"

"Yes, Vernon."

"Can you forgive me? You are a good woman, and I am a very bad man, and I have treated you abominably. But, if you will give me another chance, I will try to love you as I did long ago. Will you?"

And then he draws her to him, kisses her fondly, and she, throwing her arms round his neck, lays her head on his shoulder and weeps. Her foolish woman's heart is won once more, and forgetful of her sufferings and his perfidy she feels that she loves him as much as ever.

"We shall be married over again, shall we not, Vernon?" she murmurs, looking up at him through her tears; "so that it may be quite, quite legal, you know."

"Nay, that would never do, Esther. I can only account for your presence here by saying that we are married, and that family circumstances compelled us to separate for a time. But don't you see that to be married afresh would be equal to saying we were never married before? Some time, perhaps, but it cannot be done now."

"Well, never mind. If you will be kind to me I don't much care, and if anybody says anything, I can show my marriage lines. And, Vernon——" looking up at him archly.

"Yes, Esther; what is it?"

"You said just now you were poor."

"So I am. I have only what I make by giving lessons and writing for the *Helvetic*.

When I earn eighty or a hundred francs in a week I consider myself very fortunate."

"Well, I will help you; I can give lessons too. I do not mean to be a burden to you. I ask only your love; can you give it me?"

"I think so. Now I have you in my arms all the old feeling seems to be coming back. Yes, I can love you" (kissing her), "but you must not tell any tales, you know."

"Trust me for that. Fancy a wife telling tales about her husband. And, Vernon——"

"Yes, Esther, what is it now?"

"I have some money."

"Ah!"

"Yes, five hundred pounds."

"Five hundred pounds! Where the deuce did you get it?"

"I will tell you. When we were married, or when I supposed we were, my father, as you know, cast me off altogether, and said he would never see me again, and I knew he would be as good as his word; and when you so cruelly left me——"

"I was obliged. They threatened to prosecute me," interposed Corfe sharply.

"But you might have let me know where you were. However, I will neither reproach you nor rake up unpleasant memories. I was going to say that after you left I was obliged to earn my own living. I might have given lessons in music and painting, but I could not afford to wait for pupils, so I took to dressmaking, and being a good cutter-out I did pretty well, though I could not save much. I was always wondering where you were, and I waited and longed for news of you until I almost fretted myself to death, and then my Aunt Ruth died, and, to my great surprise, left me five hundred pounds, and almost at the same time I heard that Mr. Josephs—he was my aunt's solicitor—had heard that you were at Geneva doing something for the *Helvetic News*, so I came."

"So you came; and how did you find out this place?"

"By calling at the office of the paper and asking for your address."

"The deuce you did! And what have you done with your fortune?"

"Brought it with me. Here it is," taking from the inside of her dress a roll of notes and handing it to him.

"You don't mean—you cannot—all this money!"

"I mean to give it all to you, dear Vernon, and I wish I could give you as much every year, yes, every day."

Corfe was visibly touched, his lips trem-

bled, and drawing the girl closer to him he kissed her passionately.

"Jewess though you are, Esther, you are the best Christian I ever knew. You do return good for evil, and no mistake. You are an angel, and I am—well, the other thing."

"No, no; don't say that, Vernon; I will not let even you libel my husband. There is room for improvement, perhaps, and I shall try to improve you; but you are not the other thing, not by any means, *mon mari*,—that is proper French, isn't it? And if you were a very, very good man there would be

no merit in loving you, would there now? As for me being an angel *nous verrons*."

"Not a bit of it. You are one, and of a good sort too. Anybody who thinks differently had better not say so to me."

As Corfe spoke he put the notes into his pocket, and a spasm of disappointment darkened his face, for the thought crossed his mind, "What are these compared to two millions!"

But Esther saw not this portentous sigh, and if she had seen it might not have guessed its cause or known how ominous it was of evil.

THE PROGRESS OF THRIFT;

Or, Fifty Years of Savings Banks.

By ALEXANDER CARGILL.

A HUNDRED millions sounds fabulous. And yet this is the amount which represents the result of the slow and patient process by which pence have been developed into shillings and shillings into pounds, by means of our Savings Banks, until, after fifty years, the colossal sum we have named stands at the credit chiefly of the working classes of our country.

Probably not many people are aware that it is to the Church we owe the existence of savings banks. In the year 1799 the Rev. J. Smith, rector of Wendover, Buckinghamshire, being anxious to encourage the practice of thrift in his parish, offered, with two other responsible inhabitants, to receive weekly any sum not less than twopence; and agreed, if the amount were not touched before the Christmas following the date of deposit, to add one shilling as a bonus, by way of encouragement. This was, practically, the first bank for savings established in this country. The excellent example of the Rector of Wendover was soon imitated by others; but the chief credit of founding the Savings Bank system as we know it to-day belongs elsewhere.

The Rev. Henry Duncan, who in the early years of the present century was minister of the parish of Ruthwell, Dumfriesshire, saw with grief in the homes of his parishioners the accursed effects of improvidence, and bethought him of some practical method whereby the evil might be cured. He accordingly opened in 1810 a "Bank for Savings," and forthwith invited all who had even the most trifling sum to save to step in and save it.

The system thus happily initiated by Duncan was from the outset characterized by sound common-sense and easy practicability; and its example was so favourably regarded that by the year 1817 no fewer than seventy-eight similar societies for savings were in active operation throughout the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, few facts are extant that can throw any light on the details of the working of these primitive banks at the period referred to; but, considering the circumstances of the time, their success was, indeed, very remarkable.

In the year 1817 banks for savings were for the first time brought before the Legislature, which wisely foresaw in the thriving system, spreading far and wide, a potent force that, under proper legislative control, was bound to exercise a splendid influence on the welfare of the nation. Two Acts of Parliament, which were presently introduced, authorised "the formation of societies in Ireland and England" (the Acts for Scotland coming into operation the following year) "of any number of persons for the purpose of establishing any institution in the nature of a bank, to receive deposits of money for the benefit of the depositor, and to accumulate the produce of so much as shall not be required by the depositors, their executors, or administrators, deducting thereout only so much as shall be required to be retained for the purpose of paying and discharging the necessary expenses attending the management of such institutions, according to such rules, orders, and regulations as shall be established for that purpose, but deriving no benefit

whatsoever from any such deposit or the produce thereof" (Section I.) In the following year, by the Act 58 Geo. III. cap. 48, rules for Savings Banks were made, subject to confirmation by justices, and for the next ten years there was little or no legislation on the subject. By this time, 1821, the banks had obtained a firm hold on the confidence of the working classes, and no less a sum than £6,000,000 had accumulated at their credit.

The year 1828 has been considered a turning-point in the history of savings banks, because a very important measure was then passed by the Legislature in their interest. This Act is known as the "Act 9 Geo. IV. cap. 92," and had special reference to the more effectual working of the banks, to the better security of their funds, and to other important regulations affecting interest, limits, classes of depositors, &c. But it is to the year 1836 that most genuine historic interest is attached. What may be described as having hitherto been a comparatively narrow door for the entrance of depositors was then extended into a more ample gateway.

At a point so interesting in the history of Savings Banks, a review of the results of their fifty years' subsequent operations cannot fail to be instructive. Such a review, however, would be imperfect and unfair did it not include the results of the sister system, popularly known as Post-office Savings Banks. And as these latter establishments have just attained the twenty-fifth year of their existence, the coincidence is sufficiently interesting to warrant our embracing them in this sketch.

The marvellous success which attended the career of the older, or Trustee Savings Banks, as they are called, to distinguish them from their later offshoot, was recognised very many years ago by all classes of the community. In 1841, just five years after the general system was established, no less a sum than about £25,000,000 stood at the credit of savings bank depositors. Of this sum English depositors had over £20,000,000; Irish depositors about £2,500,000, and Scottish depositors little more than £500,000! Since then, however, much has been changed. While English depositors have increased their holding to £38,000,000, and Scottish depositors from £500,000 to over £8,000,000, those depositing in Irish savings-banks have actually less money at their credit to-day than they had forty-five years ago! It ought, however, to be mentioned, that when the amount of deposits in the Post-office Savings Banks is considered, Ireland stands in a much more favourable position. The Post-

office deposits for the three countries at the end of 1885 were, England and Wales, £44,289,875; Scotland, £969,791; Ireland, £2,438,172.

Nor has the success of the savings banks ever abated. Sure, steady, and substantial improvement has marked almost every annual report issued by the Commissioners on the Public Debt. This may be seen by a brief reference to statistics up to 1860, shortly after which date the inauguration of the new system of Post-office banks took place. From 1862 the figures representing the operations of both systems may be quoted together. But to show the extraordinary advance the working classes of this country made half a century ago, when wages were nothing like what they are at present, and facilities for saving money were neither so numerous nor so simple, the following figures may be taken:—

ENGLAND AND WALES.

Year.	Deposited in the Savings banks during year.	Estimated Working-class Population about (roundly stated).
1840	£4,544,429	12,000,000
1850	5,330,451	12,750,000
1855	6,018,823	13,330,000
1860	8,019,034	14,100,000

SCOTLAND.

Year.	Deposited in the Savings banks during year.	Estimated Working-class Population about (roundly stated).
1840	£305,088	1,800,000
1850	612,164	1,900,000
1855	720,506	2,100,000
1860	861,975	2,250,000

IRELAND.

Year.	Deposited in the Savings banks during year.	Estimated Working-class Population about (roundly stated).
1840	£845,391	6,000,000
1850	421,073	5,075,000
1855	448,882	4,750,000
1860	597,786	4,350,000

Such a steady and gratifying increase—from five millions in 1821 to twenty-five millions in 1841—was certainly indicative of a very determined desire on the part of savings bank depositors to encourage the continuance of this beneficent system of thrift. But from 1841 to 1861 a still more accelerated rate of

advancement characterized the career of the banks. In the former years the gross sum at credit of depositors in the United Kingdom was, as stated, about twenty-five millions sterling. In the next eight or ten years this was increased by four millions. Five years later, in 1855, an increase of nearly six millions—over a million a year—was registered, and in 1860, the highest total yet reached, forty-one and a quarter millions was the proud result of the efforts of depositors. And yet, notwithstanding these admirable figures, we find there were many individuals who were by no means satisfied with what had been done, and who began to consider the necessity for making this potent factor for good yield results that would be still more gratifying. The great Post-office Bank scheme was in its embryo stage in 1860, and the agitation for its adoption as a means, not of superseding the older banks, but of aiding and extending their usefulness, began to spread far and wide until, at length, the Government was appealed to for its support. Few movements initiated chiefly by private and irresponsible persons have ever been fraught with so much material good for the community as the scheme devised by a hitherto unknown gentleman resident in Huddersfield. This philanthropist was Mr. Charles Sikes, of the Huddersfield Banking Company. In a letter addressed to Mr. Gladstone, who was then for the first time Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Sikes brought under his consideration the outlines of his plan, by which, without any expense to the State, the advantage of savings banks might be extended and popularised.

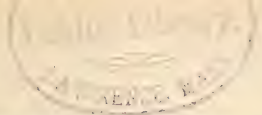
"It will be scarcely credited," wrote Mr. Sikes, "that at the present time (1859) there are in the United Kingdom fifteen counties in which there are no Savings Banks, and although difficult to ascertain the exact number of towns, there are probably one hundred with a population varying from 10,000 to 30,000 each, and towards two thousand other towns or places with populations ranging between 1,000 to 10,000, *all without Savings Banks!*" "Compared with ordinary banks, there are nearly five hundred towns or places in the United Kingdom in each of which there are one or more private or Joint Stock Banks; but in none of them does there exist a Savings Bank to aid in promoting those habits of forethought and thrift so essential to the progress and prosperity of the people." "Concurrently with this absence of savings banks the aggregate income of the working classes has, through the general prosperity,

gone on *increasing* until it has now reached a magnitude beyond all former experience."

Here, then, was a very strong reason why something should be done on a large and comprehensive scale to save a portion of the greatly augmented income of the working classes. That income was estimated at no less than £170,000,000 sterling per annum, and yet the aggregate receipts of all the existing Savings Banks in the United Kingdom was under £8,000,000 per annum!

But Mr. Sikes not only proceeded to show *why* the plan he proposed should be introduced, but he demonstrated, on a very simple and feasible basis, *how* the same could be brought about, with no expense to the country. His scheme for establishing Savings Banks through the powerful medium of the Post-office, involved also a plan for introducing the money-order system, the benefits of which have long been appreciated by the public. And it need hardly be said that its wisdom, its necessity, its simplicity, and its cheapness at once commended the scheme to the favourable consideration of the Government, who at once set about, with admirable zeal, putting the scheme into general operation. In exactly two years' time from the date of Mr. Sikes's appeal to Mr. Gladstone, Post-office Savings Banks became an accomplished fact. In their main essentials the new system of Savings Banks differed but slightly from the older system, which now began to be better known by the name of Trustee Banks. Their limits of deposit were precisely the same; the rates of interest allowable varied but little; and their general rules and bye-laws were nearly identical with those adopted by the older banks. The great underlying principle of both was to afford the humbler classes of the people a means of saving their earnings which was at once easy, cheap, and profitable. From their commencement in 1861 the success of the Post-office Savings Banks has been remarkable. In two years nearly four millions sterling were saved by their means; in twelve years, twenty-one millions were gathered; and in the quarter of the century since 1861, fully forty-five millions sterling have been accumulated. This sum belongs to nearly three and a half million depositors, giving each person an average of between £13 and £15. The number of Post-office banks open for business in the United Kingdom in the beginning of 1885 was 7,756. Now it is close on 8,000.

It might well be supposed that a system like this, which has commanded so extraordinary an amount of success, would have



"Dees is an English newspaper, Madame, and we all speaks ze English langvige."

affected the operations of the parent system. For a few years after they obtained a hold on the public, the Post-office Banks seemed likely to influence somewhat adversely the operations of the older banks. A slight decrease in the amount of the capital funds of the Trustee Banks during the years 1863 and 1873 might perhaps be thus accounted for. But if that were the case, it can by no means be said to have been an abiding influence, for the success not only of the Post-office, but of the older system of Savings Banks, has been during recent years one of the most hopeful features of the time. Both systems as now carried on, the one under the jurisdiction of influential bodies of trustees and managers who render their services gratuitously, and the other under the control of the Post-master General—their aggregate funds being invested with the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt—continue to flourish from year to year, in spite, too, of all the cry about dull times and the consequent hardships they entail upon our working-class population. A better “gauge” of the increasing thriftiness of the people could not possibly be found than in the following table, which indicates the steady rise in the funds accumulated by the combined banks throughout the United Kingdom since the year 1861:—

Year.	Total Capital of Trustee and Post-office Savings-banks.
1861	£41,258,368
1863	44,328,333
1864	44,513,400
1865	45,271,698
1866	45,403,291
1867	46,283,132
1868	48,534,112
1869	51,077,955
1870	53,057,053
1871	53,844,667
1872	58,998,219
1873	61,667,884
1874	64,623,868
1875	67,574,874
1876	70,280,008
1877	72,979,443
1878	74,704,948
1879	75,809,904
1880	77,721,084
1881	80,334,612
1882	83,650,402
1883	86,755,931
1884	90,614,660
1885	94,053,841

In addition to the above colossal sum belonging to depositors, many thousands of whom own but a few pounds apiece, nearly £2,500,000 more is separately invested in Government Stock, thus bringing up the total amount to £96,000,000! This wants but £4,000,000 of a hundred millions; but we must remember that not a few of the larger Trustee Savings Banks have separate investments of which many of their wealthier depositors take advantage. The amount of these investments—which, by the way, are generally with local corporations and trusts providing excellent security and yielding a little better interest—amounts to nearly £5,000,000 sterling; so that we have reached, in the history of our Savings Banks, with their gross accumulations of a hundred millions sterling, a very high and proud, although not unsurpassable pinnacle.

In this sketch we have made no reference to the funds invested in colonial Savings Banks by our working-class “kin beyond the sea;” these, it may be stated, amounted on 30th June, 1883, to £10,304,144, distributed over 365,828 depositors. This large sum is highly satisfactory, and—considering all circumstances—augurs well for the future of the colonies.

Nor have we made reference to other and more recent methods of accumulative thrift which are being largely patronised by the working classes. The wealth possessed by the working classes in co-operative, friendly, and building societies must be something enormous. It is stated that the share-capital invested in the co-operative societies alone has grown from £425,000, in 1862, to nearly £9,000,000 at the present time. The other means of investment must represent a much larger total; and although the gross sum, calculating it at the highest figure reasonably conceivable, may bear a small proportion to the five hundred and twenty millions of money which it is computed are annually paid in wages to the working classes, it is at any rate substantial enough to do credit to the possessors and to forbid even the most critical to despair of the future of the country. In spite of many blemishes which, alas! are incident to human nature, we venture to say that a better certificate of character our working classes cannot surely show than that a hundred millions of money stand at their credit in the Savings Banks.

A HYMN OF HEART'S EASE.

SUNDAY READINGS FOR MAY.

By PROFESSOR ELSMLIE, M.A.

"Lord, my heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty :
Neither do I exercise myself in great matters,
Or in things too high for me.
Surely I have behaved

And quieted myself;
As a child that is weaned of his mother,
My soul is even as a weaned child.
Let Israel hope in the Lord
From henceforth and for ever."

PSALM CXXXI.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Job xxvi. and 1 Cor. xiii.

THE SOURCE OF UNREST.

"Things too high for me."

WE are apt to think and speak as if difficulty of faith were an experience peculiar to our age. It is indeed true that at particular periods speculative uncertainty has been more widely diffused than at others, and our own age may be one of them. But the real causes of perplexity in things religious are permanent and unchanging, having their roots deep-seated in the essential nature of man's relation to the world and to God. There has never been a time, when men have not had to fight hard battles for their faith against the dark mysteries and terrors of existence, that pressed in upon their souls and threatened to enslave them. What is this brief Psalm, echoing like a sea-shell in its tiny circle the heart-beat of a vanished world, but the pathetic record of a soul's dread struggle with doubt and darkness, telling in its simple rhythm and quiet cadences the story, how through the breakers of unbelief it fought its way to the firm shores of faith and peace and hope. It reads like a tale of yesterday. It is just what we are seeking, suffering, achieving. Yet more than two thousand years have come and gone since the brain that thought and the hand that wrote have mouldered into dust.

The poem must have been penned at a time when the poet's own misfortunes, or the general disorders of the age, were such as seemed to clash irreconcilably with his preconceived notions of God's goodness, character, and purposes. The shock of this collision between fact and theory shook to its foundations the structure of his inherited creed, and opened great fissures of questioning in the fabric of his personal faith. He was tempted to abandon the believing habits of a religious training and the confiding instincts of a naturally devout heart, and either to doubt the being and power of the Almighty or to deny His wisdom and beneficence. For a long time he was tossed hither and thither

on the alternate ebb and flow of questioning denial and believing affirmation, finding nowhere any firm foothold amid the unstable tumult of conflicting evidence and inconclusive reasoning. At last out of the confusion there dawned on his mind a growing persuasion of something clear and certain. He perceived that not only was the balance of evidence indecisive, but also that the issue never could but be indeterminate. For he saw that the method itself was impotent, and could never reach or unravel the themes of his agonized questioning. A settled conviction forced itself in upon his mind, that there are in life problems no human ingenuity can solve, questions that baffle man's intellect to comprehend, "great matters and things too high for him." It was a discovery, startling, strange, and painful. But at least it was something solid and certain; it was firm land on which one's feet might be planted. Moreover, it was not an ending, but a beginning, a starting point that led somewhere. Perchance it might prove to be the first step in a rocky pathway, that should guide his footsteps to heights of clearer light and wider vision, where the heart, if not the intellect, might reach a solution of its questionings and enter into rest. The quest he had commenced had turned out a quest of the unattainable, but it had brought him to a real and profitable discovery. He had recognised and accepted once and for ever the fact of the fixed and final limitation of human knowledge.

It is an experience all men have to make; an experience that grows with age and deepens with wisdom, as we more and more encounter the mysteries of existence, and fathom the shallowness of our fancied knowledge. What do we know of God, the world, ourselves? How much and how little! How much about them, how little of them! Who of us, for instance, has any actual conception of God in his absolute being? You remember how in dreamy childhood you would vainly strive to arrest and fasten in some definite image the vague vision of dazzling glory you had learned to call God, which floated before your soul, awing you with its majesty and

immeasurable beauty, but evading every effort to grasp it. With gathering years and widening horizon you watched the world's changeful aspects and ceaseless movements, till nature seemed the transparent vesture of its mighty maker, but it was all in vain that you tried to pierce the thin veil and behold the invisible worker within. You took counsel with science, and it told you much concerning the properties of matter and the sequences of force, but the ultimate cause, that which is beneath, that which worketh all in all, it could not reveal. You turned to philosophy, and you traced the soaring thoughts of the sages, that rushed upward like blazing rockets, as if they would pierce and illumine the remotest heaven; but you saw how, ere they reached that far goal, their fire went out, their light was quenched, and they fell back through the darkness, baffled and spent. You betook yourself to revelation, counting that at last you were entering the inner shrine; and you did indeed learn much that was new and precious, but soon came the discovery that here also we do but see through a glass darkly, and that our best knowledge of God is no more than a knowledge in part. "Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways; and how small a portion we know of them! But the thunder of His power, who can understand?" We are, as it were, surrounded on every hand by mighty mountain peaks, whose rocky sides foil every effort to explore the pinnacles that lie hidden in distant cloud and mist. The achievements of the human intellect are many and marvellous, but above and beyond its realm remain, and doubtless ever shall remain, "great matters and things too high for us."

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Ps. xxxvii. and Matt. xi.

THE SECRET OF REST.

"Lord, my heart is not haughty nor mine eyes lofty."

There is in the human intellect an insatiable eagerness, and an indomitable energy of acquisitiveness. It carries in its consciousness an ineradicable instinct of domination, that spurs it to boundless enterprise, and prompts it to spurn defeat. This lordly quality of the human mind is the natural outcome of its sovereignty over the physical creation, and the appropriate expression of its kinship with the creator. It is part of man's divine birthright, and the insignia of his nobility. But it brings with it the peril of all special prerogative, the inevitable temptation that accompanies the possession of power. It tends to breed a

haughtiness that is restive of restraint, a self-sufficiency that forgets its own boundaries, and an arrogance that refuses to wield the sceptre of aught but an unlimited empire. So it comes to pass, when reason in its restless research is brought to a stop by the invisible but very actual confines of human knowledge, it resents the suggestion of limitation, and declines to accept the arrest of its onward march. The temptation that besets it is twofold. On the one hand pride, irritated by the check, but too clear sighted to ignore it, is tempted to refuse to admit any truths it cannot fathom or substantiate, and to deny the real existence of any realm of being beyond its natural ken. This is the characteristic error of rationalism and positivism. On the other hand, there is in the opposite direction a tendency born equally of intellectual pride and self-will, to refuse the restriction, to ignore reason's incapacity, and so to venture to state and explain that which is inexplicable. Alike in the spheres of science and of religion men strive recklessly to remove from God's face the veil which His own hand has not drawn, and irreverently intrude into mysteries hopelessly beyond human thought to conceive or human speech to express. This is the transgression of rash speculation and of arrogant dogmatism, and it is in itself as sinful, and in its consequences as harmful, as are the blank negations of scepticism.

Each of these errors the author of our poem was fortunate enough to escape. Recognising the limitation of all earthly knowledge, he does not rage against the restrictions and beat himself against the envolving bars. He does not take it on himself, by a foolish fiat of his finite littleness, to decree the non-existence of everything too subtle for his dim eyes to perceive, or too fine for his dull ear to hear. Where he fails to understand the wisdom or goodness of God's ways, he does not intrude and try to alter them, neither does he wildly struggle to comprehend their meaning, nor madly refuse to submit to them. He adapts himself to the divine dealing, and is content to obey without insisting on knowing the reason why. He curbs in the cravings of his mind, nor will suffer the swift stream of his thought to rush on like an impetuous torrent, dashing itself against obstructing rocks and fretting its waters into froth and foam. He possesses his soul in patience, and does not "exercise himself in great matters or in things too high for him."

This attitude of acquiescence is the position imposed on us by necessity, and pre-

scribed by wisdom. But, as a matter of fact, its practical possession depends on the presence of a certain inner mood or disposition. We have seen that the denials of scepticism and the excesses of dogmatism are alike the offspring of pride, and spring from an over-estimation of the potency of reason. Therefore, as we might expect, the poet's simple acceptance of limitation and contentment with partial knowledge are due to the fact, that he has formed a modest estimate of himself. "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty." His submission to restraint has its root in humility. He does not exaggerate his capacity. He takes the measure of his mind accurately. He does not expect to be able to accomplish more than his abilities are equal to. It seems to him quite natural that men should not be able to comprehend all God's ways. It is to be expected that there should be many things in God's operations beyond their knowledge, and in his thoughts passing their understanding. It is, therefore, no matter for surprise that men should encounter in God's universe "great matters and things too high for them." Nay, the wonder and disappointment would be, if there were no mysteries, no infinitudes transcending our narrow souls. Would it gladden you, if indeed God were no greater than our thoughts of him? What if the sun were no brighter and no vaster than the shrunken, dim, and tarnished image of his radiance framed in a child's toy mirror. Alas! for us, if God and the universe were not immeasurably grander than mankind's most majestic conceptions of them! Measuring ourselves thus, in truth and lowliness, over against God, who will not say with the poet of our Psalm, "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters or in things too high for me."

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Ps. lxxiii. and Heb. xii.

CALM AFTER STORM.

"Surely I have behaved and quieted myself."

Peace bulks largely in all our dreams of ideal happiness. Without repose of heart we cannot conceive of perfect contentment. But we must not forget that the peace of inexperience is a fragile possession, and that the only lasting rest is the repose that is based upon conquest. We speak with languid longing and ease-seeking envy of the peace of Jesus, because we forget that His peace was a peace constituted out of conflict, maintained in the face of

struggle, and made perfect through suffering. Therefore it was a peace strong and majestic, and the story of His life is the world's greatest epic. A life that commenced with effortless attainment, proceeded in easy serenity, and ended in tranquillity, were a life without a history, pleasant but monotonous, devoid of dramatic interest, and destitute of significance. The young cadet, in his boyish bloom and unworn beauty, furnishes the painter with a fairer model, but the grizzled hero of a hundred fights, with his battered form and furrowed face, makes the greater picture. It means so much more. And it means more precisely because the tried valour of the veteran is so much more than the promise of the untested tyro. Innocence unsullied and untried has a loveliness all its own, but it lacks the pathos of suggestion, the depth of significance, and the strength of permanence, that make the glory of virtue that has borne the brunt of battle, and has known the bitterness of defeat, the agony of retrieval, and the exultation of recovered victory. We talk proudly of the faith that has never felt a doubt, that has been pierced by no perplexity, and shows no mark of the sweat and stress of conflict. We look askance on difficulty of faith, have no mercy on lack of assurance, and reckon them happy who are convinced without trouble and believe without effort. That is not quite the Bible estimate. The Psalms echo with the prayers of hard-pressed faith, and throb with the cries of agonized doubt. The New Testament speaks of faith as a fight, counts them happy who endure, and pronounces blessed the man who encounters and overcomes temptation. If "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life," how should faith be easy, since faith is that gate, that way? The truth is, that we invert the divine standard of values, and put last what God puts first. We count enviable the landlocked harbours of unthreatened belief, that are protected from assault by their very shallowness and narrowness. We are blind to the providential discipline which ordains that men should wrestle with difficulty, and in overcoming it attain a tried and tempered faith possible only to those who have passed through the furnace of temptation. For sinful men there can be no real strength that is not transmuted weakness, no permanent peace that is not a triumph over rebellion, no perfect faith that is not a victory over doubt. The saints that have most reflected the spirit of Christ formed their fair character, like their Master, in lives of which it may be said, "without

were fightings, within were fears." The way of the cross has ever been a way of conflict, and it is they who come out of great tribulation that enter into the rest that remaineth. The deep lakes that sleep in the hollows of high mountains, and mirror in their placid depths the quiet stars, have their homes in the craters of volcanoes, that have spent their fury, quenched their fires, and are changed into pools of perpetual peace.

There breathes through our Psalm an atmosphere of infinite repose—a subdued rest, like the hush of a cradle song. Nevertheless, if we listen closely enough to its music, we catch under its lullaby the low echo of a bygone anguish, the lingering sob of a vanished tempest. Nature's most exquisite embodiment of calm is the sweet, fresh air that is left by a great storm; and the perfection of the Psalm's restfulness is that it consists of unrest conquered and transmuted. For the poet's peace is the result of a great struggle, the reward of a supreme act of self-subjection. "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself;" or, preserving the imagery of the words, "Surely I have calmed and hushed my soul." His submissiveness had not been native, but acquired. His lowliness of heart was not a natural endowment, but a laborious accomplishment. His acquiescence in God's mysterious ways was a thing not inborn and habitual, but was rather the calm that follows a storm, when the tempest has moaned itself into stillness, and the great waves have rocked themselves into unruffled rest. For his soul had once been rebellious like a storm-lashed sea dashing itself against the iron cliffs that bounded its waves, and impetuous like a tempest rushing through the empty air, seeking to attain the unattainable, and spending its force vainly in vacancy. He had longed to flash thought, lightning-like, athwart the thick darkness that surrounded Jehovah's throne, and to lay bare its hidden secrets. It was all in vain. Hemmed in on every hand, beaten back in his attempts to pierce the high heaven, baffled in every effort to read the enigma of God's ways, he had been tempted to revolt, and either to renounce his trust in the Almighty's goodness or to refuse to submit to His control. It cost him a hard and weary struggle to regain his reliance, to restore his allegiance, to calm and hush his soul.

There was nothing wonderful in this conflict, nor anything exceptional in the experience. It is the common lot of men. True, there are some natures for whom the tenure

of faith is less arduous than it is for others. But in almost every life there come crises, when this same battle has to be fought. For it is not always easy to be content to trust without seeing, and to follow God's leading in the dark, when the way seems all wrong and mistaken. There are things in life that rudely shake our faith from its dreamless slumber, and sweep the soul away over the dreary billows of doubt and darkness. There are times when, to our timorous hearts, it seems too terrible to be compelled just to trust and not to understand. Such conflicts come to us all more or less. Painful and protracted the struggle sometimes is, but not necessarily evil, not even harmful. For, if we do but fight it out honestly and bravely, the fruits will be, as they were with our poet, wholesome, good, and peaceable.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Ps. xlv. and Phil. ii.

VICTORY BY SURRENDER.

"As a child that is weaned of his mother, my soul is even as a weaned child."

It is good to cheer men on in a noble strife by speaking of the certainty of victory, and by the story of heroic deeds to nerve their arms for battle and stir their hearts to war. But that is not enough. They want more than that. They want to learn how to wage a winning war, how to secure the highest triumph, how out of conflict to organize peace. In the good fight of faith what is the secret of success? Has our Psalm any light on that point? By what method did the poet still the turmoil of his doubt and reach his great peace? The process is finely pictured in a homely but exquisite image: "Like a weaned child on its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me." What does that mean? Torn by an insatiable longing to know the meaning of God's mysterious ways, he had struggled fiercely to wring an answer from the Almighty. His heart was long the abode of unrest, and storm, and tempest. At length peace falls on the fray; there is no more clangour of contention; all is quietness and rest. How is this? Has he succeeded in solving the enigmas that pained him? Have his cravings for an answer from God been gratified? If not, how has he attained this perfect repose? His peace is the peace of a weaned child. Not, therefore, by obtaining that which he craved has he found rest; for the rest of a weaned child is not that of gratification, but of resignation. It is the repose

not of satisfied desire, but of abnegation and submission. After a period of prolonged and painful struggle to have its longings answered, the little one gives over striving any more, and is at peace. That process was a picture to our poet of what passed in his own heart. Like a weaned child, its tears over, its cries hushed, reposing on the very bosom that a little ago excited its most tumultuous desires, his soul that once passionately strove to wring from God an answer to its eager questionings, now wearied, resigned, and submissive, just lays itself to rest in simple faith on that goodness of God, whose purposes it cannot comprehend, and whose ways often seem to it harsh, and ravelled, and obscure. It is a picture of infinite repose and of touching beauty—the little one nestling close in the mother's arms, its head reclining trustfully on her shoulder, the tears dried from its now quiet face, and the restful eyes, with just a lingering shadow of bygone sorrow in them still, peering out with a look of utter peace, contentment, and security. It is the peace of accepted pain, the victory of self-surrender.

The transition from doubt to belief, from strife to serenity, is remarkable. We want to know what produced this startling change of mood, what influences fostered it, what motives urged it, what reasons justified it. Perhaps a glimpse, a suggestion of the process is hinted in the simile chosen from child life. The infant takes its rest on the breast of its mother—of its mother whose refusal of its longings caused it all the pain and conflict, whose denial of its instinctive desires seemed so unnatural and so cruel. How is it, then, that instead of being alienated the child turns to her for solace in the sorrow she caused, and reposes on the very breast that so resolutely declined to supply its wants? It is because over against this single act of seeming unkindness stand unnumbered deeds of goodness and acts of fondness, and so this one cause of doubt and of aversion is swallowed up in a whole atmosphere of unceasing tenderness and love. Besides, rating the apparent unmotherliness at the very highest, still there is no other to whom the child can turn that will better help it and care for it than its mother. So, since it cannot get all it would like, the little one is content to take what it may have, the warmth, and shelter, and security of its mother's breast.

This process of conflict between doubt and trust, rebellion and resignation, which half unconsciously takes place in the child, is a

miniature of the strife that had surged to and fro in the poet's soul. Pained and perplexed by the mystery of God's ways, foiled in his efforts to fathom them, denied all explanation by the Almighty, he was beset by the temptation to abandon faith and cast off his allegiance to his heavenly friend. But he saw that that would not solve any enigma, or lighten the darkness. Rather it would confront him with still greater difficulties, and leave the world only more empty, dark, and dreary. Then, benumbed and tired out, he gave over thinking and arguing, and was content for a little just to live in the circle of light and sunshine that ever is within the great darkness. Gradually it dawned upon him that in the world of men's experience there was much, very much of goodness that could only be the doing of the God that moves in the mystery and in the darkness. The warmth of the thought crept into his heart, softer feelings woke, love and lowliness asserted themselves, and at length he became content to just trust God spite of all perplexities, partly because there was so much undeniable proof of His tenderness, and partly because there was more of rest and comfort in this course than in any other.

FIFTH SUNDAY.

Read Gen. xxxii. and Rev. vii.

THE RECOMPENSE OF FAITH.

"Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever."

Who has not wondered why there is so much mystery in the universe, such perplexity in our life, and in revelation itself why so many doubts are permitted to assail our souls and make it hard for us to be Christians? Is this wisely or kindly ordered? Perchance it is necessary, but is it not evil? Can warfare ever be aught but loss and not gain? The question is natural, but the answer is not uncertain. The fight of faith is a good fight. Success means no bare victory, but one crowned with splendid spoil. We shall be the better for having had to fight. The gain of the conflict shall outweigh all the loss, and in the final triumph the victors shall manifestly appear more than conquerors. This is no paradox, but the common law of life. The same principle rules in the homely image of the child. Weaning is not needless pain, is not wasted suffering. It is a blessing in disguise. The distressing process is in truth promotion. It is the vestibule of pain that leads to a maturer and larger life. In like fashion the

struggles of doubt are inevitable, if faith is not to remain feeble and infantile. Only in the furnace of affliction does it acquire its finest qualities. Were there no clouds and darkness around God's throne, how should men learn humility and practise reverence? Human nature is too coarse a thing to be entrusted with perfect knowledge. A religion of knowledge only were a hard and soulless thing, devoid of grace and life and love; for sight and reason leave nothing for the imagination, and rob affection of its sweet prerogative to dream and to adore. Without the discipline of toil and the developing strain of antagonism how should faith grow strong and broad and deep? Most of us start in the life religious with an inherited, fostered, unreasoning belief, which therefore is weak, puny, and unstable. It is the storms of doubt and difficulty that rouse it to self-consciousness, stir it to activity, urge it by exertion to growth and expansion, and compel it to strike deep roots in the soil of reality. For in such conflict the soul is driven in upon God. It is forced to make actual proof of its possessions, to realise and employ properties that hitherto were known to it only through the title-deeds or as mere assets available in case of necessity. With wonder faith discovers the rare value of its inheritance, and enters for the first time into actual enjoyment of its spiritual treasures. It is no longer faith about God, but is now faith in God. In its agony and helplessness the soul is compelled to press close up to God, to take tighter hold of His hand, to fling itself on Him for help and comfort, just as a sick child clings to its mother. And ever after such a struggle there is a fresh beauty and sacredness in its relation to God. There is that pathetic tenderness of affection friends have, who by some misunderstanding were well-nigh sundered, but having overcome it are nearer and dearer to each other than ever before. There is a quiet community of knowledge, a restful confidentiality of affection that were not there before, that come of having had to fight, that you might not be severed from each other. The recoil of joy from the dread of loss and the memory of the agony that thought was to you, make God dearer to you now than ever. Out of the very strife and doubt there is born a new assurance of your love, in the consciousness you have acquired of the pain it would be to you to be deprived of your divine friend.

The experience is of general application.

It is the secret of serenity amid the world's mystery and life's pain and perplexity. Therefore, when at any time the clouds gather around you and their blackness seems to darken on the very face of God, do not turn away in terror or anger, but cling the faster to Him, even if it be by the extreme hem of His garment. What wonder if your feeble eye fails to read clear and true each majestic feature of that divine face, which is so infinitely high above you? What matter, if sometimes its radiance is obscured by the chill fogs and creeping vapours of earth's mingled atmosphere? The darkness is not on God's face but beneath it. One day you shall rise higher and you shall see Him as He is. Meantime, in your gloomiest hour, when overwhelming doubts like hissing waves wind and coil around your heart and seek to pluck it from its hold, then do but let all other things go, and with your last energy cling to this central, sovereign certainty, that, whatever else is true, this at least is sure, that God is good and that He whose doings you cannot comprehend is your Father. And so, weary of dashing yourself vainly against the bulwarks of darkness that girdle His throne, be content to lay yourself down humbly as a tired child on the breast of your heavenly Father. Thus with your questionings unanswered, with the darkness not rolled away, with a thousand problems all unsolved, be quieted, be hushed, be at peace. Lay down your head, your weary, aching head, on the great heart of God, and be at rest.

Doing this, you shall reach not merely passive resignation, but joy and peace and trust. For of humble submission hope is born. "Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever." Perchance all you can do now is just in weariness, more out of helpless despair than active expectancy, to fall back on a faint, broken-hearted trust in God's goodness. It is an act of faith, poor enough in truth, but it holds in it the promise and potency of a better confidence. For it is into the arms of God that it carries you. Resting there in the lap of His infinite love, you shall feel the warmth of His great heart penetrating softly into yours. The weary, throbbing pain will slowly pass away. Deep rest and quiet peace will steal into your spirit. And at length, out of a helpless, compelled, and well-nigh hopeless surrender, there shall be born within you fearless trust and winged reliance, and you shall hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.—GILBERT IN POSSESSION.

THERE are few more unhappy beings upon the earth's surface than half-rogues. For ever seeking impossible compromises, plagued by a shrewish conscience which scolds all the more loudly because it can no longer make itself obeyed, they falter in pitiable fashion at each successive parting of the ways, and are often reduced to the dismal expedient of rubbing dust into their own eyes, so that they may take the wrong turn in quasi-unconsciousness. Gilbert Seagrave, as we have seen, had adopted this plan, and his experiences at the outset were not of a nature to satisfy him with it. After having been ignominiously dismissed from the presence of the brother whom he had intended to pension and patronise, he retired into his father's study, and, seating himself in what had been his father's chair, was uncomfortably conscious of being not quite a big enough man to fill it. But that impression soon passed away. The late Sir Brian, in the opinion of his heir, had not been morally a big man at all. He had been kind-hearted, choleric, weak, capable of generous actions, but forbidden by his nature to take broad and comprehensive views of life. Now Gilbert flattered himself that his own views possessed what his father's had lacked. He believed that he had it in him to form a policy and pursue it; and having just now in his mind's eye the outline of a policy which promised to be full of interest, he fell to contemplating that until his self-esteem returned to him.

He had need of a little self-esteem, for the day was destined to be fruitful in petty humiliations. He had not been long alone before the house-servants, one by one, requested the favour of a few words with him; and these words proved to be in every case substantially identical. The butler and the housekeeper had been present at the reading of the will: they had heard what had fallen from Brian on that occasion, and they now came to inquire whether Mr. Brian was to be their future master or not. On being informed that he was not, they each and all begged respectfully to give a month's warning.

Gilbert kept his temper until this formula had been repeated some half-dozen times,

when he suddenly and injudiciously lost it. "You can take a month's wages and go to-morrow, if you choose," he said to an under-housemaid, who perhaps had been less carefully drilled than her companions, and who had allowed a shade of insolence to be perceptible in her manner. "You had better not come to me for a character, that's all."

"Thank you, sir, and I have no intentions for to do so," replied the young woman, obviously elated by her success in upsetting the Squire's equanimity. "Having left by my own wish and in consequence of death, such will not be required, sir, and Mrs. Williams she will be very 'appy to speak for me if applied to." Whereupon she dropped a curtsy and marched out with all the honours of war.

The bailiff and the gamekeeper, both of whom subsequently craved an audience, decided to keep their respective positions. It is a fine thing to be able to snap your finger and thumb in the face of your superior, but not everybody can afford these luxuries. A man has to consider his family, and the demand for bailiffs and gamekeepers is hardly so great in the present bad times as that for butlers and cooks. Thus Gilbert was granted such comfort as may be derived from something short of universal abandonment. However, his troubles were not yet over. Immediately after luncheon, at which meal Brian did not put in an appearance, he was informed that Admiral Greenwood was waiting to see him in the library; and the Admiral's greeting was distinctly less cordial than usual.

"How do you do, Gilbert?" he began. "I called to see your brother, but they tell me he's out. What's all this that I hear about your poor father having cut the lad off with a shilling? Only a piece of idle gossip, I trust."

"I sincerely wish," answered Gilbert, "that I could tell you that you have been misinformed; but such is not the case. My father has made me his heir. He seems to have had a strong conviction latterly that Brian was not a fit person to take his place. Indeed, he mentioned that conviction to me more than once, and gave reasons for it which I needn't repeat. Personally I am hardly a gainer by his decision. My brother, of

course, must be provided for, and I shall have to give up my profession."

"Well," said Admiral Greenwood, with his hands in his pockets, his legs very wide apart, and his cheeks as red as a poppy, "I think it's an infernal shame—that's what I think about it!"

"At least," said Gilbert, "I hope you don't blame me for what I can't help."

"I'm not quite sure as to that yet," answered the Admiral candidly. "People say that you could help it. They say that your father intended to destroy this iniquitous will, and that you knew he did. Is that so?"

Gilbert ought to have been prepared for the question; but he was so little prepared for it that he started and changed colour. He was very anxious to stand well with Admiral Greenwood; he knew that the Admiral would disapprove of his conduct; he knew also that disapproval in that quarter was not likely to be merely passive, and instantly he decided to tell a lie—thereby parting at once and for ever with that last shred of self-respect to which he had until then contrived to cling.

"I am sorry," said he, "that you should have such a bad opinion of me. Brian, I believe, is under the impression that my father meant to revoke his will; but, unfortunately, I have no reason at all to suppose that he would have done so, and therefore I think myself bound to abide by it as it stands."

"Do you mean that your father never said anything to that effect in your hearing?" asked the Admiral rather sharply.

"Never a word," answered Gilbert.

Certainly if one is to tell lies, one may as well do so with a good air of sincerity. The Admiral had never liked nor thoroughly trusted Gilbert; but he would have had to think worse of him than he did of any living being before he could have doubted an assurance so given. He held out his hand, saying, "Well, I beg your pardon. Mrs. Greenwood blew me up sky-high for believing that story, and I shall catch it again when I go home, no doubt. Nevertheless, I am not sorry to have mentioned it to you, for I can now contradict the scandal-mongers on your authority. Under the circumstances I suppose you are right to accept the position. I shouldn't much like it, if I were in your place; but——"

"But perhaps I don't like it," interposed Gilbert with a smile.

"H'm! Anyhow, it's hard on Brian. Will he have absolutely nothing?"

"Nominally nothing; but, of course, I shall take care that he does not want. My own belief is that he will be happier in his present position than he would have been as owner of Beckton."

"I'll be hanged if I see why!" observed the Admiral bluntly. "It wouldn't make me happy to be dependent upon my younger brother; but all he can do is to make the best of it, poor fellow! Tell him to come and see me when he has half an hour to spare, will you?"

"Certainly," answered Gilbert with a mental reservation.

Already he saw how much better it would have been to tell the truth, and what a crop of future troubles he had gratuitously sown for himself. This good-humoured, fussy, and not very wise old gentleman, might so easily have been talked over! But it was too late to think of that now. He went on to speak very kindly of his brother, regretting that his own means did not admit of his making Brian exactly a well-to-do man, but distinctly implying that he was prepared to be liberal to the utmost limit of his capacities.

Admiral Greenwood went away, reassured and a little contrite, and told his wife afterwards that he was really rather sorry for the young man. "What Segrave can have been thinking about to make such a will beats me; but I must admit that it would hardly do for Gilbert to act in direct contravention of it."

"That," remarked Mrs. Greenwood, "is just what I told you all along, Tom; only you never will listen to a single word that I say."

Neither Mrs. Greenwood nor her daughter had distrusted Gilbert for a moment. In a truly feminine spirit of partanship they were convinced and determined that he must be in the right; and if appearances were somewhat against him—why, so much the worse for appearances. Had Brian revealed the true state of affairs to them, it is not in the least likely that they would have believed him, and it was quite certain that they would never learn the true state of affairs from Brian. But Gilbert, obeying that inflexible law which compels us to judge of others by ourselves, was unconscious of this twofold security, and so spent a miserable afternoon.

At dinner the brothers met again, and it would be difficult to say which of them suffered the most during that protracted ordeal. To sit perfectly mute was impos-

sible, and neither politics nor the weather can be discussed indefinitely by two persons whose thoughts are not for the moment occupied with those interesting subjects. Hence there occurred long gaps of silence, during which the butler hurried round the table in those creaking boots to which poor Sir Brian had so excusably objected, while the footman, an irritating young man, whose breathing apparatus seemed to work with difficulty, kept a glassy eye inexorably fixed upon Gilbert. It was horribly uncomfortable, and there was a moment when Brian was very near to bursting out laughing; but he remembered that there was not much to laugh at, and controlled himself.

The moment that those two observant attendants had retired he rose, dragged his chair closer to his brother's, and began: "Gilbert, I've been thinking things over, and I've come to the conclusion that it's a case of least said soonest mended. In fact, there really is no more that *can* be said—to any purpose. I shall clear out of this at once. Perhaps you'll give the piano and my other traps house-room until I send for them. I am going up to London."

Gilbert experienced a sense of relief almost as sweet as if it had been deserved. With Brian out of the way his path would be comparatively smooth. But he tried to look concerned, and succeeded indifferently well.

"Must you hurry away like this?" he asked. "I can't expect that, feeling as you do, you will care to stay here and keep me company; but as there will be arrangements to be made, wouldn't it be better for you to wait until we can see our way to a final settlement and have done with it?"

"I know of no arrangements that will require my presence here," said Brian.

"Not absolutely, perhaps; still I should think you will wish to know what your future income is to be, and I can't speak quite positively as to that yet."

"My future income," remarked Brian with some grimness, "is not a positive quantity at present. When it becomes so I shall probably know rather more about it than you can tell me. I should like to avoid saying unpleasant things if I could; but you must understand that I can't consent to be put upon an allowance by you. It would be like taking conscience money."

"If it were," returned Gilbert quickly, "you would have all the greater right to it."

"Oh, if you talk about right!—However, there is no need for us to talk about anything of the sort. Rightly or wrongly, I don't

mean to accept a halfpenny from you, and there's an end of it."

"But, my dear fellow—pardon me; what alternative have you?"

"Well, the usual one. I am going to work for my living, and luckily I am not altogether incapable. A man who has taken a musical degree and who knows something about managing a church choir is in no danger of starving, I believe. I quite expect to find a place as organist in some London church before long, and most likely I shall be able to earn a little by giving music lessons as well."

Gilbert was not called upon to simulate distress this time, because he really felt it.

"You are resolved to punish me very severely for doing what I believe to be right!" he exclaimed. "You make my position almost intolerable. Just imagine yourself in my place. Suppose that the estate had been left to you and that I was without means of subsistence. Wouldn't you insist upon giving me at least enough to live upon? You know you would. I don't think your scheme has any chance of success; but if it had, do you suppose that I could endure to let my brother support himself by giving music lessons? And what would people think of me for allowing it?"

The last words were not well chosen and undid the effect of the former ones, which had touched Brian for a moment. "I am afraid you will have to endure it," said he drily. "That is, you will have to endure the humiliation of knowing that I am a music-master. But I don't see why other people should know it; and if they find out you can tell them quite truly that you offered me an income, which I refused. Then they will understand that I am sulking, and will advise you to leave me alone until I come to my senses."

"I can imagine worse advice," said Gilbert. "What you propose to do is certainly not very sensible, and I doubt whether it is even feasible. How are you going to begin? You must admit that you will want a little money to start with."

"I shall not ask you for money either now or at any future time," returned Brian doggedly.

"So be it; I can't, of course, force the money into your hands any more than I can help being aware that you will have to raise money somehow. You won't lay yourself under an obligation of any sort or kind to me, that is understood; but will you, perhaps, listen to me if I make you a plain, business-like offer?"

"Oh, I'll listen if you like!" answered Brian wearily; "only I confess that I can't conceive what business-like offer can be made to a man of my small possessions. Do you wish to purchase the grand piano?"

"I shall be very glad to do so if you want to get rid of it; but let me remind you that the piano is by no means your most valuable possession."

"Oh, I see! Unfortunately, the Manor House is not for sale."

"In that case I have nothing more to say. But if at any future time you should be anxious to dispose of the place you might allow me the privilege of pre-emption. I believe I could just afford to buy it, and probably you would rather see it merged in this estate than in the hands of a stranger. That, in fact, is what you must have looked forward to."

Brian took a minute or two to consider his reply. His impulse was to say No to anything and everything that his brother might suggest; but he was not sure that this proposition ought to be met with a direct negative. That he was sorely in need of ready money was undeniable, and he was well aware that the little Manor House property had always been a Naboth's vineyard to his father. It was undoubtedly more desirable that Gilbert should have the place than that it should remain uninhabited and uncared for until the roof fell in. So he answered, with something of a sigh,

"I wouldn't sell it to a stranger, but I dare say I had better sell it to you. Probably I shall be reduced to that necessity sooner or later. What is it worth, do you suppose?"

"I can't tell you off-hand, and both for your sake and my own we ought to have the estate valued before striking a bargain; but, at a rough guess, I should say ten thousand ought to be about the price."

"Ten thousand pounds!" echoed Brian in amazement. "Why, it can't be worth half that! You are trying to make me a present in the disguise of a bargain."

"Upon my honour, I am not," answered Gilbert earnestly; and, although the reader may think that Gilbert's honour was a somewhat shaky security, it was pledged in all sincerity then. "I haven't a doubt," he went on, "that Mr. Buswell would give you ten thousand pounds for the Manor House to-morrow."

"Oh, Buswell!—yes, I dare say he would. Very likely it might be worth that to him; because he would instantly proceed to pull

the old house down and run up half-a-dozen villas in the grounds. I wasn't thinking about Buswell's valuation."

"The value of a thing is what it will fetch," remarked Gilbert. "If I buy the Manor House it stands to reason that I must pay the market price for it."

There could hardly have been found in all the west of England a man more easy to impose upon than Brian Segrave; but then he possessed that shield wherewith kind Nature has endowed most trusting mortals in the shape of a total inability to believe in those whom he did not respect. He very much doubted whether Gilbert was the man to give a fancy price for a tumble-down dwelling, and his first suspicion that his brother was merely seeking some plausible pretext for making him comfortable suddenly yielded to a more sinister one. He was quite ashamed of allowing it to enter his mind; yet there it was, and he could not dislodge it. Therefore he said abruptly,

"No! all things considered, I shan't part with the Manor House unless I am driven to extremities."

"As you please," said Gilbert. "I thought that by doing so you might overcome what I must say looks to me like an insurmountable difficulty; but you are your own master."

Brian did not fail to note the distinct ring of disappointment in his brother's voice; nor was he able to attribute this solely to foiled benevolence. To avoid further discussion, as well as to escape from the very unwelcome thoughts which forced themselves upon him, he said "Good night" curtly and went out of the room.

He sat up late that night, packing such of his belongings as he meant to take away with him and arranging in as orderly a fashion as his nature would permit those that he proposed to leave behind; and early the next morning he hastened to the Vicarage to see Monckton, whom he found at breakfast.

"We mustn't meet trouble half way," Monckton remarked, after hearing what his visitor had to say. "You are right, I think, in trying to earn an independence for yourself; and if that turns out to be difficult or impossible——"

"But it won't," interrupted Brian.

"Well, I hope it won't. In the meantime, here are some letters of introduction which I have written for you. These men may not know of any vacant post; but at any rate they will be able to give you practical direc-

tions as to seeking for one. And now, Brian, as we have been such good friends and as we are going to part, perhaps for a long time, I hope you won't refuse me a small favour. I can understand your reluctance to take anything from your brother; under the circumstances it's only natural; but—but——"

"My dear old fellow," broke in Brian laughing, "you needn't look so shamefaced over it. It is I who ought to be blushing; for I came here with every intention of asking you for the loan which you are hesitating to offer me."

"That's right!" cried Monckton brightening. "I drew a cheque for a hundred pounds in your favour; but I did it in fear and trembling, because I know it isn't pleasant to take cheques even from one's best friends. You have paid me a true compliment, Brian."

Brian took the envelope which was held out to him. "I was pretty sure beforehand that you would look at it in that way," said he, "and I don't a bit mind being beholden to you, Monckton. When I shall be able to pay you back I haven't an idea. It doesn't sound very promising to start a hundred pounds in debt; but the fact of the matter is that I am quite ridiculously poor just now. I haven't enough to keep me alive for a week."

Monckton smiled a little sadly. He knew that the day must soon come when a hundred pounds would seem a far more imposing sum to Brian than it now did; yet he had good hope that that and other inevitable lessons would make a man of the lad. One is forced unwillingly to acknowledge that poverty is very apt to be debasing. There are people whom one would like to save from all ignoble worries about half-crowns; people whom Nature seems to have destined for some more refined occupation than balancing accounts, and whose carelessness with regard to money matters looks almost like a virtue, so innocent and unselfish is their ineptitude. Such people are not always soured by the struggle for existence, though that result is frequent enough; and when they are not soured, they are doubtless in some respects elevated by it. However, they lose their youth in the process; and to the middle-aged lookers-on the premature loss of youth cannot but seem a pity. Monckton thought of this and was very sorry; but he believed that Brian Segrave had fibre enough to resist and survive hard times; and those who care to pursue to its end this record of a portion of Brian's life will see how far his friend's faith in him was justified.

CHAPTER XVII.—DISCOURAGEMENT.

WHEN Brian found himself in a railway-carriage, being whirled towards London at the rate of fifty miles an hour, and leaving his home, his friends, the woman whom he loved, and every pleasure, interest, and hope connected with the past, behind him, he was conscious of nothing but relief. The catastrophe was so complete, the severing of all former ties was so final, that he felt as if he had been robbed of his identity, as if the old Brian was dead and done with, and as if the life upon which he was about to enter belonged to a new Brian, whose acquaintance he had yet to make. The truth was that he loved with all his heart the place and people he had been torn away from—loved even Gilbert, though he was hardly aware of that—and the relief which he felt was simply such as a man who has been condemned to lose a limb may be assumed to experience when the operation is over. Later he was to be taught by many an hour of painful longing and regret that one does not so easily shake off one's identity; and that he was not much changed as yet was evidenced by the facts that he performed his journey by express train and first class, and that, on reaching Paddington, he took a hansom and drove straight to the rooms in the neighbourhood of Jermyn Street, which he had been wont to inhabit in more prosperous times during his rare visits to the metropolis.

These he found disengaged; and by the time that his landlord had unpacked his things and made him comfortable (if Brian had been left to unpack for himself he would have tossed his clothes out upon the floor with an assured conviction that it must be somebody's business to put them away for him), the short winter afternoon was at an end. It was far too late to think of going out and delivering any of Monckton's letters of introduction; so presently he strolled over to his club, and, seating himself in the reading-room with a newspaper, pondered over the dark future until he dropped asleep.

He woke up about half-past seven to discover that he was hungry, and, after he had mechanically betaken himself to the dining-room, remembered that it now behoved him to practise a rigid economy in the matter of meat and drink. He was pensively scanning the bill of fare and wondering upon how little a healthy man can contrive to dine, when somebody at his elbow called out, "Hullo, Segrave, how are you?"

Brian turned and saw a dapper little man

in evening dress, with black hair, bright eyes, and a round, smooth-shaven face. "By Jove! it's Tommy Phipps," he exclaimed. "How are you, Phipps? I haven't seen you for an age."

"That," observed Mr. Phipps, "isn't my fault. You might have seen me if you had been in any places where people are likely to be seen; but I suppose you have been peacefully slumbering down in Northumberland or Cornwall, or wherever it is that you habitually dream the happy hours away. Come and dine with me, and I'll stand you a bottle of champagne in honour of this auspicious meeting. You look as if you wanted a little stimulant."

The speaker had been rather a friend of Brian's at Eton, where they had been in the same division, and subsequently at Oxford they had met pretty frequently, though upon somewhat less intimate terms. Phipps was by way of being something of a musician, and, indeed, could sing a very good song; he had also been noted, both in his school and college days, as a first-rate amateur actor, in which capacity he had earned for himself a large circle of friends and admirers. He was thought to be clever, and it had always been anticipated that he would eventually distinguish himself in some undefined way; but Brian had lost sight of him latterly, and had not heard whether this expectation had been fulfilled or not.

"And what's the news of you?" Mr. Phipps inquired, surveying his old school-fellow critically across the little table, after they had seated themselves. "Do you know that you wear a distinctly lugubrious aspect?"

"I have just lost my father," Brian answered. "He died very suddenly from an accident."

"Oh, really! I beg your pardon; I hadn't heard," said the other, a little disconcerted.

Perhaps, upon reflection, it occurred to him that bereavements of that kind are not always devoid of compensation, for presently he observed in a more cheerful tone, "I suppose you're a landed proprietor now?"

"Well, no," answered Brian; "I'm not. My brother has the place. You remember my brother Gilbert, I dare say?"

"Of course I do: but surely he was junior to you. I could have sworn that he was Segrave Minor."

Brian, who had rather hoped that this circumstance might have escaped his friend's memory, saw that an explanation was unavoidable. "Yes, you're quite right," he

said; "but there's no entail, and—and, in short, my father left the property to Gilbert."

"What a horrid old br—hum!—what a horrid bore for you!"

"It is rather a bore," Brian agreed; "but it can't be helped. The worst of it is that my poor father had very little money to leave, and I should think there can hardly be another man in the club at this moment who is quite such a pauper as I am."

Phipps pursed up his lips. "Sorry to hear it. You oughtn't to have been cast for that part; you have no natural aptitudes for it, if you'll excuse my saying so. What do you mean to do? Write songs? They tell me that that is a paying business; only, of course, the songs must be rather imbecile, or people won't buy them. Perhaps you'd think that sort of thing beneath a swell classical musician?"

"I shouldn't think anything beneath me that would bring me in a few sovereigns," Brian declared, laughing; "but what I am looking out for is a place as organist at some church. Do you happen to know whether such appointments are hard to get?"

Phipps shook his head. "Can't say I do; churches are not much in my line. But I could tell you things that would make your mouth water about the profits that are earned in the musical branch of my own trade."

"What is your trade?" Brian inquired.

The little man dropped his knife and fork and threw up his hands. "Such is fame!" he ejaculated. "However, I don't feel snubbed, because it is you who ought to be ashamed of your ignorance. When one is the author of a play which has been running for upwards of two hundred consecutive nights, and which is full of running still, one can afford to pardon the poor benighted beings who have never heard of it. I cannot too strongly advise you, my dear Segrave, to take an early opportunity of visiting the Frivolity—which is out-and-out the best theatre in London—and seeing *The Politicians*, which is the cleverest and most amusing piece that has been put upon the stage for many a long day. It is not I who say so; I am quoting textually from the press, and I might add a good deal more, if modesty did not lay her finger upon my lips."

Brian made a suitable apology, acknowledging that celebrities were not the less celebrated because he knew nothing of them, and Phipps went on to dilate with excusable glee upon the handsome sums which dramatic authorship had already placed to his credit.

"I'll tell you what, Segrave," said he; "you and I will produce a joint work one of these days, and make our everlasting fortunes by it. I am convinced that comic opera, or rather operatic comedy, has an immense future before it in this country. One may almost call it virgin soil. The union of a dramatist—not a mere librettist, mind you—and a composer who isn't above brightening up his work with a few catching airs ought to produce grand results."

The suggestion was not unattractive to Brian. He discussed it after dinner with his friend until the latter had to leave him in order to keep an engagement, and he returned to his lodgings with his head full of castles in the air.

But Phipps when he awoke in the morning was not at all the same man as Phipps under the influence of a good dinner and a sufficiency of good wine. In the sober, grey light of those matutinal hours he was wise and prudent, and well aware that an impecunious old schoolfellow is not the most desirable of acquaintances. Perhaps it would be hardly fair to blame him for resolving that he would avoid poor Segrave for the future, if that could be managed. Most of us have had experiences which will help us to condone this selfishness on the part of Phipps; most of us have encountered old schoolfellows, or persons describing themselves as such, whose importunities have been difficult to resist and inconvenient to yield to; and although instances have been known in which these unfortunates have been glad to accept half a sovereign, so much moderation cannot be considered common. By far the best and most economical plan is to part with twenty pounds—or more, if you can afford it—at once. Then the money and the old schoolfellow vanish away, and you never see or hear of either of them again.

But this method of procedure is one that never would have recommended itself to Brian. If, for his sins, he had chanced upon a former comrade in distress at this or indeed at any subsequent period of his career, it is in the last degree improbable that he would have got rid of that former comrade so long as he had a shilling left in his purse. Therefore he did not suspect at the time, nor has he suspected since, why it was that Phipps, whom he met a few days later in the street, did not stop to speak to him, but merely waved his hand, calling out, with a great show of heartiness, "How are you, old chap?—how are you?" and then hurried

away as fast as his short legs would carry him. Brian was sorry that his friend was apparently so pressed for time, because he wanted to have a talk with him. He had expended half-a-guinea in seeing *The Politicians*; he had been charmed with the brilliant dialogue of the play, and he had enjoyed a delightful vision of the fame and profit which would accrue to him from collaboration with its talented author. But it was a long time before he again had an opportunity of exchanging views with Phipps, and the fading away of the above dream was only one among many disappointments which he had to put up with during this stage of his earthly pilgrimage.

For, unhappily, Monckton's friends were of very little service to him. Some of them received him kindly, others, who were busy, with perceptible impatience; but not one of them either wanted an organist or knew of anybody who did. Most of them recommended him to advertise—a piece of advice which may have been excellent in itself, but which hardly repaid its recipient for the long walks he had taken, and the loss of time that he had incurred in obtaining it. He did, however, both advertise and answer advertisements, and by this means acquired a clear understanding of the difficulties of a beginner, if he obtained nothing else. A great deal of stress was laid upon the fact that he was a beginner. "You see, Mr. Segrave, you have had no experience," was the phrase employed by many who professed themselves satisfied with the sample which he gave them of his capacities, but whose terms were not such as he could accept. One reverend gentleman, the incumbent of a large church in a fashionable neighbourhood, at which the musical services were of a highly ambitious order, was quite anxious that he should take the post of assistant organist and relieve the well-known composer of sacred music who, in that case, would be his superior; but when it came to the question of salary, it appeared that none was forthcoming. "The advantage of studying under Mr. —, and the notice that you would be brought into by occasionally playing in our church, would, we think, be fully equivalent to money payment," he was told. "But I can't feed and clothe myself upon equivalents of that kind," Brian mildly objected.

Whereupon the cleric, a suave-mannered man, smiled, elevated his eyebrows and said he feared that the churchwardens would not sanction any addition to the musical part of

the church expenses. Indeed Brian found that the churchwardens were generally spoken of as obdurate when rate of remuneration was considered. He had not before had any idea that those functionaries were so powerful, and sometimes they reminded him of that "partner, Mr. Jorkins," whose hardheartedness Mr. Spenlow so often had occasion to deplore.

Nor was it only at the hands of rectors and churchwardens that Brian met with a discouraging reception. He had by him a stock of short compositions, the fruit of many hours of leisure, and he thought that these might possibly be now made to serve a purpose for which they had not been originally destined. So he rolled a few of them up, tucked them under his arm, and set off to solicit an audience of Messrs. Berners and Co., the musical publishers. With these gentlemen he had already had dealings, having intrusted them with the publication of a cantata, for which he had neither asked nor obtained payment, but which had elicited from them an extremely flattering letter, accompanied by a bill; so that the head of the firm, a somewhat obsequious personage, with a good deal of curly and oily black hair, advanced to greet him with all the respect due to a gentleman of artistic talent and independent means.

Brian said he had brought a few small things of his own, upon the chance of their being considered worthy of publication; and Mr. Berners, without so much as glancing at the score, replied: "Not a doubt of it, sir; anything written by you is sure to be that. We publish a great deal of rubbish, I am sorry to say; but the public taste is improving. It is improving, and in my humble judgment it will continue to improve. You, and such as you, sir, have given it what I may call a stimulus in the right direction."

This sounded hopeful; and, after a little further conversation, Brian sat down at the piano and endeavoured to do full justice to himself, Mr. Berners nodding complacently the while and keeping time with a pair of fat hands, as if he were conducting an invisible orchestra.

"Very pretty, Mr. Segrave; very pretty and very clever," he was so good as to say, when Brian's performance came to an end. "Your work has originality, sir—what I may call great originality, and your execution is remarkably fine. The rendering of that prelude in F minor was an intellectual treat; it was really. You have a beautiful third finger, Mr. Segrave. I declare it quite vexes

me to think of its being thrown away, so to speak, upon an amatyoor."

Now seemed to be the time to proceed to business. "I am not going to be an amateur any more," Brian announced; "I want to see what I can do as a professional."

"Do you indeed, sir?" said Mr. Berners blandly. "Yes—well—that is an ambition which, I may say, deserves reward, and which you share, sir, with persons of the very highest social standing. Professional skill, to be sure, is not quite the same thing as amatyoor skill; but although many people differ from me, I maintain that the true interests of art are served when gentlemen like yourself take their places in the orchestra or on the platform. Not, of course, with an eye to profit; but—"

"You misunderstand me, Mr. Berners," interrupted Brian; "it isn't as a performer, but as a composer, that I wish to come before the public, and profit is exactly what I have an eye to. That is my reason for submitting my poor compositions to you, and I'm very glad to hear that you think so well of them."

Then it was a sight to see how the countenance of Mr. Berners fell and how mournfully he wagged his curly head. Nothing, he declared, would afford him more sincere pleasure than to sign a cheque for a hundred or two hundred pounds in Mr. Segrave's favour; but he regretted to say that the gains of composers—not to mention unknown composers—were for the most part infinitesimal. The exceptions of which Mr. Segrave might possibly have heard only proved the rule. Then he went into details and adduced facts and figures of so depressing a nature that Brian could only wonder how anybody ever made anything at all by writing music. The upshot of it was that he left his scores in the hands of the publisher, upon the understanding that they were to be brought out at his own expense, and that his share of the profits, should any accrue, was to be in the proportion of two-thirds. This, Mr. Berners said, was a liberal arrangement, and Brian expressed himself satisfied with it.

Nevertheless, he was not satisfied. He went home sadly enough and, sitting down before the fire, yielded to his first access of despondency. A fortnight had now passed away; he had not obtained employment, nor could he see prospect of obtaining any; in spite of the utmost care, in spite of such triumphs of parsimony as drinking beer with his dinner, and occasionally climbing to the

roof of an omnibus instead of calling a hansom, his capital was rapidly dwindling, and he looked forward with a chill fear to its ultimate exhaustion. What was to happen to him when he had no more money left? Of one thing he was quite determined; he would not go back to Beckton. Surely it was impossible that a man with two strong arms could starve! But though he told himself this, he was by no means convinced in his heart that it was impossible. All his troubles, his unrequited love, his father's death, his banishment from home and friends, seemed to sink into insignificance by comparison with the almost grotesque calamity of possible lack of bread. Brian thought it over until he concluded that the very best thing that could happen to him would be to die then and there.

In later life when death is nearer at hand, few even of the most unhappy of mortals wish to hasten its approach; but young people, in whom the craving for happiness is naturally strong, can hardly believe that life without happiness is a possession worth retaining; and so, when things go wrong with them, they are apt to catch glimpses of grim despair, as Brian Segrave did.

CHAPTER XVIII.—MONCKTON DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF.

WHILE Brian was making acquaintance with the seamy side of life in London, Gilbert, down at Beckton, was daily regaining more and more of the equanimity of which his brother's absolute refusal to be helped had deprived him. On thinking it over, he was able to form what he believed to be a tolerably accurate forecast of that headstrong young man's fate. He gave Brian a month, at the outside, to exhaust his resources, assume a garb of sackcloth, and discover that there are worse things in the world than a placable and generous brother. Should his pride, even in the extremity of want, revolt against accepting an allowance, the alternative of selling the Manor House to the generous brother aforesaid would still remain; and if, as was probable, he should prefer remaining in London, playing the organ and otherwise disporting himself, to settling down at Beckton, why, so much the better.

Gilbert, then, was not, upon the whole, dissatisfied with things in general. He had been prepared for a few disagreeables at starting, and these, after all, had taken no worse shape than might have been anticipated. With the exception of the domestic

revolt which has been mentioned, no expression of disapproval reached him: on the contrary, there were signs that the neighbourhood generally acquiesced in his succession, and that Brian's deposition and disappearance were assumed to be the consequences of some unexplained guilt. In truth, the younger brother had always been more popular than the elder. Two things, however, made Gilbert uneasy in his mind at times. Firstly, there was the memory of that lie which he had told to Admiral Greenwood, and which he now sincerely regretted, for he held that it is not only base but dangerous to tell lies. Secondly, he felt sure that Monckton had a very poor opinion of him. Once or twice since Brian's departure he had encountered the Vicar of St. Michael's and had been disagreeably conscious of being despised. Monckton had not said much to him, and what little he had said had been perfectly civil, but it is easy to show perfect civility to a man and at the same time to let him see that he does not possess your esteem. Now to many people the question of Monckton's approbation or disapprobation would not have appeared to be one of much moment; but it was so to Gilbert because, like Achilles and other great men, he had a vulnerable point. All his life long he had desired to be liked and thought well of; he had even sacrificed his own interests more than once to this weakness; and now he could not help wondering how much Monckton knew, how much Brian had confided to him, and whether it might not be possible to secure at least the benevolent neutrality of one whose influence over Miss Kitty Greenwood was notorious.

Happening, therefore, to meet Monckton one windy morning, when he was walking into Kingscliff to keep an appointment, he resolved to take the bull by the horns, and, extending his hand, said, with an air of good-humoured frankness which was all his own, and was commonly found most engaging: "Mr. Monckton, I want to have it out with you."

"Yes?" said Monckton. "As to what?"

"As to poor Brian. I know you blame me for his misfortunes. Please don't deny it, I am always in favour of plain speaking."

"I wasn't going to deny it," answered Monckton calmly.

"Well," said Gilbert, with a rather forced laugh, "I am glad you don't, for I should like to defend myself, and one isn't supposed to do that before one is accused. Of course you are aware that Brian considers himself

ill-used; in fact, he has probably been more communicative upon the subject to you than he has been to me. His conviction is that my father did not intend his last will to be acted upon."

Monckton nodded.

"Perhaps you share that conviction?"

"I cannot possibly do otherwise. On the Sunday evening before his death your father distinctly told me that he regretted having made that will and intended to destroy it."

"Ah, yes, exactly, that's just it. It was on the Sunday evening that he declared his intention to you, and I believe that at the time he had been a good deal moved and excited by something which you had said in your sermon—something very just and true in the abstract, I don't doubt. But on that same morning, when he was neither moved nor excited, he held quite opposite views; and if you had known my poor father a little better you would be aware that it was just his way to decide in haste and repent at leisure. That he fully purposed to reinstate Brian when he spoke to you I make no question; but I do question very much whether his purpose would have held out against a few days of cool consideration."

"You may be right or you may be wrong," answered Monckton, "we can't tell."

"Precisely so, we can't tell; and that is why I could not feel justified in disregarding the only real evidence of his wishes that he left us. It was not without hesitation, I assure you, that I concluded as I did; and though you and Brian may differ from me, I think you ought to allow me credit for being conscientious. I quite hope and think that Brian will end by doing so."

"I dare say he will."

"When his money gives out," Gilbert added. It was a stupid thing to say; but the other's impassive countenance provoked him and he couldn't stop himself.

"I don't see the relation between cause and effect there," Monckton remarked. "If your brother forgives you it will be because he is a good fellow, not because you have starved him out."

"Really," returned Gilbert, reddening a little, "there is no question of forgiveness in the matter. I can't, of course, admit that I have wronged him, or I should have no excuse for remaining where I am. Nor—if that signifies—have I ever had the remotest intention of starving him out. I am ready to make ample provision for him whenever he chooses to accept it. What amazes me is that anyone should think a property like

Beckton worth all the annoyance and sacrifice that it has cost me. I should almost certainly have led a pleasanter life and died a richer man if I had handed the place over to Brian and stuck to my profession. I didn't do so simply because I thought myself bound to obey my father."

He paused for a moment and then added, with some irritation, "You seem to doubt me. Pray do you believe what I say?"

Monckton looked his questioner full in the eyes. "No," he answered quite quietly; "since you ask me, I don't."

Gilbert prided himself upon possessing an acute sense of the ridiculous. His dislike to being personally ridiculous was, at all events, very strong, and it preserved him from making any such retort as "Your cloth protects you, sir;" though for an instant he was almost angry enough to have said it. Still, after so unequivocal a slap in the face, the discussion could hardly continue, and he wound it up in a manner which lacked neither dignity nor grace.

"I began by telling you that I liked plain speaking," he remarked with a slight smile, "and you have certainly done your best to gratify my taste. I mustn't complain of what I have brought upon myself; but I wish you a little more faith, Mr. Monckton, and perhaps I may venture to add, a little more charity. Good morning."

"There goes a knave in the skin of a gentleman," muttered the unrepentant Monckton, gazing after Gilbert's retreating figure. "What he said was extremely plausible, and he kept his temper admirably; but he wasn't a bit ashamed of having been found out."

He was a good deal more ashamed than Monckton supposed, and was very angry with himself, besides, for having invited a rebuff. That he had succeeded in keeping his temper was, to be sure, a source of some satisfaction to him; but he wished with all his heart that he had had the sense to keep his own counsel also and to leave the parson alone. Gilbert was not a man of strong loves and hates; for nine out of any ten of his neighbours he felt nothing but a very moderate liking or dislike; but if there was any one in the world towards whom he cherished a genuine sentiment of hatred at that moment it was, beyond a doubt, the Reverend John Monckton who was thus distinguished. Nothing would have afforded him keener delight than to see Monckton led to the gallows; but since that event could hardly be considered as coming within the range of probable contingencies, Gilbert was content

to wish that his enemy might be appointed to a South Sea bishopric and, should the fates prove propitious, be killed and eaten by his dusky flock.

In this kindly mood he trudged on towards Kingscliff, and so reached his destination, a brand-new, stuccoed villa, standing in the midst of a sterile tract which might, perhaps, some day become a garden, and inhabited (to quote the "Kingscliff Directory") by "Mr. and Mrs. Buswell, family, and suite."

Mr. Buswell himself was standing at one of the bay-windows, with his hands in his pockets, and recognising his visitor, came out into the hall to greet him.

"Within five minutes of your time, I see, Mr. Segrave," he remarked, putting out a red hand, adorned with many massive rings; "and that's pretty strict punctuality for the west of England. Now, shall we have our little business talk at once, or will you come in and have a bit of lunch with us first?"

Gilbert affably chose the latter alternative, because he perceived that he would hardly be able, in any case, to escape without partaking of luncheon, and because, when an unpleasant duty has to be performed, the sooner it is over the better. To him the duty in question was very unpleasant—much more so than it would have been to his brother, who had a wider range of sympathies. Gilbert was naturally refined and fastidious; it quite took away his appetite to sit down beside Mrs. Buswell, who ate largely and noisily; and there were many little Buswells, too, who did not appear to have been well brought up. However, in these days it is only recluses who can hope to avoid occasional contact with vulgarity; and Gilbert took so much pains to be agreeable to his entertainers that he established himself in their good graces at once and for ever. Afterwards Mr. Buswell gave him an excellent cigar and led him out into the waste place which surrounded the villa.

"This is only temporary, y' know," said he, pointing back over his shoulder with his thumb. "I wanted a little crib to put the missus and the children into while I looked about me; but if I can arrange matters like I hope to do I shall run up something a bit more stylish over yonder."

In truth, Mr. Buswell has since been as good as his word, and has built himself, near the spot indicated, a lordly pleasure-house with two towers and a glass cupola, which glitters in the sun and is visible for many miles around.

"A millionaire like you can afford to in-

dulge his fancies," Gilbert remarked pleasantly.

"Oh, get along with you, Mr. Segrave!" returned Buswell, much delighted by this delicate piece of flattery. "Millionaire, indeed! But I've a fancy for Kingscliff, I confess—always have had since I first saw the place—and it's true that I'm able to make myself comfortable. So will you be, if you make hay while the sun shines. Now I've got here," he continued, drawing a paper from his pocket, "a little plan, similar to one I once showed your poor father—and a pretty stew it put him into, poor old gentleman!—which will just give you a rough idea of my scheme. Here, you see, is a row of 'high-class dwelling'-ouses, to be called Segrave Crescent, and here you have the winter-garden and aquarium."

He went on pointing out details with a rather dirty forefinger, while Gilbert, looking over his shoulder, listened attentively.

"My father," he observed at length, "was, as you know, exceedingly averse to parting with any land for building purposes, but I am glad to say that, in speaking to me upon the subject, he left it entirely to my discretion to decide whether I should follow his policy or not, and, taking everything into consideration, I have made up my mind not to do so."

This somewhat uncalled-for self-justification did not greatly interest Mr. Buswell. "Oh, I thought you would," he remarked carelessly.

Gilbert winced slightly. The phrase reminded him of something that Mr. Potter had said, and he was about to enter a protest, when he remembered that it really could not much signify what Mr. Buswell's anticipations might have been.

"Perhaps," he said, with a shade less of cordiality than he had hitherto displayed, "you would let me have some definite statement which I could lay before my lawyers."

"By all means," answered Buswell. "Step inside, and I'll put down for you in black and white what I'm prepared to offer, as at present advised. Mind you, Mr. Segrave, I shall want the Manor 'Ouse; the 'ole aspect of the place will be marred, in my opinion, so long as that old empty building is left standing."

"The Manor House does not belong to me," said Gilbert.

"So I understand; but I should think you could come to terms with your brother; or, if you can't, maybe I can. You could oblige me with his address, I dessay."

"Certainly; but I think you had better leave the transaction to me. He is at present disinclined to sell, and I doubt whether he would listen either to your proposals or mine just now. In the course of a few weeks his point of view may possibly change."

"I see," said Mr. Buswell, with a knowing wink, which was highly offensive to his companion. "Nothing like allowing 'em a little time, is there? Why, bless you! a young man without any money to spend don't take long to find out on which side his bread is buttered. Now, if you please, Mr. Segrave, we'll get indoors out of this wind. Looks as if we should get a sou'-west gale before night, don't it? Well, I 'ope to see the day when Kingscliff will have a snug 'arbour of its own."

The conference which ensued was a somewhat lengthy one; for Mr. Buswell was a man of business, and he found, rather to his surprise, that he had a very business-like man to deal with. Gilbert had an accurate enough notion of what his property was worth—so accurate a notion that he saw his way to a large and speedy increase of income, together with the advantages which an increased income brings. He had always been ambitious, and had intended to make a name for himself; his hope now was that he might be able to enter Parliament and come to the front in political life; and a few words which fell from Mr. Buswell afforded him some entirely new matter for reflection as regarded this point.

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Segrave," that worthy said, "you ought to come forward as a candidate for the Kingscliff division at the next general election. We shall have a Kingscliff division, I expect, or something corresponding to it, and with your local influence, you would be pretty sure of being returned—in the radical interest, of course. You've no principles, I suppose."

"No principles, Mr. Buswell?"

"I mean you're not committed to one side or the other. You call yourself a Conservative, I hear; but that ain't of much account. Most likely you've never thought the subject out. Now there's no such thing as a Conservative party, let me tell you. There are men who call themselves Conservatives and there are men who call themselves Whigs; but they don't form a party, nor never will again. There's just two parties in England at the present time, Mr. Segrave—the Tory Democrats and the Radical Democrats; and it don't want a prophet to say which is going to win. How can there be

such a creature as a Tory Democrat? You might as well talk about a Royalist Republican. You stand as a Radical, and I'll undertake to have you returned with a big majority. Call yourself a supporter of Lord Salisbury, and you won't have the ghost of a chance, take my word for it."

"I should have thought," said Gilbert, "that Kingscliff was distinctly Conservative."

"Don't you believe it! The villas are Conservative, if you like; but what do they amount to? As for the tradesmen, that's the very reason why they'll vote Radical. There ain't enough money spent here, don't you see? People get their clothes in London and their groceries down from the stores, and if ever they enter a shop in a place like this they begin calling out that everything's so dear. The agricultural population are bound to be on our side."

"Are you sure of that?"

"As sure as I stand here. The working men will support my candidate; and that's as much as we shall want to carry the election. The fishermen are a bit doubtful, I dessay; but the odds are that they'd vote for you, as being the Squire."

Gilbert went away, pondering these things. His political convictions were certainly not very profound. He had a fine open mind, and was no more likely to let prejudice interfere with his advancement in the world than to allow himself to be hampered by his father's absurd determination to retain the Beekton estate intact. His father had left him free, and no man can be expected to sacrifice his own interests in deference to a palpable absurdity.

Another direction was abruptly given to his thoughts by a gust of wind which all but blew his hat off. The weather had changed considerably for the worse since the middle of the day, and there was every prospect of a dirty night. It was now blowing half a gale from the south-south-west; low black clouds were being driven swiftly inland; the thunder of the breakers was increasing every minute, and from the rising ground on which Gilbert was standing he could see a little knot of people collected on the shore and gazing out to sea. Presently he descried in the offing a brown sail tossing and plunging, as the great waves swept into the bay, and then he knew what had brought them together.

"By George!" he muttered, "it's as much as they'll do to beach that boat in such a sea. Buswell was right; we ought to have a harbour."

He hurried down to join the group, which was composed chiefly of fishermen in oilskin coats and overalls. A few women were moving uneasily to and fro among them; nobody appeared to be speaking. As Gilbert drew near he became aware of two ladies clad in ulsters, who were sheltering themselves under the lee of a small shed, and, recognising Miss Huntley and her companion, he approached them, saying, "How do you do, Miss Huntley? What an afternoon for you to be out!"

The girl turned round quickly, and he was startled by her beauty. Her cheeks were glowing with the salt air; her eyes were large and bright; the wind had blown her hair about her face. "Oh, Mr. Segrave!" she exclaimed, "can't anything be done to save those poor fellows?"

"I don't think they are in any great danger of their lives," answered Gilbert, smiling a little. "I should be sorry to insure the boat, though."

"I see warrant you would!" growled a deep voice at his elbow. It was Mr. Puttick, who, with his hands thrust deep into the pockets of his tarry trousers and his hat rammed down upon his forehead, was awaiting the coming catastrophe with an air of gloomy stoicism.

"Does the boat belong to you, my man?" inquired Gilbert.

"Part owner," replied Mr. Puttick briefly.

"Well, I'll do a more foolish thing than you seem to think me capable of; I'll pay for the boat, if she is lost."

Was it because he already realised the luxury of riches, or because he had an eye to the impending election, or because Miss Huntley was standing by, that he made a promise of which the generosity was hardly in accordance with his habit? Perhaps all three motives were at work; and it is certain that Miss Huntley's eyes applauded him.

"Thankee, sir," answered Puttick, with a grudging sort of gratitude. "What about they nets now?"

"I should think the nets might be saved," Gilbert said, half laughing; "but if they are not, I'll replace them."

Puttick, it may be hoped, would have said something civil in answer to that; but his attention, as well as Gilbert's, was diverted by the approach of the supreme moment. The lugger was close in shore now; her brown sail fluttered down; they could see a man and a lad standing well forward, ready to run, and another man at the tiller. Then suddenly the boat flung her black bows high

above the white crest of the wave that was bringing her in; the men on shore, who were waiting to hook the tackles on her, made a rush into the surf; then another great breaker swept in over boat and men, and Miss Huntley, striking her hands together, exclaimed, "Oh, they will all be drowned!"

"Not them, miss!" gruffly responded Mr. Puttick, who, by reason of age and rheumatism, could take no active part in the proceedings. "Don't you be afeard for them. But they worn't quick enough with they tackles, and the boat she's on her beam-ends. She ain't got a many more minutes to live, you may depend."

In truth the two fishermen had either stumbled or had been dragged up to dry land, safe and sound; but the boy, missing his footing, was swept away by the backwash, and probably would not have been saved had not a man in a pilot-coat and sea-boots dashed into the water after him, at the imminent risk of his own life, and seized him round the waist. The next roller knocked them both down, but carried them within reach of a dozen powerful arms; and so they, too, were rescued, somewhat dazed and breathless, but not otherwise the worse for their immersion.

"There!" cried Mr. Puttick; "that's what I call a man, that is! He don't stand starin' about him when he's wanted. Them fellers oughter be 'shamed o' themselves. We didn't want nobody's help to save a mate from being drowned when I was young."

Miss Huntley had watched the little drama with a heightened colour and glistening eyes. "I should like to give that man ten pounds," she cried.

"Well, miss," said Mr. Puttick, "you can do that if you've a mind ter, and he'll find a good use for the money. 'Twon't stay in his pocket, though."

"Why, it is Mr. Monckton!" ejaculated Miss Huntley, as the object of her proposed benevolence drew nearer. She would have stopped him; but he raised his hand to his cap and laughed, saying that he must run home and change, and so departed at a slinging trot.

"Wasn't it splendid? I'm so glad I saw it!" Miss Huntley exclaimed, turning to Gilbert, who was ruefully watching the break-up of the lugger.

Gilbert smiled. "Yes; it was—dramatic," he answered. "The performance was not quite such a risky one as it looked, I think; but of course that is the sort of thing that

makes these people swear by Monckton. He has been rather lucky in the same way once or twice before. I don't wish to cast any discredit upon his prowess, but he is a little bit of a *poseur*, you know."

"Oh, is he really?" asked Miss Huntley innocently. "How disappointing! And to think that I had been imagining him a hero! To be sure, when one comes to consider it, it was a much finer thing to stand quietly here, as you did, and pay for the damage. I am afraid it has been an expensive afternoon for you."

Such was the childlike candour of Miss Huntley's countenance as she said these words, that Gilbert actually doubted for a moment whether any sarcasm was intended. He was not at all grateful to Miss Joy, who took compassion upon him and said:

"Beatrice, my dear, we can't be all heroes; and I am sure it is very kind and liberal of Mr. Segrave to 'pay for the damage,' as you call it. There are more ways than one of saving people's lives, you must remember."

"You are always right, Matilda," answered Miss Huntley gravely; "I am much too excitable and apt to be carried off my feet by *poseurs*. In that respect, Mr. Segrave, I rather resemble your brother, who has no stability, and who would never have done half the good here that you will do. I met that delightful Mr. Buswell this morning, and he whispered to me that you and he were going to establish the prosperity of Kingscliff upon a firm basis between you. By-the-bye, where is your brother now?"

"He is in London," replied Gilbert, rather curtly.

"Please remember me to him when you write, and tell him that Jacob's ladder promises to lead up to high places. It is an obscure allusion, which he probably won't understand. Good evening, Mr. Segrave."

"Heaven preserve us from clever women and from women who think themselves clever!" muttered Gilbert, when he was left alone. And then he reflected with thankfulness that his dear little Kitty Greenwood could never be included by anybody in either category.

CHAPTER XIX.—MISS SPARKS.

BRIAN, whom we left in a condition of deep despondency, remained in that state—nothing occurring to rouse him from it—for several days, when a civil little note from one of Monckton's clerical friends reached him, in which the writer stated that he understood there was a vacancy for an

organist at St. Jude's, North Streatham, and had thought that possibly Mr. Segrave might consider it worth his while to inquire further as to the matter. Mr. Segrave did consider it very well worth his while to make inquiries; for although he had mentally resolved to eschew the suburbs, he had now recognised that he was in no position to pick and choose. Therefore he put himself in communication with the incumbent, whom he found, on reference to the "Clergy List," to be the Rev. Christopher Peareth, M.A., and by return of post was requested to accord that gentleman a personal interview.

The Reverend Christopher, small, thin, fifty years of age, or thereabouts, with scanty grey hair and a somewhat nervous manner, opened the conversation by saying, "I believe, Mr. Segrave, that you have had—er—misfortunes."

"I have lately had the misfortune to lose my father," answered Brian, wondering what the man was driving at.

"Oh, yes. Yes, exactly. But nothing worse than that?—nothing more, I mean? You must pardon my asking the question; but our church being without endowment, and the expenses being almost entirely defrayed by a few of the more wealthy attendants, I am naturally obliged to consult them to a greater extent than I should wish—that is, to a greater extent than is customary elsewhere. And in this neighbourhood great stress, very great stress, is laid upon personal character."

"I can easily get testimonials as to my perfect respectability," said Brian, smiling.

"Thank you; if you will be so good. You see, Mr. Segrave, it is not exactly usual for gentlemen to seek employment of this kind (though I'm sure I don't know why they shouldn't), and there is, I am sorry to say, a tendency to blame me when any—er—mistakes occur. For instance, when the manager of our temperance coffee-house was found lying in the street in a state of shameful intoxication, many people seemed to think that I was in some measure responsible for the scandal. I am told that you have had some little experience of choir management, though not in a professional way."

Brian answered that he was quite accustomed to accompanying, and believed himself to be capable of giving the necessary instruction; and then Mr. Peareth suggested that they should adjourn to the church. "You might like to try our organ, Mr. Segrave, a very fine instrument, presented to us by Mr. Dubbin, who is—er—conspic-

ous among the wealthy persons whom I mentioned to you just now."

St. Jude's was one of those spacious, modern churches which, without being frankly ugly, like the churches of fifty years ago, are yet almost more distressing than they to the appreciative, by reason of that effect of vulgarity which attaches to pretentious failure. It was of the Victorian-Gothic order of architecture, and was not a very happy specimen of that style, its proportions being all wrong, and its interior ornamentation at once poor and florid. There was a violent blue and yellow window at the east end; encaustic tiles had been unsparingly applied to the floor and walls of the chancel; the whole edifice was cold, glaring, and smelt of varnish.

These details Brian hastily noted as he followed his conductor into the building, where three persons, conversing together in the aisle, appeared to have been awaiting his arrival, with a view, no doubt, to putting him through a sort of informal test-examination. One of these, a burly man, who wore a long black beard and no moustache, advanced to meet the new-comers with a certain air of proprietorship.

"How do you do to-day, Mr. Peareth?" said he condescendingly. "Mrs. Peareth and the young ones keeping pretty well, I hope? That's right. I was just passing the remark to my friend Mr. Prodgers here that we ought to have a handsome west window put in, and his answer was, 'So we will, when we can afford it.' Well, we shall see—we shall see."

Obviously Dubbin the Magnificent.

"And this," he continued, turning to Brian, "is our young aspirant, I presume? Well, sir, I hope you will suit us; and so, no doubt, do you. I have had the organ opened, so you can give us a tune as soon as you please."

It seemed to be the best thing to do. Brian, with some inward amusement, played such a "tune" as he thought would be likely to give satisfaction to his audience, and when he had finished, the man with the beard cried, "Brayvo!" while one of his satellites said in an audible undertone,

"I don't know whether you would wish to put any questions to the candidate, Mr. Dubbin, sir?"

"Presently, Mr. Prodgers, presently," answered the great man; after which there was a pause.

It was quite honestly, and without any diplomatic intent, that Brian remarked,

"This is a very fine organ."

"Well, sir," answered Mr. Dubbin, evidently pleased, "it ought to be; for it cost a pretty penny, I can tell you. But what I always say is, pay a good price and get a good article. That's my system all through, and I consider that we're justified in applying it to our organist as well as to our organ. Your salary, sir, will be seventy pounds per annum."

While Brian was meditating over this anti-climax, Mr. Peareth was heard to murmur something about character and testimonials. But the great Dubbin waved these unworthy suspicions aside.

"Never mind about that, Mr. Peareth, I know a gentleman when I see one," he was so kind as to declare, "and the information that we have received will be sufficient. Seventy pounds, Mr. Segrave, is not a large sum—did you speak, Mr. Prodgers? Oh! I thought I heard you make some observation. Seventy pounds, I say, is not a large sum; it is a paltry sum, and I should be precious sorry to have to live upon it myself, I know; but such as it is, it's a little more than we have given hitherto, and if you're disposed to undertake music or singing lessons, Mr. Segrave, you'll soon establish a lucrative connection. With regard to your church duties, you will be required to take two choral services on Sundays, and one on Saints' days; choir practice three times a week for boys and once for men and young women as well. At Christmas and Easter you may find a little extra drilling necessary; but, with these exceptions, the remainder of your time will be at your own disposal."

So far Mr. Dubbin had spoken as one who owns no superior; but now he seemed suddenly to recollect the presence of the Vicar and said, "I believe I have stated matters correctly, have I not, Mr. Peareth?"

"Quite correctly," answered Mr. Peareth, rubbing his hands nervously.

"And now," continued Mr. Dubbin, addressing himself once more to Brian, "I must tell you that, although we wish our services to be attractive and in harmony with modern feeling, we are distinctly opposed to Ritualism. I mention this because I understand that you have been a good deal mixed up with ritualistic parsons. Nothing of the sort here, sir, if you please. No nonsense about confession or penance or purgatory, or any other Romish inventions."

"Really," observed Mr. Peareth, plucking up a little spirit, "it is not usual for an organist—"

"An organist, sir," interrupted Mr. Dubbin severely, "is brought into contact with

the young; an organist may be a most pernicious person—a snake in the grass. I don't make any accusation against our friend here; I merely caution him."

"The caution is not needed," said Brian smiling; "I shall confine myself strictly to my duties."

"That's right, young man; you stick to that rule and you'll get on in the world. Well, Mr. Peareth, I think we may consider this matter settled; and now, as I have other things to attend to, I'll wish you good morning."

"I am afraid," said Mr. Peareth timidly, as Brian and he walked away from the church, "that you may have found Mr. Dubbin a little——"

He paused so long that Brian ventured to fill up the hiatus.

"Offensive? Oh, no; I though he seemed a well-meaning sort of fellow enough. He's an awful cad of course."

The phrase seemed to delight Mr. Peareth immensely. He rubbed his hands and laughed softly for several minutes.

"Well, well, well!" he murmured. "But it doesn't do to say so, you know, Mr. Segrave. At times, I confess, he appears to me to take rather too much upon him; but he has been a most generous benefactor—we mustn't forget that. Mrs. Peareth thinks I ought not to allow myself to be—well, as she says, 'sat upon'; but I am a family man—a man with a very large family—and I find that it is best to submit to things. So long as no question of principle is involved, that is not an unjustifiable attitude, I trust."

He looked appealingly at his companion, and Brian answered, in a cheerful tone,

"Oh, no; I shouldn't think so."

"You see," Mr. Peareth went on, "in such a neighbourhood as this one cannot expect to find social intercourse exactly what one would choose. My congregation is composed almost exclusively of rich tradesmen; Mr. Dubbin himself is a wholesale boot and shoe manufacturer, though I believe he began as a small shopkeeper. They are excellent people, many of them; but—well, it is refreshing to meet with a member of one's own class now and then; and if you ever feel lonely, Mr. Segrave, I hope you will drop in upon us informally. We shall always be very pleased to see you."

The good man had evidently discarded his first misgivings and was inclined to be extremely friendly. He found cheap and not uncomfortable quarters for Brian over a baker's shop, and there, in the course of a

few days, our hero installed himself. At the end of a fortnight he wrote to Monckton:

"I am prospering exceedingly, and at this rate, I shouldn't wonder if you were to see your hundred pounds back some fine day. My salary is not magnificent; but I have got lots of pupils already, and am earning about six pounds a week! What do you think of that for a beginning? I like my work, and I believe I shall make the choir quite tidy in time, though I wish I could turn out the young women and put the boys into surplices. However, I daren't say a word about that, because they are very Protestant hereabouts, and St. Jude's is considered to be rather dangerously high in its ritual even now. Mr. Peareth, the vicar, is a dear old fellow, a little out of his element here, and in mortal fear of offending his rich parishioners, who ride over him roughshod. I should like to get him appointed to a canonry. He has a good little overworked wife and a host of small children. Some of my pupils would amuse you, I think. Notably, a Miss Julia Sparks, a young lady fresh from a boarding-school, with large black eyes which she rolls at me till I don't know which way to look. She is dying of curiosity to hear my history and, I fancy, takes me for a prince in disguise. Write me a long letter and tell me all about Kingscliff. Has Puttick been backsliding again? Has Miss Huntley carried out her intention of becoming a district visitor? &c., &c., &c. Answer all the questions I don't ask, and

"Believe me,

"Ever your attached friend,

"BRIAN SEGRAVE."

Monckton replied promptly, and with as much fulness as could be expected of a busy man. He reported all the local intelligence that he could think of to his correspondent; but, unluckily, in his anxiety to answer the questions that Brian had not asked, he omitted to notice one of those that he had, and never mentioned Miss Huntley's name at all. On the other hand, he had a word or two of serious warning to say about Miss Sparks. "It is all very well," he wrote, "to laugh at the young lady who makes eyes at you, but jokes of that kind sometimes turn out to be no laughing matter. If I were you I should take care to have a third person present at Miss Sparks's music lessons."

Brian smiled at an admonition which he naturally thought superfluous. Indeed, he was too inexperienced to take in its signi-

fiancee, and fancied that Monckton was cautioning him against falling in love with his pupil. He had, as we know, the best of securities against doing that; and so, in serene consciousness of invulnerability, he continued to give Miss Sparks musical instruction twice a week, and never attempted to detain Mrs. Sparks when that corpulent matron rose and waddled out of the room, as she usually did after listening to her daughter's performance for five minutes or so.

The girl was rather pretty, and not more vulgar than the generality of her class. She was over-dressed, as they all are nowadays; she wore her hair in a caricature of the prevailing fashion, as they all do; she was fairly well educated, which is perhaps more than can be said for most of them; and there really was no harm in her, if there was no great good. Unfortunately, she had conceived a romantic affection for Brian, and this was, on many grounds, a pity. He, for his part, liked her after a fashion, and found her very diverting. She was apparently under the influence of an intense desire to learn who he was and where he came from, also (since he remained impervious to the broadest hints) of an impulse to reveal all her own secrets to him. This she was free to indulge, and she did so with more or less of lucidity. From sundry mysterious allusions Brian gathered that she was not happy, that her parents wished her to bestow her hand where her heart had not been given, and that she was a victim to the customary unsatisfied yearnings.

"Ah, Mr. Segrave," she would sigh, letting her fine eyes roam over the truly hideous but expensively furnished drawing-room which was the scene of these interviews, "wealth and luxury are not what people suppose! You know that, I am sure."

"I have had no experience of either," Brian would reply; "but I should think they were not to be despised."

Whereupon she would shake her head and say reproachfully, "Ah, you're laughing at me!"—as indeed he was.

However, he ceased to laugh at her when he found that laughter really hurt her feelings, for, after all, it is quite possible to be both lackadaisical and sincere, and there is no reason for refusing sympathy to those who are impelled by nature or education to express their emotions in a grotesque manner. Brian, who surmised that this sighing damsel had been crossed in love, felt that she possessed thereby special claims upon his kindly consideration, and although she bored him a

good deal at times, besides often singing false in the choir, to which she belonged, he did his best to befriend her, and divert her mind from sad thoughts by making her work hard—a form of consolation which she scarcely appreciated, yet put up with, as being at any rate better than neglect. The innocent Brian thought that Miss Sparks only made eyes at him because it was her way to make eyes, and when she sang Signor Tosti's "Good-bye" with an intensity of pathos which almost amounted to a howl, he was dense enough to imagine that that heart-rending farewell was addressed to some young man in the City whose income might be inadequate to the support of a wife.

So the days and weeks slipped away in a not unpleasant monotony, and Christmas came and went; and though the organist of St. Jude's was not precisely merry at that season he was extremely busy, which does nearly as well, if a man be not too exacting. It was in the early days of the new year that he heard of the imminence of what Miss Sparks had frequently referred to with awful ambiguity as her "Fate." Her father, a brisk little bald-headed man, whom business detained in London from morning to night-fall, informed him one Sunday, after church, that Julia was engaged to be married to Mr. Dubbin.

"We look upon it as a great match for her," the little man said cheerfully, "and I'm glad that the girl has made up her mind to it. It's true that he's a good many years older than she is, but I can't see anything to cry about in that—and he keeps his carriage. She'll be happy enough once she's settled down, though she makes a fine to-do now because he ain't young and handsome. As I tell her, one can't look to have everything."

"I am not sure that I should care to marry my daughter to a man old enough to be her father, even if he did keep a carriage," remarked Brian, feeling bound to put in a word for the hapless Julia.

"Heaven bless you, Mr. Segrave!" returned the other, without taking offence, "she wouldn't do it if she didn't like it. I can't make her marry Dubbin, nor anybody else, she knows that precious well. Girls like a bit of romance, but they like a good position too, and Julia values position just as much as you or me, you may take your oath of that."

This very sensible view of the matter reassured Brian, who thought to himself, "It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good; perhaps when she is Mrs. Dubbin she won't want to sing in the choir any more."



PORTRAIT OF THE QUEEN.

Engraved by special permission.

OUR QUEEN.

BY THE EDITOR.

WELL do I remember the effect produced on the audience of students, of which I was then one, when Lord Macaulay delivered his Rectorial address in the University of Glasgow, and when after giving such pictures as he alone could paint of the character of the four centuries that had closed since the University had been founded—each epoch presenting a scene of bloodshed and misgovernment—he sketched the possible future of the college, and anticipated

the time when coming generations would tell how certain contemplated changes had been accomplished during the reign of “the Good Queen Victoria.” The phrase was accentuated by an oratorical swing; and when it was given, the tremendous burst of enthusiasm showed that they who listened felt the great historian had chosen the right epithet, and that he intended it in the sense that as some monarchs are called “Great” and some “Little,” so for all time Victoria would be



Never before published.]

Vignette of Her Majesty as a Girl.

[Engraved by special permission.]

named “the Good Queen.” This was said forty years ago, before Tennyson had fixed the “Household name,” “Albert the Good,” for

“That star
Which shone so close beside Thee, that ye made
One light together.”

The epoch in our history which is embraced between the years 1837 and 1887 is unparalleled. At no time in the history of the nation or of the world has there been such rapid and beneficent progress. We, who are citizens of “the old country,”

scarcely realise the extent of our dominion. The Roman Empire was one-fourth its size; all the Russias contain an eighth less; it is sixteen times as large as France, and three times as large as the United States. The United Kingdom, with its Colonies and Dependencies, includes about one-fifth of the entire globe. The rapidity with which population has grown in some parts of our dominion may be measured by Australasia, which in 1837 had 134,059, and in 1885 3,278,934, or twenty-three times as many more. When we turn from these figures to



Birthplace of Her Majesty, Kensington.

consider other fields of progress we are still more amazed. It goes without saying that these last fifty years have seen the growth of railways and steam-ships from their infancy to their present world-embracing influence. The mileage of railways open in the United Kingdom in 1837 was about 294 miles, but a great proportion was worked by horses. In 1885 the mileage was 19,169, the gross receipts, £69,555,774; they carried about 1,275,000,000 passengers, and employed 367,793 men. Not a steamer had crossed the Atlantic by steam alone when the Queen came to the throne, and her accession was in the year previous to that during which Wheatstone in this country and Morse in America introduced Electric Telegraphy. We, who enjoy express trains, sixpenny telegrams, halfpenny postcards, and the Parcel Post, can scarcely realise that we are so near the time when mail-coaches and sailing-

packets were almost the only means of conveyance, and when postage was a serious burden. The greatness of the changes in social life may be realised when we remember that so recently as 1844 duelling was banished from the code of honour; that crime has diminished 71 per cent. since 1837; and that while fifty years ago Government did nothing for education, there are now 30,000 public schools under the Privy Council. These facts are suggestive of the extent of the advance. Or if, without touching on the marvellous victories of Science, we try to form an estimate of religious progress, and take the tables for Pro-

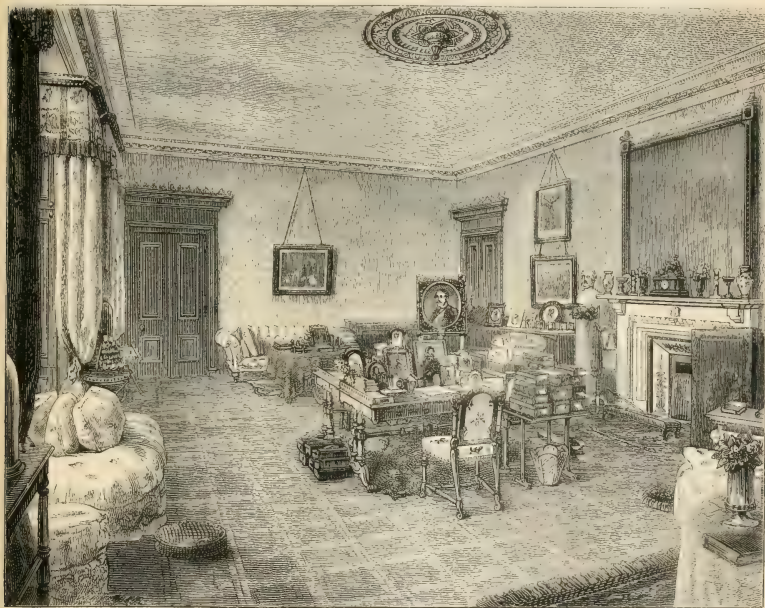
testant Missions, as giving a fair indication of the zeal and self-sacrifice of the Churches, we find that while British contributions in 1837 amounted to £316,610, in 1885 they reached £1,222,261.

It may be said with truth that the progress thus indicated must have gone on, no matter who sat on the throne; but it would be unjust not to recognise the close influence which the Crown has directly and indirectly exercised on its advance. There has been no movement tending to the development of the Arts and the Industries of the country which has not enlisted the active sympathy of the Royal Family. From the first the Prince Consort recognised the important part which the Sovereign could fulfil in reference to the peaceful victories of Science and Art. Beginning with agriculture—the improvement of stock and the better housing of agricultural la-

bourers—we trace the effect of his constant toil in the series of industrial triumphs, of which the Great Exhibition of 1851 was the magnificent precursor; and, in recent years, the same kind of objects has always enlisted the best energies of the Queen and her children.

The contrast is great and touching between the scene in Westminster Abbey, when, amidst the pomp of a gorgeous ceremonial and the acclamation of her subjects, the fair Girl-Queen received the Crown of Britain, and that other scene, when, after fifty years of

a government that has been unblemished, she once more kneels in the same spot—a widow surrounded by her children and her children's children, bearing the burden of many sad as well as blessed memories, and encompassed with the thanksgivings of the three hundred millions of her subjects. We can imagine how oppressive for one so loving must then be the vision of the past as she recalls, one after another, the once familiar and dear faces which greeted her coronation, those relatives, great ministers of State and war-



The Queen's Private Sitting-room at Balmoral.

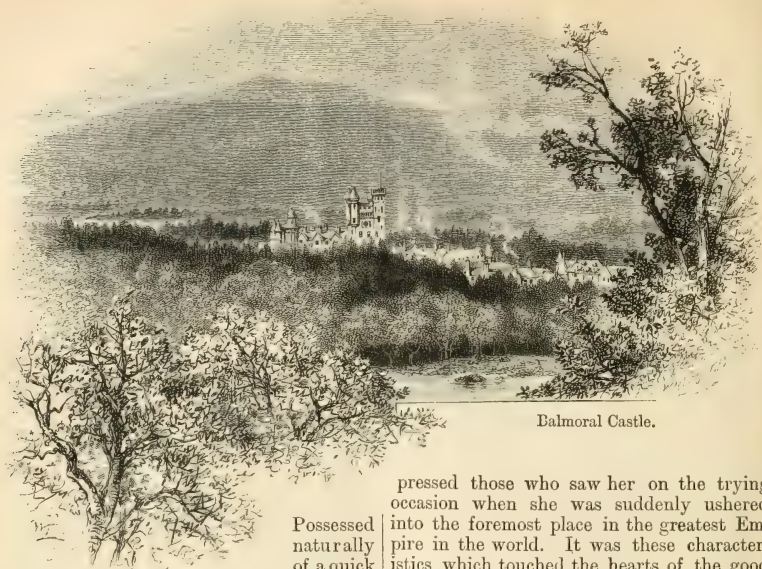
(Engraved by special permission.)

riors of whom so few survive; and when all her happy married years and the years of parting and desolation appear in vivid retrospect. But if ever monarch had cause to bless God for His tender mercies it must be she, who can combine with the memory of her own life's hopes and trials, the consciousness that, in the great work given her as a sovereign, she has been enabled to fulfil the beautiful desire of her innocent childhood, when, on her first being informed of her royal destiny, she indulged in no vain

dream of power, but uttered the simple longing "to be good." That goodness has been her real greatness.

The life of Her Majesty is marked by three great stages—Her Youth, Her Married Life, and Her widowhood. Each is bound to each by the tie of a consistent growth passing through those experiences which are typical of God's education of His children, whether high or low, rich or poor.

Her childhood, with its wise education, is very much the key to her after-life.



Balmoral Castle.

From a photo, by G. W. Wilson.]

an unusually accurate memory, a taste for music and the arts, and a deeply affectionate heart, she was admirably brought up by her mother, the Duchess of Kent, on whom the training of the future Queen devolved from her infancy. If the education was as high as it was possible to afford a young and intelligent spirit, the moral influences were equally beneficial. The young Princess, instead of being isolated within the formalities of a Court, was allowed to become acquainted with the wants and sufferings of the poor, and to indulge her sympathies by giving them personal help. The contrast was a great one between the court of George IV., or even that of William, and the truly English home where the Duchess of Kent nurtured this sweet life in all that was simple, loving, and pure. There could scarcely have been a better school for an affectionate nature. All that we learn of Her Majesty at that time gives a consistent picture of great vivacity, thorough directness in her search after truth, warmth of heart and considerateness for others, with a genuine love for all that is morally good. These were the characteristics which im-

pressed those who saw her on the trying occasion when she was suddenly ushered into the foremost place in the greatest Empire in the world. It was these characteristics which touched the hearts of the good Archbishop and of the Chancellor of England when they announced her great destiny to the girl suddenly summoned from slumber. That first request, "My Lord Archbishop, pray for me!" revealed the depth of her character. It was the same when she had next day to pass through the ordeal of meeting the great Councillors of State for the first time. Lord Melbourne, the Duke of Wellington, Peel, and the keen-eyed Secretary Greville, all felt the beautiful combination of dignity with unaffected simplicity, and of quick intelligence with royal courtesy. But they did not see the episode which followed the fatigue and excitement of the long formalities of the Council, when the young Queen rushed first of all to her mother's arms, there to indulge her feelings in a burst of tears, and then, with girlish naïveté, claiming the exercise of her royal prerogative to procure for herself two hours of absolute solitude.

The earlier years of her reign were happily blessed with the wise and beneficent influence of Lord Melbourne. His relationship to the youthful sovereign was more than that of a father and able political instructor than of a formal First Minister of the Crown. He was too experienced not heartily to appreciate the beautiful character of his young Mistress,

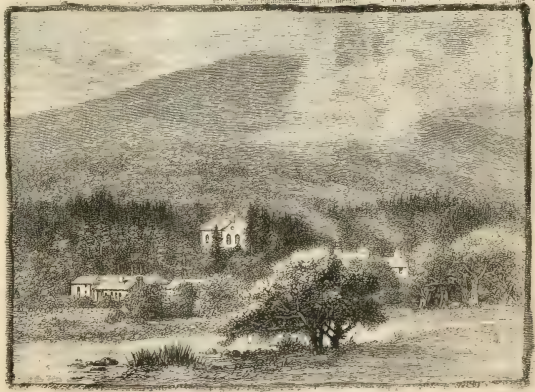
and the interest he took in her political education, and in everything likely to further her prosperity and happiness was evidently kindled by warm affection. She was equally favoured in having as adviser so sagacious a relative as her Uncle Leopold, the late King of the Belgians. The Duke of Wellington regarded her almost as a daughter; and there was also, ever at hand, another, whose trained intellect and loyal heart exercised no little influence on her career—Baron Stockmar—to whose lofty ideal of the functions of Royalty, calmly-balanced treatment of all questions of state policy, and high-toned moral sympathies, both the Queen and the Prince Consort have amply expressed their indebtedness.

Without touching further on the earlier period of her reign, which was not without many incidents of interest, we turn to the married years of the Queen as to a bright and sunny memory.

The position of an unmarried or widowed Queen necessarily entails a peculiar loneliness. She is surrounded by the rigorous demands of State necessity. If she has to form a judgment upon documents submitted to her, there is no one so close to her, and so independent of all other influences as to be truly an *alter ego*. Faithful servants of the Crown may do their best to be of use, but no one of them can be so near as to receive such unguarded confidences as can be given to the husband, who shares every joy and sorrow. The Queen's married life was ideally perfect. She married the man she loved, and each year deepened her early affection into an admiration, a reverence, and a pride which elevated her love into consecration. There was no home in England made more beautiful by all that was tender, cultured, and noble, than that in which "the blameless Prince" fulfilled his heroic career of duty, and shed the bright light of his

joyous, affectionate, and keenly intellectual life. There were few homes in which a greater amount of trying and anxious work was more systematically accomplished, or in which there was a more exquisite blending of hard thinking with the enjoyment of the Fine Arts and the fulness of loving family happiness. We have picture after picture given us in the life of the Prince Consort, which put us in touch with these brilliant years when the Queen and he were never parted but for one or two brief intervals. Early hours of close labour were followed by a genial and hearty relaxation, and at every turn the wife and sovereign felt the blessedness of that presence which ministered to her in sickness with the gentleness of a woman, and which she leant upon in hours of difficulty with complete trust in the strength and truthfulness of his wise intellect. There was no decrease on either side in those feelings and utterances of feeling, which are so beautiful when they carry into after years the warmth of the first attachment, only hallowed and deepened by experience.

There were many fresh features in the kind of life which was introduced by the Queen and the Consort into the habits of the Court. Among these, none were more marked



From a photo.]

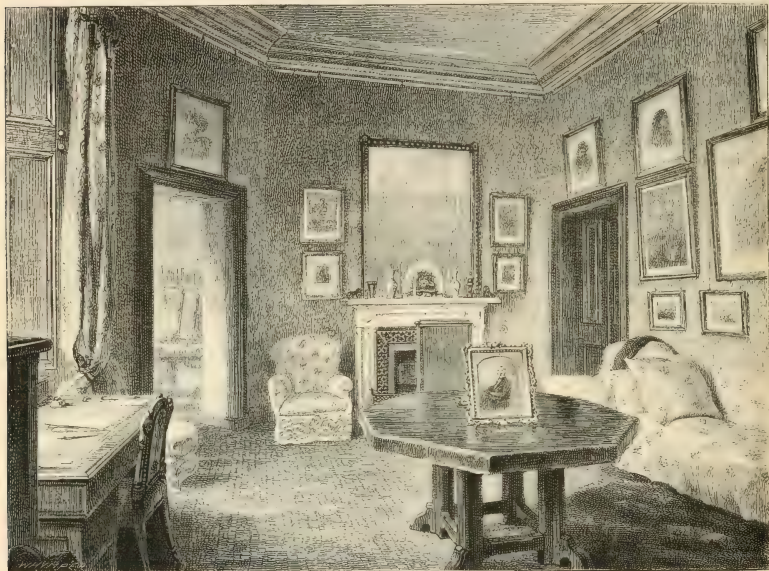
Crathie Church.

[By G. W. Wilson.

than the breaking up of that monotony which the restrictions that hitherto prevailed as to the residence of the Royal Family in one or two State palaces entailed. We can well

understand how the Empress Eugénie should have found the Tuileries, in spite of its grandeur, no better than "*une belle prison*," and her delight at the comparative freedom she enjoyed at Windsor. The Queen and Prince Consort inaugurated a new era in the customs of the Court by taking advantage of the facilities afforded by modern methods of conveyance. Scarcely any part of the country celebrated for scenery, or any town famous for its industries, remained unvisited by them. The beneficial effects of these journeys

were great. Loyalty is to a large extent a personal matter, and is necessarily deepened when the representative of the State not only possesses moral dignity of character but comes frequently into contact with the people. It is also of use to the Crown that its wearer should know, from actual observation, the conditions of life in the country. It is in the light of this mutual action of acquaintance between Prince and people that we estimate the value of that knowledge which the Prince of Wales, his



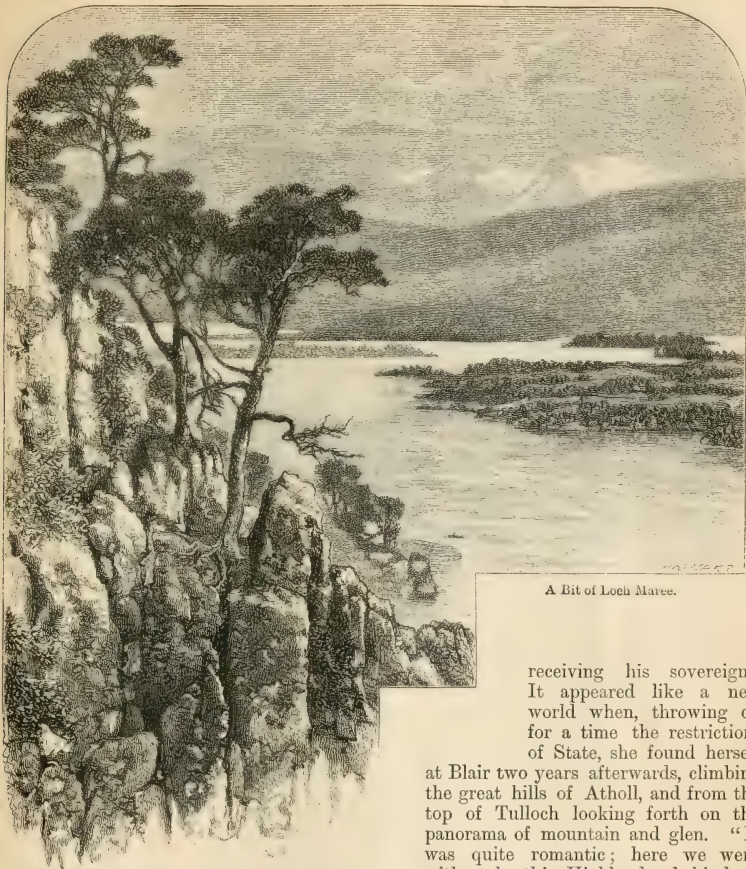
Private Room of the late Prince Consort at Balmoral.

(Engraved by special permission.)

brothers, and his sons, have gained of so many parts of the Empire. The Prince Consort felt keenly the use of these influences. "How important and beneficent," he once said, "is the part given to the Royal Family of England to act in the development of those distant and rising countries, who recognise in the British Crown and their allegiance to it, their supreme bond of union with the mother country and to each other!"

During each year of their married life the Queen and Prince Consort went on some interesting tour. In England—Oxford and

Cambridge, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, received Royal visits, while such historical houses as Chatsworth, Hatfield, Stowe, and Strathfieldsay were honoured by their presence. Ireland was thrice visited; Wales more than once. The first visit to Scotland was made in 1842, another in 1844, and from 1847 only one year passed without a long residence in the north—first at Ardvachie, on Loch Laggan, and then at what was to be their Highland Home on Deeside. Repeated visits were also made to the Continent, sometimes in State and sometimes in as



A Bit of Loch Maree.

From a photo. by G. W. Wilson.]

much privacy as could be commanded. It is when we come to this bright time, so full of fresh interest and of a delightful freedom, that we have the advantage of the Queen's own "Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands." Her visit to Edinburgh in 1842, and the drive by Birnam and Aberfeldy to Taymouth, and the splendour of the reception, when amid the cheers of a thousand Highlanders and the wild notes of the bagpipes, she was welcomed by Lord Breadalbane, evidently stirred every feeling of romance. "It seemed," she wrote, "as if a great chieftain of olden feudal times was

receiving his sovereign." It appeared like a new world when, throwing off for a time the restrictions of State, she found herself

at Blair two years afterwards, climbing the great hills of Atholl, and from the top of Tulloch looking forth on the panorama of mountain and glen. "It was quite romantic; here we were with only this Highlander behind us holding the ponies, not a house, not a creature near us but the pretty Highland sheep, with their horns and black faces. It was the most delightful, most romantic ride and walk I ever had." These early visits to Scotland inspired her with her love for the Highlands and the Highlanders. She found there quite a world of poetry. The majestic scenery, the fresh bracing air, the picturesqueness of the kilted ghillies, the piping and the dancing, and the long days among the heather, recalled scenes which Sir Walter Scott has glorified for all time, and which are specially identified with the fortunes of the unhappy Stuarts,



From a photo.]

Windsor Castle.

[By G. W. Wilson.

of whom she is now the nearest representative.

It was in 1848 that the Court proceeded for the first time to Balmoral, then a picturesque but small castle. The air of Deeside had been recommended by Sir James Clark, the Queen's Physician, and his anticipation of the benefits to be derived from residence there was so completely realised, that although four years passed before the property was actually purchased, yet preparations were made for establishing there a royal home. Plans for the future castle, and for laying out the grounds, were gone into by the Prince with keen delight. "All has become my dear Albert's own creation, own work, own building, own laying out as at Osborne; and his great taste and the impress of his dear hand have been stamped everywhere."

We do not wonder at the attachment felt by the Royal pair for Balmoral. The Highlands have a charm which every healthy mind must acknowledge. The sportsman and the tourist confess it when they rush from the crowded town and the cares of business, or from the tamer beauties of cultured lands, to enjoy "a bath of liberty" on the fresh seas and lochs of the Western Hebrides or among the vast solitudes of the Grampians. We all enjoy our holidays, and the associations of freedom and healthy exercise naturally invest with a delightful fascination the places where we possess them to greatest perfection. The Queen is peculiarly "herself" at Balmoral. If we can learn best the greatness of the Prince and the more purely monarchical qualities of Her Majesty as we read of the earnest toil undergone by both during great crises in our national history, and when the Court at Windsor was daily the scene of anxious interviews with ministers of state, it is at Balmoral that the human and personal side of her character is chiefly illustrated.

The scenery of Deeside has very distinctive features. Unlike the glens we meet in the Western Highlands, always wild, often narrow and closed in by mountains that overhang the path, Deeside has a princely width and shows its sterner forces piled away in a background "so near and yet so far" as to enable you to measure the sublimity of its vast ranges of peak and precipice. From Ballater to Braemar every turn of the road brings some fresh surprise. The lower hills rise in massive groups, here clothed with pine and birch, and there presenting sheets of gloriously empurpled heather. Granite

boulders lie tossed about the hill sides or are piled over level tracts as if there once had been a battle of the giants. But the hills in the foreground are as a rampart guarding the great solitudes which rise to the snow-clad precipices of Loch-na-gar, and the long waving line of the monarchs, who lift their crests into far depths of sky. There is a crisp freshness in the air like that of early morning upon the Alps. It is a delight to breathe it. You fill your lungs with it as a thirsty man would drink from a clear spring. The atmosphere is pure as the cloudless heaven, and the breeze, laden with the scent of the pine or with the sweet breath of the birch, is at once soothing and exhilarating. The colouring is marvellous. In August there is a glow of heather everywhere, except where the deep green of the pine woods—half concealing, half revealing the metallic lustre of the stems—spreads its rich darkness on the lower hills, or where the birch hangs its feathery tresses of quivering leaves. In later autumn the scene assumes another aspect. The mountains are clothed with brown, and the birches, touched by the early frost, burn into every tint, from that of flaming fire to palest gold, from the glow of russet to the yellow of the daffodil. Each tree forms a picture, rising with silvery stem to its light crest, from which the tendrils, covered with dancing leaves, fall back again to earth—as a fountain shoots up to send down its showers of sparkling water-drops around its shining column. In winter it is grander still, when the whole land is wrapt in purest snow and each mountain lies shaped in white, and awful in desolation. And at all seasons there is the ceaseless voice of waters echoing through the valley; for the Dee, the very genius of the scene, rushes broad and strong, dashing over its rocks and swirling into its pools, an unfailing source of life and interest. The people are fine specimens of well-educated Highlanders. Aberdeenshire has always been famous for its schools, and this district, the land of the Duffs and Farquharsons, and which but recently was more Gaelic than English, has shared these advantages.

It was here that the Queen and the Prince Consort enjoyed for more than twelve years a delightful freedom, mingling with their people, devising the wisest methods for ensuring their well-being, going with them to worship in their plain (very plain!) Parish Church, and being to each and all unaffectedly sincere friends. Every spot around soon became consecrated by some sweet association. Every great family event had

its commemoration amid the scenery round the castle; though many a cairn, once raised in joy, is now, alas! a monument of sorrow. The life at Balmoral was in every sense beneficial. There never has been there the kind of relaxation that comes from idleness. Systematic work has been always maintained at Balmoral as at Windsor. Early hours in the fresh morning, and a regular arrangement of time during the day, have given room for the constant business of the Crown; but every now and then there were glorious "outings," whether for sport or for some far-reaching expedition, which gave fresh zest to happy and united toil. There is more than one characteristic of the Queen which may recall to Scotchmen the history of their own Stuarts, and among these is her enjoyment of expeditions *incognita*. The Prince Consort, with his simple German heart, entered fully into the "fun" of such journeys, as starting off on long rides across mountain-passes and through swollen burns and streams, lunching on heights from which they could gaze far and wide over mountain and strath, they would reach some little roadside Inn and there, assuming a feigned name, had the delight of feeling themselves "private people," while the simple fare and the ridiculous *contretemps* which frequently occurred, were enjoyed the more keenly because of their contrast to accustomed state. And during all these years their domestic life was unbroken by any great family sorrow. It was not till a year before her great bereavement that the Queen lost her mother, the Duchess of Kent. Few can read the account of that sorrowful parting without being drawn nearer to the Sovereign by the tie of a common humanity, so deep and tender is the affection that is revealed.

But till 1861 the Queen was surrounded by all those who were dearest to her, and she and the Prince shared the sweet task of superintending their children's education. Few parents more anxiously considered the best methods for securing a sound, moral, and religious training. "The greatest maxim of all," writes the Queen, "is that the children shall be brought up as simply and in as domestic a way as possible; that (without interfering with their lessons) they should be as much as possible with their parents, and learn to place their greatest confidence in them in all things." As to religious training, the Queen's conviction was that it is best when given to a child "day by day at his mother's knee." It was only the great

pressure of public duty which rendered it impossible for her to fulfil her part so completely as she desired. "It is a hard case for me," Her Majesty writes, in reference to the Princess Royal, "that my occupations prevent me being with her when she says her prayers." The religious convictions of the Queen and the Prince Consort were deep. They both cared little for those mere accidents and conventionalities of religion which so many magnify into essentials. The Prince, eminently devout, insisted on the realities of religion. "We want not what is safe, but true," was his commentary on the exaggerated outcry against "Essays and Reviews." "The Gospel, and the unfettered right to its use," was his claim for Protestantism. For his own spirit, like that of the Queen, was truly religious. The quiet evenings spent together before communion, and the directness and reverence with which both served God, were combined with an utter abhorrence of all intolerance. Such qualities are generally misunderstood by the narrow-minded, who have only their own "Shibboleths" to test all faith, and the one Church—whatever it may be—that they regard as "true." The Queen and the Prince rose above such distinctions; they shared the Catholicism of St. Paul, "Grace be with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

But these bright and happy years were doomed to a sudden ending. It is only when we have realised all that her husband was to her that we can measure how fearful was the blow to her loving heart when he who was her pride and her constant companion was laid low. We may well feel what a shattering it brought to all that hitherto had enriched her life, and how very desolate her position became when she was left in loneliness on the throne, a widow separated by her Queendom from many of those supports which others find near them, but from which she was deprived by her position. "Fourteen happy and blessed years have passed," she wrote in 1854, "and I confidently trust many more will pass, and find us in old age as we now are, happily and devotedly united. Trials we must have, but what are they if we are together?" In God's wisdom that hope was not to be realised, and in 1861 the stroke fell, and it fell with crushing power.

It is not for us to lift the curtain of sorrow, that fell like a funeral-pall over the first years of her widowhood. For many a day it seemed as if the grief was more than

she could bear, and although she was sustained through it all by God's grace and supported by the sympathy of the nation, yet it was naturally a long-continued and absorbing sorrow. Other blows have fallen since then. The tender and wise Princess Alice and the thoughtful and cultured Duke of Albany have also been gathered to their rest; and the Queen has had to mourn over one after another of her most faithful servants taken from her. But the hallowing hand of time, the soothing remembrance of unspeakable mercies, and the call to noble duty, have done much to restore the strength, if not the joy, of former days. Her people rejoice, and the influence of the Crown is enormously strengthened, when in these later years the Queen has been able once more to mingle with the nation.

When we touch on the third period of her life—which may well be termed that of sorrow, although brightened by many happy events in the domestic life of her children—we reach times that are familiar to every reader. These have been years in which the cares of State have often been exceedingly burdensome. The days of anxiety during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny have more than once had their counterpart. Afghanistan, Zululand with its Isandula, and the Transvaal War with its Majuba Hill, Egypt and the Soudan, brought hours of sore anxiety to the Sovereign; but they were probably not more harassing to intellect and heart than the months of difficult diplomacy which the threatening aspect of European politics frequently laid upon Government.

I may say in passing that no portrait of her appears to me to be quite satisfactory. They usually have only one expression, that of sadness and thoughtfulness; and so far they give a true representation; for when there is nothing to rouse her interest and when she is silent, that look of sadness is doubtless what chiefly impresses one. Her face then bears the traces of weary thought and of trying sorrow; but when she is engaged in conversation, and especially if her keen sense of humour has been touched, her countenance becomes lit with an exceedingly engaging brightness, or beams with heartiest laughter.

Her life at Balmoral since her great sorrow maintains, as far as may be, the traditions of the happy past. She still makes expeditions, *cognita* or *incognita*, sometimes to the scenes of former enjoyment or to new places of interest. She has in this way visited

Blair, Dunkeld, Invermark, Glenfiddich, Inverrossachs, Dunrobin, Inverlochy, Inverary, Loch Maree, and Broxmouth.

The Queen among her people at Balmoral gives a splendid example to every landlord. "The first lady in the land" is the most gracious mistress possible. Her interest is no condescending "make-believe," as we sometimes find it in the case of others; who seek a certain popularity among their dependants, by showing spasmodic attentions which it is difficult to harmonize with a prevailing indifference. With the Queen it is the unaffected care of one who really loves her people and who is keenly touched by all that touches them. She knows them all by name, and in the times of their sorrow they experience from her a personal sympathy peculiarly soothing. If we might apply such a term where the difference of rank is so great, we would characterize her relationship as "neighbourly"—so hearty and simple is it. There is indeed no part of the volumes she has given us more surprising than the minute knowledge she there shows of all the people who have been in any way connected with her. The ghillies, guides, and gamekeepers, the maids who have served her, the attendants, coachmen and footmen are seldom mentioned without some notice of their lives being recorded as faithfully as is the case with Peers and Peeresses. How few mistresses are there who, burdened as she is with duty, would thus hold in kindest remembrance each faithful servant, become acquainted with their circumstances, and provide for them in age or in trial with generous solicitude. It is this rich humanity of feeling that is her noblest characteristic. The public are accustomed to see messages of sympathy sent by the Queen in cases of disaster and of accident, but they cannot know how truly those calamities fall upon her own heart. As far as her life in the Highlands is concerned, she is now perhaps the best specimen we have of what the old Highland chieftain used to be, only that in her case we find the benefits of paternal government without its harsh severities. There is the same frank and hearty attachment to her dependants, the same intimate knowledge of each one of them, the same recognition of services. It is a Queenly quality to recognise what is worthy, no matter what the rank may be. It was from this she placed so much confidence in her faithful attendant, John Brown. Her great kindness to him was her own generous interpretation of the long and loyal services of one who for more

than thirty years had been personal attendant on the Prince Consort and herself, leading her pony during many a long day upon the hills, watching over her safety in London as well as on Deeside, and who, on more than one occasion, protected her from peril. "His attention, care, and faithfulness cannot be exceeded," she writes in the first volume of the "Leaves," "and the state of my health, which of late years has been sorely tried and weakened, renders such qualifications most valuable."

This large human-heartedness makes her instinctively ready to place herself, as it were, beside those whom she respects and cares for. She acknowledges with a splendid directness what is good, true and great in human beings, whatever station they may occupy. I hope that I may be permitted to give an instance of this without being misunderstood. The Queen herself has expressed in most touching and appreciative language the feelings with which she regarded my brother, the late Dr. Norman Macleod. When engaged in writing his life, I felt that the sole duty of a biographer is to present as true and adequate a portrait of his subject as he can, and to let that portrait speak for itself. It also appeared most becoming in me, who was his brother as well as his biographer, to indicate rather than to give illustrations of the regard in which he was held by his sovereign. But it is a different matter when I am engaged in writing, not about my brother but about the Queen, and when my object is to illustrate her character; and it is because it shows how much she could, with true greatness of heart, place what she is as Queen second to what she felt as a woman, that I recall my first interview with her after his death. When she spoke of him her tears were unrestrained; and after hearing some particulars from me of his later hours, she proceeded, with a pathos that showed the depth of her emotion: "I have mourned for him as I have mourned for no one else outside of my own family;" and then added, pausing to give greater emphasis, "I have considered it an honour that my people called him my friend." Such an expression may well be treasured by those who loved him, as a tribute from his sovereign, but it has a wider interest, for it is still more memorable as the utterance of a humanity so large-hearted that the separation of rank was for the moment obliterated when she thought of the good man she had learned to love. It is only a noble spirit which could thus recognise human excellence and confess that she,

the Queen, thought it "an honour to be called his friend."

Courage is a virtue which the Royal Family of Britain has never failed in; but it should be remembered that there are few soldiers who have been more frequently exposed to danger than the Queen, against whose life no fewer than nine attempts have been made, and that yet personal fear has never for a moment restrained her from duty. "Great events," she said, "always make me calm;" and she records how, on one occasion when her carriage was upset by the side of a lonely Highland road, that during the few seconds when death seemed imminent, her chief thought was that there were "still things I had not settled and wanted to do." These are characteristics of a brave woman.

Her age has many solaces; for besides the love of her people and the loyalty to her person, which unites three hundred millions of the human race in one, she is encompassed by the tender attachment of her children and her children's children. She is the first British monarch to whom it has been given to see, not only the heir apparent, but the son of the heir apparent in direct succession, reaching his majority. When in this capacity Prince Albert Victor handed the Queen from the throne at the opening of Parliament, he took part in a ceremonial which has not its exact parallel in the history of our country. She has also been spared to see all her children married, and retains beside her the companionship of that daughter who in recent years has been so much the sharer of Her joys and sorrows.

The time has happily not yet come when it will be possible to form an adequate estimate of the influence the Queen has exercised. It has been great and greatly beneficial in the past, and the state of English society makes it desirable that the personal influence of the Queen should be still more directly exercised in the future. It will be a calamity felt in many directions, and reacting upon the throne itself, if circumstances or the state of her health should prevent this; for that personal influence was probably never more required than it is now.

One of the duties laid upon the Crown under our constitution is that of self-suppression as regards the value of its own labour. This was pre-eminently the case with the Prince Consort, of the greatness and benefit of whose toil the country knew little till death had removed him. This self-suppres-

sion must also be true in the case of every sovereign. The public can never measure the power exercised by the Crown, when its possessor is a person of intellectual ability and political sagacity. Only the ministers of State who come personally into contact with the reigning Sovereign can justly estimate the influence exercised. Since the Memorials of the life of the Prince Consort have been published the country has learned the large place the Queen and he occupied in the councils of the nation. It is not too much to assert that during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, and during the no less anxious periods of diplomatic action, in which one false step might have imperilled the peace of the world, the legitimate exercise of a wise influence by the Crown was then of as much importance in guiding the country aright, and in extricating it from difficulty, as anything suggested or accomplished by the responsible Ministers of State. The methodical and patient consideration brought to bear on every question; the dispassionate intelligence with which every point was analysed and the accidental separated from the essential; the luminous defining of positions and the practical sagacity with which the best course to be followed was indicated, made the Memoranda upon documents submitted to the Crown of the utmost value for Government. And when we recall the extraordinary political education the Queen has enjoyed, coming in close contact with the greatest Statesmen, Diplomats, and Sovereigns; having to weigh year by year the most critical questions and maintaining a continuity in her knowledge of events impossible for any Secretary of State who must resign his portfolio with every change of

Government; we may be assured that there are few, if any, ministers placed in so favourable a position to form a judgment. Those who imagine that, under a constitutional Government, the Crown ceases to have influence, must surely be mistaken. No sovereign has done so much to define the limited character of the monarchy as the Queen, but these limits by no means exclude the expression of opinion; and when we recollect her great natural ability, the extraordinary tenacity of her memory, and her power for mastering and retaining the mastery of details, we may be assured that what we have learned from the Prince Consort's Memoirs holds true still, and that when the inner history of her reign comes to be known, and when we are in possession of such materials as we have been furnished with in reference to the Prince Consort, the nation will learn how wise and valuable her counsels have been. What she herself has hitherto published necessarily excluded every allusion to affairs of Government. She has given Memorials only of happy days spent among her people; but in the Life of the Prince we have glimpses afforded which are sufficient to show the firm and wise grasp which the Queen has taken of questions of public policy. When, therefore, the story of her Life shall all be told, and when all that she has been and done is related with a completeness which it is impossible to expect at present, we are confident that the verdict of coming generations will be somewhat in the words of Macaulay already quoted; and that it will then be said, how great the nation was and how greatly it had been blessed during the reign of "The Good Queen Victoria,"—Whom may God bless and preserve.

JUBILEE.

FIFTY years since first a maiden,
 Thou took'st the burden of a crown;
 Fifty changeful, chequered years
 Touched with natural doubts and fears,
 Nor without their blinding tears,
 As, with sorrow heavy-laden,
 Thou hast bowed thee down!
 Years of progress for the land
 In wealth and power and liberty,
 And widening empire and command,
 To spread abroad thy Jubilee.

Some are singing, some are speaking;
 Oh, to put some heart into
 What they speak or what they sing,
 Just to give it the right ring,
 For the heart is everything!
 Are not all thy people seeking
 Some leal word and true,
 That from thronging hall or street,
 Well their thoughts may tell to thee,
 When the multitudes shall meet,
 Happy in thy Jubilee.

How we watched thee once, and wondered
 Would'st thou play Queen Bess or Anne !
 Seek for counsel men of wit,
 Or deem thy chamber-women fit
 To guide the land and govern it ?
 And while thus we mused and pondered,
 Lo ! appeared a Man !
 Wise and thoughtful, brave and good,
 Friend and helpmeet true was he,
 The lonelier now thy solitude,
 Alas ! on this thy Jubilee.

Maiden, wife, and widow, queenly
 Mother of a Regal race,
 Loyal to the Nation's laws,
 Loyal to the People's cause,
 Not for favour or applause
 Thou hast done thy work serenely
 With a royal grace ;
 Never paltered with the Right,
 Nor faltered where thy path should be,
 But walked in duty and in light
 Until this year of Jubilee.

Once when crowns and thrones were trembling,
 Panic-promises were given,
 And the nations deemed them true,
 And started on the race anew,
 Till they found they had to do
 With tricksters crafty and dissembling
 In the eye of Heaven.
 But thou would'st hold a sovran sway
 Over a people great and free,
 And leave no spot to stain this day
 That celebrates thy Jubilee.

Fifty years of broadening Science,
 Fruitful progress in the Arts,
 Lesser toil and wages more,
 Better schooling than of yore,
 For mind and body ampler store,
 And a kindlier alliance
 Of high and humble hearts ;
 So shall the fathers tell the story
 To the children at their knee
 Of that wise rule and truest glory
 We crown in this thy Jubilee.

Far and wide thy people wandered,
 Planting English homes where'er
 English ships new lands had found,
 And quiet bays and fertile ground
 Where grass or gold did much abound,
 And they lifted up the standard
 Of the old land there ;
 Yet still they grew in numbers here
 For all the millions over sea,
 And loyal hearts both far and near
 Will joy on this thy Jubilee.

Well thou lovedst peace, but also
 Thy country's honour would'st uphold ;
 If ever fighting must be done,
 Thy heart might bleed, but bleed alone,
 And showed its weakness unto none :
 For never was thy spirit false to
 The Fame its story told :
 And heroes scarred with shot or steel,
 Adorned with cross or clasp by thee,
 The pride of battle yet shall feel,
 When marching to thy Jubilee.

And if in Ireland there be sorrow,
 And in the Senate hoarse debate ;
 If want has bred fierce discontent,
 Land-hunger, and the hate of rent,
 Distrust of law and government ;
 If men from bitter memories borrow
 Wild light to guide their fate ;
 Yet shall this fever, raging long,
 Abate its lurid wrath, as we
 Stand to do right—for right is strong,
 And well beseems our Jubilee.

Fifty years ! and each year feeling
 More and more thy people's love.
 For that the woman still was seen
 Beaming in the stately Queen,
 And dropping there where grief had been
 Words of tender help and healing,
 Like dew from heaven above :
 So, Lady, reigning in the heart
 Of this great people strong and free,
 Accept the love that without art
 Would celebrate thy Jubilee.

WALTER SMITH.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XX.—MISS HUNTLEY ENTERTAINS.

IN the month of January Miss Huntley, grateful for much hospitality received, and conscious of having done nothing to mark her sense thereof, determined to give an evening entertainment. She would not call it a reception or a drum (because in spite of Miss Joy her age and position were hardly such as to warrant independent action), nor would she issue formal invitations; but she drove round to the houses of her acquaintances in Kingscliff and its vicinity, who by this time were very numerous, and begged them to drop in after dinner on a certain day and meet a few of their friends. And first of all she secured the presence and patronage of Lady Uttoxeter, who was the great personage of the county and a distant relation of Lady Clementina's. This showed that she understood what she was about; for Lady Uttoxeter turned up her nose (a fine Roman one) at Kingscliff and its villa-residents, and would not advance beyond a bowing acquaintance even with the Greenwoods. Therefore, when it became known that her ladyship was going to drive over from the family place, twelve miles away, and dine and sleep under her kinswoman's roof, the good people all, both great and small, resolved that nothing should prevent them from paying their respects to a hostess so highly connected.

And on the appointed evening they came pouring in from all quarters, to the number of three hundred or thereabouts, inasmuch that Miss Huntley's pretty little villa was fairly choked with them, and Mr. Buswell, who was among the invited, calculated that, what with refreshments and lights, and the string band in the conservatory, the cost of this little affair must have run to £150 at least. He was kind enough to add that everything was in tip-top style, and that he couldn't have done it better himself.

By good fortune, the weather was of that soft and balmy description which Kingscliff does occasionally, though not very often, enjoy even in the month of January. From a cloudless sky the full moon looked down, making a silvery path across the still waters of the bay, interfering somewhat with the effect of the Chinese lanterns which were dotted about the garden, and tempting amorous couples, of whom there were, of course, plenty among so many human beings, to stroll out into the

cool night air. Indoors the scene was highly creditable to Miss Huntley's taste. The house had been beautified by some artistic furniture, and Persian rugs, and Syrian embroidery, and by many knickknacks, imported from London; the lighting was very prettily contrived; the conservatory was filled with exotics; and the crush was so great that that alone would have ensured success; for, after all, the main thing is that a crush should be a crush.

Conspicuous upon a sofa near the door sat Lady Uttoxeter, with a select circle gathered round her, not exactly receiving the people, but putting up her eye-glass at them as they entered, and, when one or other of them made her an undecided sort of bow, acknowledging the salute with a wondering bob of the head, which seemed to say (though, of course, she would never really have uttered so low an ejaculation), "My good woman! who the dickens are you?"

Miss Huntley, in a white frock of costly simplicity, refused to take her stand in the place usually assumed by hostesses, but moved about among her guests, saying something pleasant to everybody and charming them all by the unpretending friendliness of her manner. Monckton, who arrived late, had some trouble to discover her, and, having done so, declared his intention of retiring forthwith.

"Do you call this meeting 'a few friends,' Miss Huntley?" he asked reproachfully; "and didn't I tell you that I never go to parties?"

"You go to dinner-parties, because I have met you at one," she returned. "Besides, if you look round, you won't see more than a few friends here. I don't believe you know who half of them are, and I'm sure I don't; though Miss Joy declares that they have all called upon me, and that I have returned their visits. Can I have called upon Mrs. Buswell, I wonder! I have got a mixed lot together, haven't I?"

"Well," answered Monckton, glancing at the four corners of the room, "you certainly don't seem to have been exclusive."

"We are under distinguished patronage, though. I hope Lady Uttoxeter's nose caught your attention as you entered. I intended it to be the feature of the evening, and I felt sure that it would lend tone to the proceedings; so, at the cost of some personal abasement, I persuaded the old lady to come

over and spend the night. Oh, I know why you smile; nevertheless, if a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well. That is one of your own axioms; and I assure you that I couldn't have done this thing well without old Uttoxeter's countenance."

Since Brian's departure from Kingscliff Monckton and Miss Huntley had become friends. The latter had actually offered to undertake the duties of a district visitor, but had been candidly told that she was not the sort of person who would be likely to be useful in that capacity, and had submitted to her rejection with a good deal of equanimity. Pecuniary help, however, she had been allowed to bestow in various ways, and thus had been brought pretty constantly into contact with the Vicar, whom she sometimes addressed with deep humility, sometimes assailed upon questions of doctrine, and sometimes tried to tease, according as her mood might happen to be. Some of the other ladies who were concerned in parochial work accused her of flirting with him, and liked her none the better for her supposed offence; because really it is unpardonable to flirt with the Pope, and besides, they had all attempted to do the same thing in their day and had been repulsed. But the accusation was quite unfounded. It is probable enough that Miss Huntley would have liked to constitute Monckton her spiritual director; but he did not seem to be ambitious of acting that part, so she contented herself with making a friend of him. Upon the whole, they understood one another very well.

"Talking of successes," she resumed presently, "how is the future Beethoven getting on? I suppose you sometimes hear from him, don't you?"

"Do you mean Brian Segrave? He doesn't often write; but I believe he is getting on very fairly. I think I told you that he is organist at a suburban church."

"Yes, you did; and I can't say that that exactly realises my conception of the high road to fame."

"It is bread and butter."

"And very little more, I should imagine. A man who is contented to exist upon bread and butter is a lamentable spectacle. His brother wouldn't be so easily satisfied."

"I never said that Brian was satisfied," remarked Monckton; "but I do say that he has done a great deal better than I thought he would; and in one sense I think he has done a great deal better than his brother."

Miss Huntley brought a scrutinising glance to bear upon her neighbour. "I observe,"

said she, "that you are prejudiced against that very sharp-witted young squire. Now I rather like sharp-witted people. He is going to sell a large slice of his property and make a fortune by it, I hear."

"Is he? I am not in his secrets," said Monckton, and turned away rather abruptly to speak to a friend who accosted him at that moment.

That Gilbert proposed to sell that part of his inheritance which abutted upon Kingscliff was no longer a secret, except in name. He had not mentioned his intentions to anybody, and consequently nobody had spoken about them to him; but they were pretty generally known and had met with no little criticism of one kind and another. What had given rise to even more comment was a persistent rumour to the effect that Mr. Segrave would offer himself as Liberal candidate for the division at the general election, which could not now be very far distant.

"I don't know whether it's true or not," Admiral Greenwood was saying that very evening to Sir John Pollington, who had led him into a corner hoping to obtain some information upon this point, "and I don't like to put the question to him in so many words; but from what I hear, I fancy that the local wire-pullers have got hold of him. As a Liberal myself, I ought to be glad of it; only——"

"Only, my dear Greenwood, you don't love a turncoat. Nor do I. If he stands, he'll get in—there isn't much doubt about that. But it will be at the price of losing all his father's old friends."

"Oh, come now, Pollington, that's hardly fair, is it?" protested the Admiral. "That sort of thing amounts to intimidation, you know."

"All right; if I am liable to be prosecuted for declining to visit a man whom I don't like, by all means let them prosecute me," replied Sir John. "I am quite aware that this isn't a free country any longer. I shall continue to choose my own friends when I come out of prison all the same."

"Well, but after all, a man has a right to his opinions," the Admiral urged.

"He has no right to change what he calls his opinions in order to secure a seat in Parliament," returned the other stubbornly. "That young fellow has attended a score of Conservative meetings to my certain knowledge, and if he chooses to rat now he must take the consequences. Maybe he won't care much."

The Admiral rubbed his chin reflectively.

"Mrs. Greenwood," he observed, "says that it shows pluck and honesty on Gilbert's part to change his opinions—supposing that he has changed them. There's something in that, you know."

"I sincerely trust that difference of opinion will never alter the friendship that I feel for Mrs. Greenwood," replied Sir John, and so stalked away.

Certain it is that Sir John's views are those which meet with the most common acceptance, and doubtless it looks awkward for a man to change sides at a time when he may be supposed to derive personal advantage from so doing. Yet Gilbert was more sincere in calling himself a Liberal than he had been in calling himself a Conservative. What the future of England will be very few people seem to have the least idea; but democracies are not apt to be conservative, and a man who aspires to lead his compatriots had better, if he can, begin by placing himself in harmony with their tendencies. It was hardly in Gilbert's power to view any transaction from a higher moral standpoint. He took the world as it is, and made the best of it; which may, or may not, be the wise system, but was, at any rate, the only system possible to him. On thinking it over, he was quite sure that he was a Liberal at heart and, that being so, it seemed to him rather hard that men like Sir John Pollington should turn their backs upon him for having the courage of his convictions.

What both consoled him and earned his warmest gratitude was the spirit of blind faith in which Kitty Greenwood accepted all that he said and did. Love does not always lead to exalted actions; but that it elevates, softens, and refines human nature while it lasts, will perhaps be conceded. Gilbert's love for Kitty Greenwood was the best thing about him. It was genuine; it was disinterested; and it was grounded upon something more stable than a young man's infatuation for a pretty face. Kitty realised his ideal of what a woman and a wife ought to be. She was not over and above wise, yet had understanding enough to appreciate the wisdom of others; she was amiable and trusting, and had strong religious convictions. Gilbert liked women to have strong religious convictions, so long as these did not debar them from participating in the ordinary amusements of society. If he had not yet proposed to Miss Greenwood it was because, with characteristic prudence, he judged it best to wait until his bargain with Buswell should be completed and the amount of his

future income be no longer a matter of conjecture.

Meanwhile, by far the happiest hours of his life were those which he spent in her company. Apart from any other attractions that she may have had for him, he felt with her what he had not been able latterly to feel with any one else, unless it might be with her mother, that he was thoroughly believed in. The girl was herself so simple and honest that a part of her simplicity and honesty seemed to be transferred to him when he talked to her, and filled him with a sense of peace and well-being which he never experienced at any other time. And so, when Sir John Pollington resolutely declined to see him, and other influential guests of Miss Huntley's met his advances with gruff, monosyllabic replies, it was only natural that he should seek her out with a view to forgetting his chagrin.

He found her seated beside an open window, gazing at the moon; and Captain Mitchell, who was standing outside, with his elbows resting on the sill, said audibly, "Oh, if that fellow is coming I may as well be off, I suppose;" a proposition which Miss Greenwood did not see fit to dispute.

"You have found out the only retreat in the room where one can breathe," Gilbert remarked, seating himself sideways on the window-sill, whence Mitchell's arms had just been withdrawn. "What an extraordinary idea of Miss Huntley's to give a London crush down in these unsophisticated latitudes! Not a very happy idea, I think. She forgets that in London one can go away when one begins to be bored or asphyxiated, and that in Kingscliff one can't."

"Do you want to go away?" Kitty asked, raising her blue eyes to his face, with a suggestion of reproach in them.

He laughed. "I don't now; I did a minute ago. Why did you hide yourself behind the curtains?"

"I thought you knew where I was," she replied innocently; "but you seemed to have such a number of people to speak to that I hardly expected you to find me out. You didn't look bored."

"One has to disguise one's feelings even in Kingscliff society, and I wish some of the people whom I have been speaking to had been a shade more successful in disguising theirs. Most of them seem to honour me with a fine, hearty, bucolic hatred."

He spoke with such unusual bitterness that Miss Greenwood looked quite alarmed. "Oh, why should you think that?" she ex-

claimed. "What have they been saying to you?"

"Not very much. One or two of them even went so far as to say nothing at all. I believe the truth is that they have got hold of a rather premature report about my standing at the next election. If I do come forward it will be as a Liberal, and that is what enrages them."

"Papa was talking about it," Miss Greenwood remarked pensively. "He said that people were indignant because you had altered your views; but why should you not be allowed to do that just as much as Mr. Gladstone, and Lord Derby, and ever so many others?"

"The old story, I suppose: one man may steal a horse, while another mayn't look over a hedge. Not that I admit having stolen a horse, or done anything equivalent to it. During my father's lifetime I was by way of being a Tory, because he was one, and because our family have always taken that side, and also because I really felt very little interest in the matter. But when it was suggested to me that I might possibly enter Parliament, I had to examine myself, in order to see whether I had any political convictions about me, and I found that I had, and that they were Liberal convictions. But these wisecracks are a great deal too clever to believe that. They will say—in fact I suppose they are already saying—that I chose the side which looked most like winning."

"It does not matter what they say!" cried Miss Kitty, flushing up at the bare idea of such calumny.

Gilbert smiled. "What people say always matters," he returned; "but in this case it won't trouble me much, so long as *you* don't listen to them."

He was fond of making speeches of that kind; he liked to watch their effect upon her, to see her eyelids drop and her colour come and go, and to hug himself in the knowledge that these pretty signs of confusion were a tribute paid to him alone. For Miss Greenwood had had plenty of ardent admirers, and it was no novel sensation to her to be flattered. She did not reply, thinking, perhaps, that no reply was necessary; and presently he said:

"I dare say you have heard a good many unpleasant remarks made about me of late. Some charitable persons—your friend, Mr. Monckton, for instance—accuse me of having treated my brother badly, I believe."

"No; not Mr. Monckton; he would not be likely to say that even if he thought it.

But I know it has been said by others." She added, after a moment's hesitation and with something of an effort, "Does your brother himself think that you have treated him badly?"

"I am sorry to say that he does. He thinks Beckton ought to be his, you know."

"But it isn't your fault that Beckton was not left to him. He has no right to blame you for that; only——"

"Only what? Please don't mind speaking out; I shan't be offended."

"I don't like to think of his being reduced to the position of a church-organist, that's all. I dare say I may be quite wrong, but I can't help feeling as if something rather better than that might have been found for him."

"Surely you don't imagine that I turned him out of doors! I was ready and anxious to give him an allowance which would have made him independent of any employment; but he refused to accept a penny from me, or to be satisfied with anything short of my surrendering the estate to him. As I wouldn't, and, indeed, couldn't do that, he went away in a huff."

"Then I think he behaved very ungratefully and very cruelly," cried Kitty. "And yet," she added, relenting a little, "I suppose it must have seemed very hard to him. Perhaps, if we had been in his place, we should have been unjust too."

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders. "Possibly I might have been; I don't think you would. But what can I do?"

"Couldn't you—it is very presumptuous of me to preach to you, I know—but couldn't you, after a time, go and see him, and try to make friends again? He may have been angry and unfair at first, but I am sure he hasn't a bad heart."

"I am sure that you have a very good one," said Gilbert, smiling. "I doubt whether my seeking out Brian will be of much use, but I will do it very gladly to please you. At any rate, you don't doubt my willingness to help him, I hope?"

"Oh no!" she answered. And then she agreed to his proposal that they should stroll out into the garden, where doubtless they found pleasanter subjects to talk about than Brian and his wilfulness.

A little later it occurred to Miss Huntley that she would take the air, and see what nature and art had done for the out-door part of her entertainment. Stepping quickly across the grass, she caught sight of Gilbert and Kitty Greenwood, as they paced side by

side down one of the paths, and saw also the figure of a tall, broad-shouldered man, who appeared to be following their movements with interest, and whose attitude expressed deep mental dejection. To this solitary watcher she drew near, and tapped him lightly on the shoulder with her fan.

"Are you contemplating the moon, Captain Mitchell?" she inquired. "The moon is a valuable satellite. She causes the tide to run out for the benefit of sanitary engineers and shrimpers; she sets the sap flowing in the trees, and makes our hair grow, and serves a variety of other useful purposes, such as lighting up the landscape at appropriate times; but it's no use crying for her, you know, Captain Mitchell."

"I am not crying for the moon," returned Mitchell rather doggedly, for he thought Miss Huntley might just as well mind her own business.

"Oh, but you are though! and perhaps some day you will get—well, not the moon, but something quite as disappointing. Still, if it is what you wanted you won't be able to complain. Would you like to have me for an ally?"

"Thank you," answered Mitchell hesitatingly; "but really I don't quite understand."

"In plain terms, then, I am on your side in this affair. I like Kitty Greenwood; I think she is a dear, good little soul, and that she would be perfectly miserable with Mr. Segrave, whose character is too complicated for her comprehension. Now, to me complicated characters are full of attraction. Don't you think it would be a righteous deed to separate that couple?"

Mitchell shook his head. "It's too late, I'm afraid."

"Well, if it's too late, it's too late. All the same, I wouldn't give up hope yet if I were you. I suppose you aren't capable of entering upon a violent flirtation with somebody else, are you?"

"Certainly not," answered Mitchell decisively.

"No; you don't look as if you were. But you can keep in the background and possess your soul in patience perhaps?"

"Oh, yes! I can do that," replied Mitchell, who indeed had given ample proof of his powers in the direction specified.

"Do so, then; and when you want to pour out your griefs and be comforted come to me. Perhaps, later on, a more active part may be assigned to you. This is an offensive and defensive alliance; and it's a secret one, if you please."

With that she left him to place his own interpretation upon the encouragement vouchsafed to him.

"All very fine," said he to the moon; "but supposing that she is clever enough and handsome enough to turn the fellow's head—which I suppose is her game—what good will that do to me?"

The moon making no reply, and Gilbert and Kitty having vanished among the trees, he walked away, shaking his head dubiously as he went.

CHAPTER XXL.—BRIAN GETS INTO TROUBLE.

MISS KITTY GREENWOOD and other kindly persons wasted a good deal of pity upon Brian, who, while they were commiserating him for his misfortunes, was far from being an unhappy man. Happy indeed are those who love music, and happier still those who have mastered the technicalities of the musical art. For them life can never seem quite empty, nor its darkest days without gleams of light. Brian hired a piano, considering that his present earnings justified an expenditure of twenty-five shillings a month upon that luxury; and so, although most of his leisure time was spent in solitude, he did not feel lonely, nor was he disposed to repine at his lot. Of Beatrice Huntley he thought constantly; only he thought of her as one utterly and finally separated from him. His love for her had not cooled, would not, as he believed, ever cool; but it was a hopeless love; and when a man becomes hopeless he ceases, at least, to fret himself. The truly miserable lovers are those who fancy that there may be a possible hope for them when in reality there is no hope at all.

As for the choir of St. Jude's, they were one and all delighted with their organist. He had infinite patience; he took infinite pains with them; little by little, he succeeded in raising the level of the services; in time he obtained the consent of Mr. Peareth, who had previously obtained that of Dubbin, Producers and Co., to put the boys into surplices; he managed—though that was a work of greater difficulty—to get rid of some of the more brazen-voiced and dull-eared of the men. However, he could not get rid of the young women. Mr. Peareth laughed softly and rubbed his hands together when Brian lamented over the apparent impossibility of accomplishing this reform. Mr. Peareth understood, if Brian did not, why the damsels of North Streatham were so reluctant to desist from their weekly labours. Had they not besieged him with questions as

to the antecedents of the mysterious and distinguished young gentleman who was pleased to preside over them? And had not he himself been a bachelor and a curate once upon a time? He laughed and said nothing. He did not think that his organist was in much danger of falling a victim to the wiles of suburban sirens, and he admired the young fellow's complete freedom from self-consciousness.

Mr. Peareth, it is true, did not know that Brian had fallen into the habit of walking home with Miss Sparks every Friday afternoon, when the choir practice was over. Had he been aware of that, he might have spoken a word or two of warning; and indeed Brian himself would, perhaps, not have allowed Miss Sparks to have her way in this particular, had he not been under the impression that her engagement to Mr. Dubbin rendered her a perfectly safe person to walk with. He was sorry for her; he imagined, absurdly enough, that it cheered her up to saunter homewards across the fields with a companion who could explain to her the difference between the modern school of composers and that of the last century, and was able to tell her in what respects the former excelled, and in what it fell short of the standard of its forerunner. Miss Sparks did not care a straw about either; but she listened, swallowing her yawns, because she was a woman, if not a very refined one, and therefore knew that in the matter of conversation the concessions must come from her side. It was only every now and then that she alluded, with a deep sigh, to her "fate," and hinted that Nature had designed her for quite another mate than a wholesale boot and shoe manufacturer of mature age. Brian's replies were so discreet in substance that they might have been published in the local newspaper; but his tones were soft and his sympathies were enlisted on behalf of the poor girl. For, in truth, to be married to a Dubbin did seem an appalling prospect for any human being to look forward to.

One believes without great difficulty what one wishes to believe. Miss Sparks, who had made Brian the central figure of a lengthy conjectural romance, ended by not only taking her fancies for facts, but by persuading herself that this Prince Charming was ready to cast himself, at a given signal, at her feet. A similar process had long ago convinced her that all her attributes were aristocratic, and that she was destined to take a prominent place in the highest society of the land and the period. Now it was manifest that

she never could fulfil her destiny as Mrs. Dubbin; no fancy, however untrammelled, could picture Dubbin, with his bushy beard, his shaven upper lip, his enormous hands (from which neither soap nor nail-brush could wholly remove professional stains), and his loud, rasping voice, mixing in the highest society of the land. The thing was impossible; and so Miss Sparks told her mother, who was partly in her confidence, and who could not but agree with her. Mrs. Sparks was fat and lazy and addicted to the reading of old-fashioned novels, in which the hero was very frequently of the Lord of Burleigh order. She believed her Julia to be fitted to adorn any station, and although, since she was nearly sixty years of age, she deemed a Dubbin in the hand worth two Prince Charmings in the bush, and consequently would not hear of such a thing as a rupture with her affianced son-in-law, she made sundry private inquiries of which the result was highly satisfactory to her. She learnt upon the best authority, that, namely, of her neighbour Mrs. Jones, whose information came from Mrs. Prodggers, who had been told by Mrs. Peareth, who had had it from Mr. Peareth himself—that Brian belonged to an ancient and honourable family, that he was the eldest son of the late Sir Brian Segrave, that he had left his home owing to a dispute with his relations, in which they had been entirely in the wrong, and that his present seclusion was not likely to be permanent. She could not refrain from imparting this news to Julia, nor could she help rounding off the story and making it complete by the not unnatural deduction that the organist of St. Jude's must be a baronet, with a large rent-roll.

Thus it came to pass that Miss Sparks was permitted to enjoy her Friday afternoon walks without let or hindrance, while Mr. Dubbin, who, on that as on most days of the week, was safe at his place of business in Bermondsey, devoted his unsuspecting mind to leather and porpoise-hide. It was somewhat strange that, in that populous neighbourhood, so long a period should have elapsed before any lady felt it right to let that great and good man know of the goings on which took place in his absence; but of course the warning came at last; and though he pooh-poohed it and severely snubbed his informant, he resolved to judge for himself whether she was a calumniator or not.

Week succeeded week; winter passed away; spring came, with bleak east winds, with occasional bursts of sunshine, and, finally, with a sprinkling of vivid green upon

the trees and hedgerows which the London smoke had blackened; yet Miss Sparks did not advance much with the supposed baronet, and it behoved her to expedite matters, seeing that her wedding was appointed to be solemnised shortly after Easter. Therefore, on a mild, sunshiny afternoon, when she had, as usual, secured Brian's escort, it seemed good to her to ask, with sudden impressiveness:

"Mr. Segrave, can it ever be right to marry without love?"

"That might depend a little upon circumstances, might it not?" answered Brian. "I should be sorry to say that such a thing could never be right."

"Well, at any rate, deceit must be wrong."

"Oh, yes; deceit is wrong, of course."

"And I live in an atmosphere of deception!" cried Miss Sparks, throwing out her arms tragically.

Brian said he was sorry to hear it.

"Yes; I am engaged—I am going to be married—to a man whom I do not love. You cannot imagine that I am in love with Mr. Dubbin!"

"Well, no," agreed Brian. "For the matter of that, I cannot imagine anybody being in love with Mr. Dubbin. But then I should think he wouldn't expect it."

"Ah," sighed Miss Sparks, "I don't know what he expects. Oh, how will it all end?"

The tears were so evidently at hand that Brian, to calm her, said, "Why should you marry the man, if you would rather not? Nobody can force you into it."

"But I have promised, and I have no excuse for drawing back. And oh, he is such a coarse, vulgar man, and I do so hate vulgarity! I should like to go away from Streatham and never see the place again. I am sure you must sympathise with me, Mr. Segrave; it must be a daily torture to one of your refined nature to live amongst such people."

Brian smiled; this was a speech which Miss Sparks had made to him several times already. "I think there are pleasant people in all ranks of society," he said.

"Oh, one or two, perhaps," assented Miss Sparks, thinking of herself; "but with most of them you cannot possibly have anything in common. And then, Mr. Segrave," she continued, raising her eyes to Brian's for an instant, "don't you sometimes feel, as I do, that you are living—forgive me!—in an atmosphere of deception?"

"Really I can't say that I do," answered Brian laughing. "I am not conscious of having deceived anybody."

At this point their path across the fields was barred by a stile. The melancholy Julia paused and leant against it, in a pensive attitude, and after a moment Brian seated himself sideways on the top rail, dangling one of his long legs.

"And yet," Miss Sparks resumed presently, speaking with becoming timidity and punching holes in the grass with the tip of her parasol, "some people might think that you have deceived them. Some people say that you have passed yourself off as an organist, when you are really—something else."

"I assure you I am an organist," Brian replied. "Not a first-rate one, I admit; still, more or less of one. What else am I supposed to be?"

"I am afraid you will be displeased with me if I tell you."

"Oh, no; I am not easily displeased. Besides, I don't think I care very much. Please let me hear what North Streatham takes me for."

"They say that you are the eldest son of the late Sir Brian Segrave. Is that true?"

"Perfectly true; and anybody might have had the information from me for the asking."

"But then," cried Miss Sparks excitedly, "you are not Mr. Segrave at all; you are Sir Brian Segrave."

"No; my father was a K.C.B., not a baronet."

This was a little disappointing. "But at all events he had a large landed property," persisted Miss Sparks.

"A fairish property; hardly what could be called a large one."

"Then, Mr. Segrave, why don't you return home and claim your ancestral estates? I know I must seem dreadfully inquisitive; but—but——"

"Pray, don't apologise," said Brian good-humouredly; "your curiosity is quite natural, and I may as well gratify it. Then you can tell the others, you know. I don't claim the ancestral estates simply because I have no claim upon them. They were left to my brother."

"Though you are the eldest son!"

"Though I am the eldest son. My father, for reasons which I don't care to enter into, thought at one time that I was not a suitable person to succeed him, and while he was under that impression he made his will. Now you know all about it, Miss Sparks."

Miss Sparks uttered a sympathetic murmur.

"And have you nothing? No land at all?" she asked.

"None worth mentioning. There is a

small property—the Manor House—left me by my mother. Perhaps I may go and live there some day when I have made my fortune.”

“The Manor House! that sounds pretty. Is it an old place?”

“Yes; very old. It belonged to my mother’s family for many generations.”

Miss Sparks, whose visions had been somewhat roughly dispelled, began to brighten up again. A baronet, with ten or twelve thousand a year, would have been very nice; but baronets, after all, are not a very exalted class. Lord Mayors and all sorts of people get baronetcies, and a rich husband, albeit desirable, was by no means a *sine quâ non* for the only daughter of a man who had been saving money all his life and who was now notoriously well-to-do. Miss Sparks’s ideas moved with such rapidity that she had time to picture herself as a graceful *châtelaine* dispensing hospitality within the oak-panelled walls of the old Manor House, during the very few minutes which passed before she said gently,

“And you can’t go back there until you have made your fortune? How hard for you! I don’t wonder that you so often look sad.”

“Do I look sad?” asked Brian. “If I do, it isn’t on that account, I think. There are worse things than poverty, Miss Sparks.”

“Oh, indeed there are!” cried the sympathetic Julia. “Sometimes I have fancied——” She did not finish her sentence, but resumed presently, with eyes modestly cast down, “Mr. Segrave, has it never struck you that if you don’t make your fortune somebody else’s fortune might perhaps do as well?”

She was really ashamed of herself for saying this, but it seemed as if he never would come to the point unless he were dragged to it.

Brian stared and frowned. “I see,” said he, “that, by some means or other, you have found out a good deal about my affairs. No; it has never occurred to me to think in that way about the fortune that you speak of. Even supposing that I could have it by asking for it—which is not the case—it would be impossible for me to ask for it under existing circumstances. But you must excuse my saying that the subject is one which I would rather not discuss with you.”

The heart of Miss Sparks beat high with hope and elation. She had, of course, never heard of Beatrice Huntley, and the idea that this young aristocrat was only withheld from avowing his sentiments by a sense of inferi-

ority of position was both novel and sweet to her.

“Ah,” she murmured, “you are too proud.” Brian folded his arms, contemplated the landscape, and made no reply.

“Heigho!” sighed Miss Sparks, edging a little nearer to him.

He did not take the slightest notice of her movement. If these were aristocratic manners, there seemed to be something to be said in favour of plebeian ones. She felt very much inclined to box his ears, but resisted the inclination and adopted a gentler method. Wriggling closer still, she laid her hand upon his arm and whispered,

“Mayn’t I know the name of the lady whose fortune you won’t ask for? Perhaps it isn’t such a *very* large fortune after all.”

Then, with a start, he realised the full horror of his position. It was creditable alike to his presence of mind and his good feeling that the first thing he thought of was the providing of a decent line of retreat for the attacking force.

“I thought, from what you said, that you knew her name,” he answered calmly. “As you don’t I mustn’t tell it to you; but you would be none the wiser if I did, for you have probably never seen or heard of her.”

At these cruel words Miss Sparks, whose presence of mind was not equal to Brian’s, bounded back to the other extremity of the stile with a wild whoop. “Oh! oh!” she shrieked: “you should have told me this sooner!”

Before Brian could make any rejoinder the thump, thump, of a heavy footfall was heard approaching rapidly across the field, and in another instant Mr. Dubbin in person trotted up, breathless and wrathful.

“I heard a cry for help,” said he. “Mr. Segrave, sir!—Julia!—what does this mean?”

There is nothing like danger for sharpening the faculties. If Miss Sparks had been distraught a moment before, she was fully alive now to the risk of losing both romantic and material happiness at a blow, and, without hesitating for a second, she decided upon her course of action. Hurling her whole weight against the broad chest of Mr. Dubbin, “Samuel!” she gasped, “catch me! I’m going to faint!”

Mr. Dubbin promptly deposited her flat upon her back on the damp grass. “Oh, I’ve caught you,” he responded, rather brutally; “there isn’t much doubt about that. Humph! your colour don’t seem to have faded much; you’ll come to presently, I dare say. And now, sir,” he added, facing Brian,

"what have you got to say for yourself, pray?"

The whole situation—the sudden irruption of the panting Dubbin, the total collapse of Miss Sparks, who lay prone and speechless upon the ground, as if struck by lightning; his own guilty appearance, of which he was fully conscious—all these things struck Brian as so irresistibly comical that he began to laugh.

"Oh, you think it's a laughing matter, do you?" cried Mr. Dubbin, glaring at him. "You'll laugh on the wrong side of your mouth before you've done with me, I can tell you! This young lady will have to give me an explanation presently, which I hope will be a satisfactory one; but as things stand at present, I'm bound to say that they look a deal more awkward for you than they do for her. I hear her scream for assistance, and when I come up I find her evidently agitated and you grinning from ear to ear, like a young satyr. Now, if you think you can take advantage of your position of trust to insult young ladies in this parish, you'll find yourself very much in the wrong box."

"My good man," answered Brian, who, perhaps, did not much like being described as a satyr, and who forgot for the moment that he was only a humble organist, while Dubbin was a local personage of importance, "you are making a great fool of yourself, if you only knew it. Nobody has been insulted, and——"

"Good man!" broke in Mr. Dubbin, foaming with rage; "how dare you address me in that disrespectful way, sir! Of all the impudent young puppies!—But I shall not stoop to exchange abusive language with you. My business just now is merely to inquire what has been passing between you and this young lady."

For an instant Brian was very nearly telling the truth; but he caught sight of the dismayed countenance of Miss Sparks, who had assumed a sitting posture and was throwing piteous glances of appeal at him, and he could not find it in his heart to betray her.

"I don't feel called upon to answer your question, Mr. Dubbin," he replied quietly. "You seem to be a good deal heated, and that is natural enough, I dare say; but no doubt Miss Sparks will be able to reassure you."

Miss Sparks was not slow to take advantage of the opening thus generously afforded to her. She jumped up with great agility, clutched her irate betrothed by the arm, and whispered, "Come away, Samuel; please

come away! I am sure there will be a quarrel if you don't, and his arms are so dreadfully long and strong, and how could I bear to see you going about with a black eye? Walk home with me, and I will tell you all about it."

Mr. Dubbin hesitated, but ended by allowing himself to be led off. "You and I will square accounts some other time, sir," he called back over his shoulder to Brian. "In the presence of a lady my hands are tied; but don't flatter yourself that you are out of the wood yet."

Brian, still sitting on the stile, watched the pair as they pursued their way, arm in arm, across the meadow, and had a hearty laugh all by himself.

"I have lost a pupil," he thought, "and I shouldn't wonder if I had lost my character into the bargain; but I don't suppose that will matter much. Dubbin will probably have the sense to say no more about it. She will tell him that I have been trying to make love to her, most likely. Well, I'm sure she is very welcome."

Then he rose and strode homewards, regretting that loyalty to the romantic Julia forbade him to relate the incidents of the afternoon to Mr. Peareth, who, he was sure, would have been tickled by them.

CHAPTER XXII.—DUBBIN CONQUERS.

LIFE, which presents itself under such different aspects to different people that it is doubtful whether any man knows quite what it looks like to his neighbour, has been pronounced by some to be nothing but a farce from beginning to end, while others see so little of the farce in it that they cannot even allow a just measure of importance to farcical episodes. Yet these, as every student of history must be aware, are factors in human affairs which it is very imprudent to despise, and which have more than once been productive of the most far-reaching results. Brian, who viewed the world at large rather as it ought to be than as it is, and who had a foolish way of judging both men and things according to their intrinsic merits, ceased to think about Mr. Dubbin and Miss Sparks as soon as he had ceased to laugh at them, and turned his attention to what he conceived to be matters of more personal moment to him. Although no communication had reached him from Mr. Berners, and he had seen neither criticisms nor advertisements of the works which he had confided to that affable personage, he was not discouraged to the point of desisting from composition, and was

just now occupying the leisure of his long evenings by the stringing together of sundry airs and choruses, with a vague idea that he might some day submit them to his friend Phipps as a groundwork for the possible opera mentioned by that gentleman. In this way he employed himself agreeably enough until bed-time, and the next day went about his wonted avocations with no presentiment of coming evil. It was only when he reached his lodgings after sunset and found a note from Mr. Peareth, in which he was requested to call at the Vicarage as soon as he could conveniently do so, that he began to wonder whether anything was amiss. He was led to suppose that he had given offence in some way by the rather dry wording of the note and by the circumstance that it began with "Dear Mr. Segrave." Latterly Mr. Peareth had dispensed with the prefix in addressing his organist and friend.

"Surely," thought Brian, with some inward amusement, as he set off in obedience to the summons conveyed to him, "Dubbin can't have been lodging a formal complaint against me!"

That, however, was exactly what Dubbin had been doing, and before Brian had spent many minutes in Mr. Peareth's study he realised that Dubbin might be a sufficiently formidable foe. Mr. Peareth's demeanour exhibited an odd mixture of dignity, displeasure, and shamefacedness.

"Mr. Segrave," he began, "I have heard with great regret that you have been guilty of—er—misconduct towards—er—a lady parishioner. I am very sorry indeed to receive such a report of you."

"But, of course, you don't believe it," said Brian quietly.

This rejoinder disconcerted Mr. Peareth exceedingly. He rose from his chair, sat down again, rumbled his thin hair with both hands, sighed half impatiently, half despairingly, and at length resumed: "Mr. Dubbin was with me this morning——"

"Mr. Dubbin is a thundering ass," interrupted Brian.

"It may be so, though I cannot consider the description a becoming one for you to apply to him or to address to me. But let that pass. The question is, what defence have you to make to the charge that he brings against you?"

"First of all, let us hear precisely what the charge is."

"Dear me! I thought I had told you. He accuses you of misconducting yourself towards Miss Sparks. He declares that you

insulted her—well, well; I dare say you didn't do that; still, I suppose there must have been something—and it appears that she screamed. Really you ought not to have let her scream."

"How in the world was I to help it? I am quite innocent of having said or done anything that could cause a reasonable being to scream."

"But very likely she is not a reasonable being; few young women are. And to say the least of it, Mr. Segrave, you had no business to place yourself and her in a position so liable to—er—misconstruction."

"I had no business to be walking with her at all, you mean?"

"Exactly so," answered Mr. Peareth, seizing eagerly upon a standpoint which he felt to be unexceptionable. "Such a proceeding was, to my mind, most imprudent—I had almost said improper."

"Well," returned Brian, "I am very sorry that I ever walked with her. As you may imagine, the society of Miss Sparks has no particular fascinations for me, and I dare say I was rather a fool not to keep her at arm's length. In future I shall be more cautious. That's all I can say, I think."

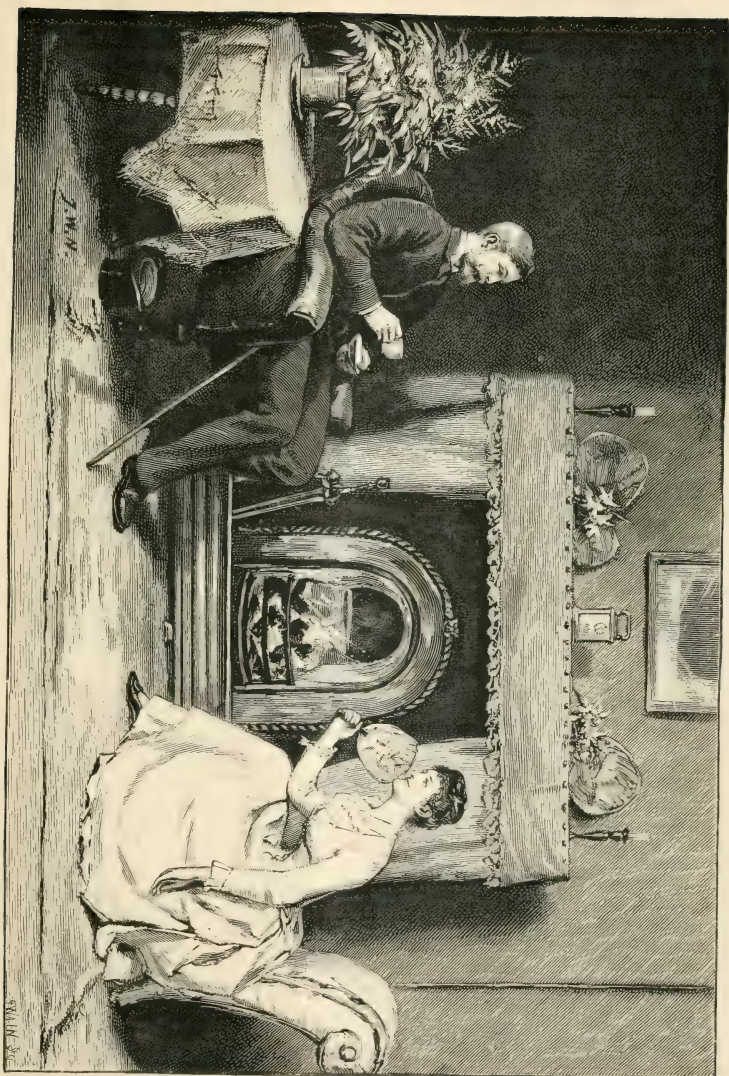
"But you have as yet made no answer to the charge," objected Mr. Peareth.

"To the charge of having insulted Miss Sparks? Well, no. I told Mr. Dubbin at the time that I must decline to enter into explanations with him, and I am afraid I can only repeat the same thing to you. Of course I didn't insult her; you will take my word for that; but for the rest, she must be allowed to give her own version of the affair. I am sure that, if you were in my place, you would feel as I do about it."

Mr. Peareth fidgeted, moved and replaced the books on the table before him, cleared his voice once or twice, and finally said, "So far as I am personally concerned your word would be amply sufficient: but you see, unfortunately, I am not the person chiefly concerned, and when an influential parishioner comes to me, demanding your instant dismissal upon certain specified grounds, and you decline to defend yourself, I—I—in fact, I hardly know what to do."

"Oh, I should think that much the wisest thing you could do would be to dismiss me," answered Brian, unable altogether to conceal the contempt that he felt for a man of so little backbone. "No doubt Mr. Dubbin will make things very uncomfortable for you if you don't."

Poor Mr. Peareth winced. He would



"She had nothing disagreeable to say about anybody."



have liked very much to take Brian's side ; he did not in the least believe the accusation brought against the young man, and his conscience accused him of meanness in that he had at first seemed to believe it. But he was for ever haunted by the thought of his large small family, and he knew that Dubbin, though without nominal authority to dismiss either him or his organist, could speedily and easily render the position of both of them untenable. Dubbin, in short, possessed that power which must be acknowledged to be supreme in the affairs of parishes as well as of nations : he held the purse-strings. The man was not a bad sort of man in his way. "He was offensive and dictatorial ; but he was generous in a pecuniary sense, and the simple truth was that the withdrawal of his support would mean the abandonment of the services which had made St. Jude's attractive, and the consequent emptying of the church. Now Mr. Peareth's stipend depended upon the offertories. Therefore the utmost that he felt able to say was :

"I shall not dismiss you ; I could not conscientiously do that. But the circumstances justify me, perhaps, in strongly advising you to offer your resignation."

"My resignation is very much at your service," answered Brian with a slight smile, "and I am ready to take myself off as soon as you please. Possibly it would be a convenience to you if I performed my usual duties to-morrow, though."

"Yes, I should be much obliged," replied Mr. Peareth hurriedly and with a downcast mien. "Mr. Dubbin said—that is, I believe we shall be able to find a substitute before next Sunday."

He looked so red in the face and wretched that Brian could not be angry with him. "Very well," he said ; "I will wait until the substitute comes. Most likely he will be glad of a few hints as to the services we have been accustomed to, and so forth."

Mr. Peareth raised his faded blue eyes and made an undecided gesture. "You have done a good deal for us during the short time that you have been here, and I have found your help invaluable ; but, indeed, I think you are too good for the place. I hope and believe that you will find a more lucrative post elsewhere," he said feebly.

"Thank you ; I hope so," answered Brian ; "and if you will bear witness to my efficiency it will be a help. I shall hardly venture to apply to you for a moral character, though," he added, laughing.

But Mr. Peareth could not laugh. "I have

told you already that your word is enough to convince me of your innocence," he observed, a little reproachfully.

"And yet you invite me to hand in my resignation."

"Because you will not defend yourself."

"Mr. Peareth, suppose I were to defend myself ; suppose I were to make a defence which should seem convincing to any impartial man—what would you do then ?"

"In that case, of course, I should have no option but to inform Mr. Dubbin that I must accept your statement rather than his, and retain your services."

"Well, I believe you would ; though you would think it a dangerous course—and perhaps it would be dangerous. Anyhow, you won't have to risk it this time. You and Mrs. Peareth have been very kind to me, and we shall part friends, I hope."

"Certainly—most certainly," answered Mr. Peareth, rising and holding out his hand. "I wish with all my heart that we were not going to part at all. Will you not stay and dine with us this evening ?"

But Brian declined an invitation which could hardly have been taken advantage of without a good deal of consequent embarrassment to both host and guest, and it may be conjectured that his refusal did not leave Mr. Peareth inconsolable.

There is more than one standard by which a decent, honest sort of man may regulate his conduct towards his neighbours and sacrifice neither honesty nor decency. The highest and simplest is that of doing as he would be done by ; and this has the advantage of securing to those who adopt it a sense of self-approval which is not to be despised. However, not many do adopt it ; and of that small number a smaller number still are conspicuous for worldly success. The mediocre majority are satisfied to do the best they can for themselves without transgressing certain bounds, judging, sensibly enough, that if they do not take their own part, nobody else is likely to take it for them. Brian, when he thought things over in the solitude of his lodgings, felt it to be a little annoying that he should have been compelled to sacrifice his means of subsistence for the sake of Miss Sparks ; but he was glad to think that he had behaved like a gentleman, and possibly also—not being altogether perfect—he may have derived some comfort from the recollection of having thoroughly humiliated poor Mr. Peareth.

But with these sources of consolation he had to content himself ; for he obtained no

others. Sunday passed as usual. Nobody had heard of his impending departure: Mr. Dubbin did not attend divine service that day, and Miss Sparks failed to take her place in the choir, being kept at home by a severe cold—the result, perhaps, of the inconsiderate manner in which she had been laid out on the damp grass on the preceding Friday afternoon. But on the Monday morning he received an intimation to the effect that his predecessor, who was at present out of employment, had consented to replace him for a few weeks, and would not require any instruction as to the method of conducting the services. Thus there remained nothing for him to do but to pack up his belongings, collect such money as was owing to him in respect of music-lessons, say good-bye to his friends and go.

These several tasks occupied him during a couple of days, and none of them were particularly agreeable. Many people dislike sudden requests for payment; many people also look with suspicion upon sudden departures. In the course of his rounds, Brian met with more expressions of surprise than of regret, and, with the exception of the choir-boys, to whom his patience and good-humour had endeared him, nobody bade him God-speed. Even at the Vicarage, which was the last house on his list, a feeling of restraint and discomfort on both sides prevented him from lingering more than a few minutes.

Mrs. Peareth was obviously afraid of committing herself, and only withheld by conjugal allegiance from raising the flag of revolt against the omnipotent Dubbin. She chose to assume an offended air, saying, "You know your own business best, Mr. Segrave, no doubt, but I am sorry that you should be so anxious to leave us." Nevertheless, at the last moment she broke down, and, while her husband's back was turned, squeezed Brian's hand and whispered, "Don't blame him; it isn't his fault. That cobbler will trample upon us with his hobnailed boots all our lives!"

As for Mr. Peareth, he said very little, having indeed very little to say; but his face was eloquent after a fashion, and Brian left him without ill-will, if without any profound feeling of respect. And so that chapter in the life of an improvident young man was closed.

Brian, unhappily, was very improvident, and so little capable of becoming anything else that it may be doubted whether any dose of the discipline of life could have been made strong enough to cure him of a defect for which most of us have a sneaking kind-

ness—unless, indeed, it be too manifest in the character of our near relatives. Upon what he had earned during his residence at Streatham, he should have been able to live in tolerable comfort and to lay by something against a rainy day; but, as a matter of fact, he had done neither. He had conscientiously denied himself all luxuries in the way of eating and drinking; but his landlady, perceiving his total ignorance of the price of food, had taken care that this asceticism should be of little service to him. And his efforts at economy began and ended there. Money burnt a hole in his pocket; so long as he had any, he was sure to spend it—upon others, if not upon himself; and the consequence was that he returned to his old quarters in Duke Street scarcely better off than when he had left them, some four months back. It was with a somewhat heavy heart that he counted up his modest assets, realising that he must now begin afresh that search for employment which he had found so discouraging before, and that only a few weeks of fruitless search would be required to reduce him to his last penny.

CHAPTER XXIII.—MITCHELL'S ALLY.

IN spite of the promise which he had made on a certain evening, in response to the pleading of a pair of innocent blue eyes, Gilbert Segrave hardly contemplated a visit to London with the object of seeking out his brother and enfolding him in a fraternal embrace. He asked nothing better than to be at peace with Brian; but he could not suppose that a reconciliation would be brought about by the means suggested; besides, as a matter of detail, he did not know where Brian was. However, to set himself quite straight with Kitty Greenwood and his conscience, he consulted Mr. Monckton upon the point. He had not quarrelled with the plain-spoken Vicar of St. Michael's. Only small-minded men harbour malice against those who honestly misunderstand and misrepresent them, and Gilbert was philosophical enough to overlook a little rudeness when it was quite clearly to his interest to do so. Although he had not formally announced his intention of standing for a constituency which as yet did not exist, he had offered no contradiction to the rumours which had been circulated upon that subject, and it was generally understood that they were authentic. Now nothing could be more certain than that, in any election contest, Monckton's good word would influence a large number of votes. Gilbert, therefore, contributed handsomely

to the Seamen's Mission, instructed his bankers to pay an annual subscription to the fund for the defrayal of church expenses, and from time to time sent baskets of flowers over to the Vicarage, for which, of course, he had to be thanked. When he met Monckton, as he pretty frequently did, he never failed to speak a civil word or two, and it was on the occasion of one of these chance encounters that he said:

"By the way, Mr. Monckton, have you any news of my brother? He never writes to me, and sometimes I feel uneasy about him."

"I don't think there is any cause for uneasiness at present," Monckton answered. "He is earning fair pay as an organist at Streatham, and he tells me that he has plenty of pupils."

"Dear me! what a wretched state of things it is, to be sure! I really can't say that I rejoice in his success, because it seems likely to prolong our separation. Candidly now, do you think it would do any good if I were to go and see him?"

"That, I take it, would depend very much upon what you had to say to him."

"I should ask him whether he didn't think it was time that this freak of his came to an end, and I should beg him either to come home with me or to behave like a sensible being and let me provide for him."

"Nothing more than that?"

"More than that I could hardly say. I am very anxious that we should be friends again, and I want him to know it."

"I will let him know of it, if you like," said Monckton, after a moment of consideration. "I am very sure that Brian is too good a fellow to remain estranged from you for ever; but I can't recommend you to go to him just at present, still less to bring him back here. We may take it for granted that, with or without reason, he would disapprove very much of your parting with land, as I am told you have done."

Gilbert gave a little upward jerk of his shoulders and smiled. "I should be sorry to incur his disapproval; but naturally I claim the privilege of using my own judgment with regard to my own affairs. Anyhow, I believe you are right; there is nothing for it but to leave him to himself and have patience."

This conclusion he subsequently imparted to Kitty Greenwood, mentioning that it was shared by Mr. Monckton, to whose decision, as he had expected, she at once bowed.

"Perhaps some day your brother will see that he is in the wrong," she remarked. To which Gilbert replied, "Let us hope so."

He had other and pleasanter subjects for reflection than the obstinacy of a wrong-headed brother. His negotiations with Buswell were proceeding satisfactorily, though slowly, under the skilful guidance of Messrs. Potter and Dodder; there was every prospect that before another year was out he would be, if not a rich, at all events a well-to-do man; he was beginning to live down the hostility of certain of his neighbours, and he was shrewd enough to be aware that a young M.P., with a sufficiency of money, hospitable habits, and agreeable manners, is not the kind of person to be cut by the county. But what pleased him more than the bright promise of the future, more than the absence of Mr. Potter, whose caustic remarks he dreaded a little, and who managed his affairs for him through the medium of the post and an amanuensis who wrote respectfully in copperplate, was the changed attitude of Miss Huntley. Gilbert had been rather afraid of Miss Huntley. He thought—and doubtless he was right—that women are formidable antagonists; he thought Miss Huntley did not like him, and he suspected that she would put a spoke in his wheel the moment that she saw her opportunity. He was glad to learn, upon the very best authority, that he had misjudged her.

"When are you going to have the manners to call upon me, Mr. Segrave?" she asked him one day. "You can't pretend, as Mr. Monckton does, that you are too busy to pay visits."

Gilbert declared that he was really busy, but that he was not, and never could be, too busy to call upon Miss Huntley. If he had not done so long ago, it was because he was afraid of being a bore.

"Or of being bored?" she rejoined. "Whatever you may be, you are not a bore, Mr. Segrave, and you know that so well that I shall not pay you the compliment which was at the tip of my tongue. Come and see me to-morrow afternoon at five o'clock, and Miss Joy will give you a cup of tea. The least that you deserve in return for such a speech is to be deprived of all hope of not finding me at home."

He not only found her at home, when he obeyed this command, but was speedily made to feel himself at home also. Miss Huntley took a good deal of trouble to achieve this result, and appeared to take no trouble about it at all. She manœuvred him into a comfortable chair, with a little table at his elbow, on which to place his teacup; she then left him for awhile to be entertained by the prattle of Miss Joy, and, seating herself at

the piano, played softly to the end of the piece which she had been trying over at the moment of his entrance. She had a good touch, had been well taught, and played readily at sight. The effect of her performance was soothing to her visitor, although he was no great lover of music, and he understood, as he was meant to understand, that her lack of ceremony implied a friendly bent. By-and-by she approached the fire, sank into a low chair facing Gilbert, and, holding up a hand-screen to shield her face from the blaze, began to chat in an easy, familiar fashion about Kingsliff and its society. She had nothing disagreeable to say about anybody; on the contrary, she had a good word for them all, from Admiral Greenwood down to Mr. Buswell; but her tone was that of an outside observer to whom the ways of provincials are an amusing study; she gave it to be understood that she belonged to quite a different world, and seemed to assume, as a matter of course, that Gilbert belonged to it too.

"If I had a nice old place like yours, I think I should be quite satisfied to spend every winter here," she remarked; "but I suppose it is different for a man. After you get into Parliament you will hardly be allowed to bury yourself for six months, even if you wish it."

Gilbert observed, with a smile, that he was not in Parliament yet.

"But of course you will be; and you have chosen the right side, too—at least, the most interesting side. All the clever people are Radicals nowadays. I myself am a Conservative, I believe, though why I don't quite know, except that it would be an uncomfortable thing for my brother's sister to be anything else."

"Why is your brother a Conservative?" Gilbert inquired.

"I have never asked him; but he has his reasons, no doubt. For one thing, it's respectable; and when one is very rich, and has had no great-grandfather, and has married a duke's daughter, one ought at least to cultivate respectability."

"The Duke of Devonport happens to be a Tory; but there are plenty of Liberal dukes," observed Gilbert.

"Naturally there are. Dukes can afford to allow themselves luxuries; but if Joseph were to go in for advanced ideas he would lose caste, I imagine. Joseph expects to get a peerage from the Tories one of these days, only they say he must be a Cabinet Minister first, which I presume means that that would

give them a capital excuse for kicking him up-stairs."

"Sir Joseph Huntley is a man of great abilities," Gilbert remarked.

"Is he really? Well, I suppose you are a better judge than I, but I should never have guessed it. It is true that he has a good deal of solid common sense, and he is said to be an authority upon certain subjects. He might do for the Board of Trade perhaps. However, it doesn't much matter, for, by all accounts, the Tories won't be in office again for a great many years to come. That is partly what makes me long to be a Radical; it is so stupid to belong to a party which is hopelessly out of it. I wish you would try to convert me, Mr. Segrave."

"I am afraid I should only succeed in wearying you," Gilbert answered.

Nevertheless, he let her persuade him to unfold and explain the Radical programme; and she listened to him with so much interest, every now and then interrupting him with such bright and intelligent comments, that he ended by greatly enjoying a discussion in which he gained the victory at every point.

"Well," Miss Huntley said at length, "I suppose I must acknowledge myself beaten, if I am not quite convinced yet. It seems a little strange that an owner of property in land should hold the opinions that you do; but the strangeness is all to your credit. What I admire about the radicalism of men in your position is that it must at all events be disinterested."

"A good many people hereabouts would tell you that that is just what my radicalism is not," observed Gilbert.

"Oh, they are angry with you for leaving them, and I don't wonder at it. It must be very provoking to lose the one man in the county who is sure to come to the front in Parliament."

After the interchange of a few more such speeches as these Gilbert went away in high good-humour, and as soon as he was gone Miss Joy said,

"Beatrice, what is your object in making a fool of that young man?"

"I don't think he is a fool," Miss Huntley replied, yawning; "and if he is I am sure it is not I who made him so. He expounded the Radical gospel very clearly and convincingly, I thought."

"Now, Beatrice, as if you could deceive me in that way! I don't pretend to understand politics, but I know that you might have driven him into a corner about the game laws, and that you deliberately let him

escape. You wouldn't have done that, my dear, if you had been arguing seriously."

Miss Huntley clapped her hands and laughed loudly. "The next time he comes I shall turn you out of the room," she said. "You are far, far too clever, you delightful old Matilda, and I may as well confess at once that I wanted Mr. Segrave to have the best of that exciting controversy. I mean to make a friend of Mr. Segrave, and I must begin by stroking him down."

"But why should you want to make a friend of him?"

"Well—he interests me."

"I dislike him rather particularly," Miss Joy declared in a decided tone of voice; "and what's more, I believe you do too."

If such was the case nothing short of Miss Joy's remarkable cleverness could have discovered it. From that day Miss Huntley made it her business to show marked favour to Gilbert; nor did it take her long to overcome the suspicion with which he regarded her first advances. After all, he said to himself, it was not so very astonishing that a woman of distinctly superior qualities should feel herself drawn towards the only man in the neighbourhood who had any pretensions to superiority. He was flattered by her recognition of his claim to be honoured above his fellows, and, in any event, her friendship must be preferable to her enmity. Therefore he did not hesitate to avail himself of her constant hospitality, and thoroughly appreciated the little dinners which she was fond of arranging, and at which he generally had the pleasure of meeting Kitty Greenwood. Captain Mitchell and one or other of the idle young men who hung about Kingscliff usually completed the party; but the presence of these nonentities did not interfere with Gilbert's comfort, nor divert the attention of his hostess from him. Indeed, he scarcely noticed that they were there.

What he might have noticed, and what other people did notice, was that, somehow or other, in the course of these pleasant evenings he never managed to secure a little private conversation with the girl of his heart. No one could say that Miss Huntley was making a set at him; she displayed no anxiety to keep him to herself, and all the remarks that she addressed to him might have been spoken in the market-place; but, on the other hand, she never left him alone. Thus it happened that, every now and again, Mitchell obtained the opportunities which were wanting to Gilbert, and availing himself thereof, was sharply snubbed for his pains. But this

was no new experience to the gallant and lovelorn sailor. He preferred a slap in the face from Kitty to a kiss from anybody else, and nobly maintained his character for patient endurance while watching with wondering admiration the manœuvres of his ally.

What Miss Greenwood thought of these manœuvres it was not easy to tell from her demeanour. She was one of those simple, old-fashioned maidens—there are still a few such, whatever may be asserted to the contrary—who cannot avow to themselves that they love any man until his own love for them has been declared. She may have been made a little unhappy by the partial cessation of Gilbert's attentions: but if so, she probably did not inquire into the cause of her unhappiness. For the rest, she was deeply attached to Beatrice Huntley, who had become her intimate friend, and whom she believed to be incapable of treachery in any form.

So the days and weeks passed by, and there were dinners, as aforesaid, and boating excursions and rides and other unexciting diversions, and at the end of all it must be owned that things remained very much as they had been at the beginning. Miss Huntley found out—and the discovery surprised her somewhat—that Gilbert was really and truly in love with Kitty; Mitchell made no progress with his suit; and Gilbert himself drifted agreeably upon the top of the flood, finding life sweet and seeing no need for hurry in the matter of marriage. He was, in fact, so sure of success that he was beginning to think that it might be as well to wait until the election was over before taking a step which would entail a considerable sacrifice of independence and an inconvenient period of absence from home.

It was on an evening in the month of April, when the weather had become warm, and rash persons were proclaiming that winter was at an end, and Miss Huntley's departure for London was regretfully spoken of as imminent, that a little piece of luck befell the patient Mitchell. That evening the small party above enumerated had assembled, as they had so often done before, at Miss Huntley's villa, where Kitty Greenwood was staying on a short visit, her parents having been invited to dine at a house on the other side of the county and—in accordance with a local custom—to remain for a couple of nights under the roof of their entertainers. Miss Huntley was getting Gilbert to explain to her (though she knew quite as much about it as he did) the effect upon the constituencies

of the Redistribution Bill, which just then was engrossing public attention; Miss Joy was relating to Mitchell, who was not listening to her, how she had been as nearly as possible overtaken by the tide, while sketching, that afternoon, and Kitty, all by herself, was abstractedly turning over the pages of a book of prints which she had taken upon her knee.

Presently she shifted her position a little in order to get a better light and, raising her arm, brought it into contact with one of the candles which were standing upon the table behind her. In an instant a tongue of flame shot up from the flimsy fabric of which her sleeve was made. She gave a cry of terror; Gilbert started to his feet, but Mitchell, quicker than he, sprang forward, seized the burning sleeve in his hands and pressed the flames out before Miss Joy had time to do more than ejaculate "Good gracious!"

Very little harm was done. Miss Greenwood's elbow was slightly scorched and Mitchell had a blister or two upon his hands, which he did not think it necessary to display; but it was evident that only his promptitude had averted a serious, if not a fatal catastrophe; so that he might be considered a fortunate man, in spite of his blisters.

When the hubbub had subsided, and Kitty, notwithstanding her protestations, had been taken up-stairs to have her elbow swathed in cotton-wool by Miss Joy, Miss Huntley could not refrain from saying aside to Gilbert, "You missed a fine opportunity there."

"Really that was not my fault," he returned, in a somewhat aggrieved tone; "the whole thing was over in a second, and Mitchell bounced up in front of me, so that I couldn't get past him."

"So officious, wasn't it? Let us hope that he burnt his fingers; I see that he is examining them surreptitiously. But, do you know, I am very glad that he has had this chance of playing the hero—or would you call him a *poseur*?—because, perhaps, it may induce Kitty to take a fancy to him, and those two are made for each other."

"I can't agree with you," said Gilbert, flushing slightly.

"I am quite aware that you can't, and I sincerely regret it, for everybody's sake. I must stick to my opinion that Kitty Greenwood is designed by nature for the domestic virtues and their rewards. Men who have a career before them seldom find time for domesticity, and, if they marry at all, ought to marry ambitious women. Excuse my frankness."

Having dropped that hint she moved away, leaving it to bear what fruit it might; but she did not retire to rest without turning the episode of the evening to account in another quarter.

"Kitty," said she, after she had accompanied Miss Greenwood to her bedroom, "do you ever read *Æsop's fables*? If you don't, I will lend you my copy, and you can study the fable of the dog who dropped his bone into the water in the attempt to get hold of another, which he saw reflected there. You are the dog; Captain Mitchell's devotion to you is the substantial bone, and as for the shadow, you may fill that up according to taste. Do you fully realise that Captain Mitchell saved your life this evening?"

"Yes, indeed I do, and I am very grateful to him," answered Kitty; "only I wish——"

"I wouldn't wish for more than I had got, if I were you. 'One isn't loved every day,' as Owen Meredith very truly observes."

"Well, but," objected Kitty, with a blush, "Captain Mitchell has never told me that—he has never said anything of *that* sort to me."

"He never will if you go on as you are doing now, and I know who will be sorry for it some fine day. You think you are certain of him, but I assure you that you are not. He is a mortal man, and he is capable of consoling himself. In fact, I like him so much that, sooner than see him so badly treated, I myself will undertake to console him—not personally, but by deputy. I know more than one girl who is almost good enough for him. Now good-night. Ponder these sayings." And with that, she kissed her guest and withdrew.

A few days later Miss Huntley was standing on the departure side of the little Kingscliff station, surrounded by quite a host of sorrowing friends and acquaintances. She addressed them, severally and generally, in the most amiable terms, and with a few favoured ones she took a turn or two up and down the platform. Amongst the latter was Monckton, who had hurried down to bid farewell to a lady whose liberality had tided more than one indigent member of his flock over the dark days of the stormy season.

"You will come back to us next winter, I hope," said he.

"Ah, I don't know," she answered, with something of a sigh. "It is a long time from now to next winter, and all sorts of things may happen between this and that. But I shan't forget Kingscliff and I shan't forget you. If only you could come up to London

and preach to me every Sunday, I shouldn't be afraid of—of temptations that sometimes frighten me now.”

“Preaching is a poor thing to trust to,” said Monckton.

“Perhaps so, but it is better than nothing, and at any rate I am always influenced by it. My sister-in-law will preach to me now; I don't like her sermons as well as yours. You said you would be in London soon; you will come and see me, won't you?”

“Yes, with pleasure, if I can find the time; but I shall be very busy, I expect.”

“Well, if you can and will find the time, it will be a kindness.” Then, with a sudden change of tone, “Shall you look up Esau when you are in London?”

“Esau?” repeated Monckton inquiringly.

“I have a way of giving people nicknames; it serves to keep them in my memory. Mr. Brian Segrave is called Esau, for obvious reasons. Tell him that I shall be in Park Lane for the season.”

“I will tell him,” answered Monckton, “but I won't promise that he shall call upon

you. He probably regards himself as being altogether out of society.”

“What has that to do with it? Besides, he must come back to society. He ought to sell the Manor House. I wish he would sell it to me, then I should have an excuse for returning to Kingscliff.”

“I'm afraid he won't do that,” said Monckton, shaking his head.

“Why not? At least I shouldn't parcel it out into building-lots. Anyhow, I shall think him very rude if he drops my acquaintance.”

At this moment the train drew up to the platform, and Miss Huntley took her place amidst a chorus of good-byes. Her last words were for Gilbert. “Remember that you have promised to report yourself in Park Lane before the month is over.”

So the express bore her away, and the gilded youths of Kingscliff were left to meditate upon the melancholy fact that they had had an heiress among them for six months, and that not one of them had had the courage to propose to her.

HOW MONEY IS MADE.

By PROFESSOR T. E. THORPE, F.R.S.

MONEY, in its widest sense, has been defined by an American writer to be “that which passes freely from hand to hand throughout the community in final discharge of debts and full payment for commodities, being accepted equally without reference to the character or credit of the person who offers it, and without the intention of the person who receives it to consume it or enjoy it or apply it to any other use than, in turn, to tender it to others in discharge of debts or payment for commodities.”* Doubtless particular cases may be found which do not readily come within this definition. Indeed, there are probably few terms in economics more difficult to define than that of money, owing mainly to the development of modes of exchange dependent upon the growth and organization of that credit which is one of the distinguishing features of a progressive civilisation.

In ordinary language, by money is usually meant stamped metal, to be used as the medium of exchange, and as the measure by which the values of the exchanges are determined. It is in the sense of stamped metal that the term is employed as the title

of this paper. It is a singular fact—and this notwithstanding all the wise sayings, familiar in our mouths as household words, in which our common humanity has concentrated its experiences of the power of money, whether for good or for evil—that the intrinsic nature of money should be so little understood by people at large. Of course these sayings, in which, as we are told, the wisdom of the many has been crystallised by the wit of the few, have mainly reference to money in the abstract; but many a poor widow living on an Indian pension is to-day painfully conscious of one, at least, of the contingencies which affect the value of a specific form of money. The intrinsic nature of money, in a concrete sense, has become to her a matter of very real importance.

It is perhaps hardly necessary here to dwell upon the reasons which have induced all civilised communities to adopt the metals as the material of money. In early times the common mode of exchange was by barter, and such modes are still in use among savage peoples to-day. As such people advance in the arts of civilisation the need of a circulating medium becomes more and more felt. The skins of animals are among

* F. A. Walker, “Money, Trade, and Industry.” Quoted by Professor Bastable, Art. “Money,” Ency. Brit. vol. xvi.

the earliest forms of currency, to be followed by the animals themselves. With the early Roman tribes sheep and oxen were considered as units of value, and, according to Mommsen, ten sheep were regarded as equivalent to one ox. The Latin word *pecunia* (*pecus*) has its origin in this use of cattle as money, and it is said that the English words *fee* and *feudal* spring from the same root. Among certain tribes in South Africa cattle are still the only medium of exchange. Slaves have often been, and still are in Central Africa, regarded as a form of currency. We have a survival of this practice in the word *cumhal*, one of the standards of value in the Irish law tracts, and which is said to mean originally a female slave. Corn, oil, cocoa-nuts, tea, and tobacco, have at various times and among different people been accepted as legal tender. Shells, whales' teeth, and feathers are current to-day among the islanders of the Pacific, and greenstone and red ochre are used by way of exchange among certain Australian tribes.

The mere enumeration of these primitive forms of currency will serve to indicate why the metals have come to be regarded as the most suitable medium for money. It is at the same time easy to perceive why the so-called precious metals tend to displace the others. The material of money should be valuable in itself, and it should be durable, readily portable, homogeneous, easily divisible, and if necessary readily united together again; its value should be easily estimable, and fairly permanent. Certain of these conditions are fulfilled by some of the common metals and hence most of them have been used at some time or other as the material of money. Thus the Spartans used iron, and in later times it has been so employed by the

Chinese and in Japan. Nails, indeed, were used for money in Scotland in the time of Adam Smith. Lead and tin were once employed for coinage in this country. Of all the common metals copper has been used the most extensively, either alone or in union with tin; in fact, in some nations copper and its alloys constituted the principal coinage for long periods of time. But these metals only partially satisfy the ideal requirements of the material of money. Iron rusts, and is

cheap; lead is soft, and tin is brittle; copper is tough and durable, but its value is so low that a coinage formed exclusively of this metal would lack the condition of ready portability. Gold and silver, of all the metals, practically alone possess the essential qualities. As Cantillon says, "Gold and silver alone are of small volume, of equal goodness, easy of transport, divisible without loss, easily guarded, beautiful, and brilliant, and durable almost to eternity." For a long time silver constituted the chief form of money, gradually superseding copper until in mediæval times it was almost the exclusive form of exchange. Its relative abundance is now affecting its value towards gold, which tends to become the sole monetary standard. The questions which spring out of this disturbed relation in the values of



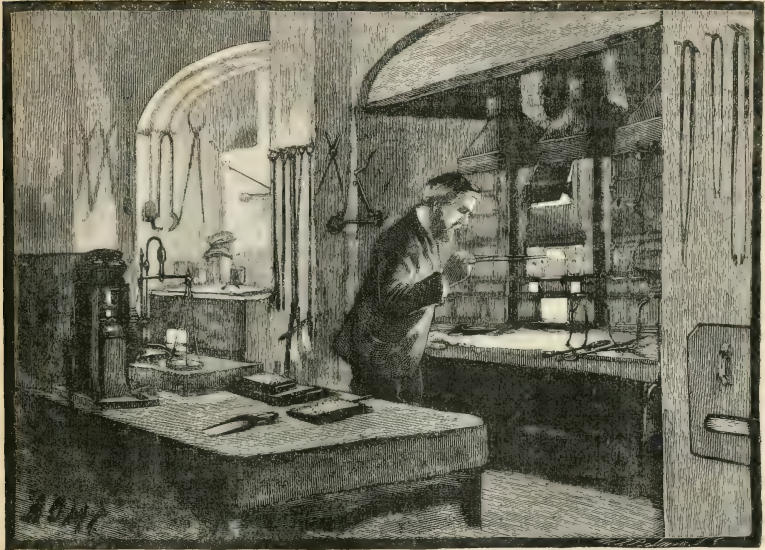
Entrance to Mint.

the two metals are among the most serious economic problems of the day.

When metals were first used for money, they were always tendered by weight, and we have a survival of the practice in China at the present time, and an allusion to the principle in our own word "pound." The disadvantages of this method are obvious, and hence arose the art of coining, the metal being, as Aristotle says, "determined in value by men putting a stamp upon it, in order that

it may save them from the trouble of weighing it," the stamp denoting not only the weight, but the fineness or quality of the metal. According to Herodotus, the Lydians were the first to coin gold and silver.

In order to guard against fraud, the shape and even the size of the coin, as well as the character of the design impressed upon it, became all important. Rectangular, or hexagonal pieces, which have occasionally been



Assaying.

used, lend themselves to the practice of "clipping;" hence there has been a general preference exercised in favour of circular coins. A coin should not be too small, otherwise it is not easily picked up, and is readily lost. On the other hand, it should not be too large, as it is relatively more expensive to coin large pieces than small pieces of the same quality of workmanship, and moreover a large piece of high value is liable to be tampered with. Thus numbers of the American double-eagles were sawn in two, the gold in the middle being removed and its place partially supplied by the cheaper and somewhat heavier metal platinum, the outside surfaces of the coin being afterwards soldered together. To avoid counterfeiting, the design should be fairly elaborate, and such as can only be impressed by expensive machinery; and to prevent "clipping" the edge should be milled or have a legend inscribed round it. Lastly, the workmanship and artistic

merit of the coin should be the best possible. With work on our coins like that of Simon, who made the famous "Petition Crown" of Charles II., we might well defy the machinations of the common level of counterfeiters. Biringuccio, in his advice to a mint master, given upwards of three centuries ago, specially urges that good workmen should be secured to engrave the dies, not only that fraud may be prevented, but that the people may have pleasure in things they must perforce use.*

Pure gold and pure silver are never employed as the material of money to-day, mainly for the reasons that these metals used alone are not sufficiently durable, and that the addition of a baser metal to them constitutes a notable source of revenue to the State. This base metal is, in Mint terminology, known as *alloy*, and it is very much in the Mint sense that the word is commonly

* Roberts-Austen, "Alloys used for Coinage," p. 13.

understood. In scientific phraseology, however, alloy means simply a fused mixture of metals without reference to the comparative value of the components. The word comes from the Latin *ad-ligo* or *alligo*, to bind together. It has been supposed that it has been more directly derived from the French *à loi*, meaning an admixture according to a recognised standard. The word "sterling" applied to the standard money of Great Britain has a singular history which has greatly perplexed the curious. It was not in use before the Conquest, but seems to have originated from the circumstance that people of the north-east of Europe or *Easterlings*, according to Stow, "did first make money in England in the reign of Henry II.," "and thus," he continues, "I set it down according to my reading in antiquitie of money matters, omitting the imaginations of late writers, of whom some have said Easterling money to take that name of a starre stamped on the border or ring of the penie; other some, of a bird called a stare or starling stamped on the circumference, and others (more unlikely) of being coined at Stiruelin or Starling, a towne in Scotland."

The nature of the base metal to be added to the gold or silver is a matter of great importance. In the British coinage it is now exclusively copper. Silver alloys admirably with gold, but the resulting mixture is less yellow than gold; the Australian sovereigns owe their peculiar colour to the presence of silver. Copper on the other hand heightens the colour, and the combination is sufficiently hard, ductile, viscous and homogeneous to approximate to the requirements of an ideal alloy for a gold currency.

By a statute of Henry VIII. made in 1527, troy weight was definitely established as the only legal weight for gold and silver, and the troy pound and its divisions are still used in weighing these metals. This circumstance has brought about the particular mode of adjusting the relation between the precious metals and the alloy which still continues. From a Parliamentary paper presented by the Commissioners appointed in 1868 to inquire into the condition of the Exchequer standards we glean that "the troy pound is said to have been derived from the Roman weight of 5759·2 grains, the 125th part of the large Alexandrian talent, this weight, like the troy pound, having been divided by the Romans into twelve ounces." Troy weight seems to have been in general use in this kingdom from the time of Edward I. According to the Com-

missioners, "the most ancient system of weights in this kingdom was that of the moneyer's pound, or the money pound of the Anglo-Saxons, which continued in use for some centuries after the Conquest, being then known as the Tower pound, or sometimes the Goldsmiths' pound. It contained 12 ounces of 450 grains each, or 5,400 grains, and this weight of silver was a pound sterling."

Up to 1882 the quality or *fineness* of gold as used in the Mint was computed by the system of carats and grains, the former word being probably derived from the Greek *keration* or the Arabic *kyrat*, terms originally applied to beans or seeds used as weights. This system of weights has probably come down to us from the Arabian alchemists, from whom the Western nations derived their knowledge of the operations of chemistry and of metallurgical processes. To-day, following the practice of Continental nations, the fineness of gold and silver alloys is calculated in the Mint on the decimal system, the pure metals being considered as 1,000.

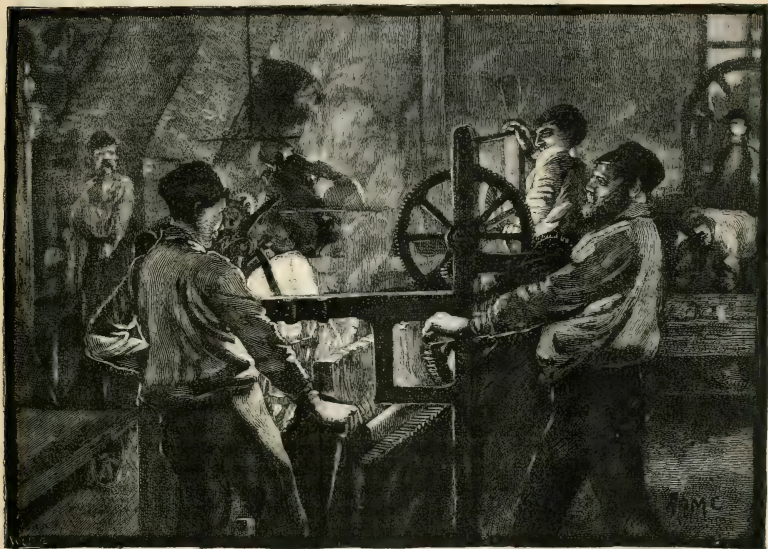
The coinage system of this country is at present regulated by the Coinage Act of 1870, in which previous Acts upon the subject are amended and consolidated. The standard fineness of the gold coinage is therein defined to be $\frac{11}{12}$ fine gold, $\frac{1}{12}$ alloy; or millesimal fineness 916·66; that of the silver coinage is $\frac{3}{4}$ fine silver, $\frac{1}{4}$ alloy; or millesimal fineness 925; and the bronze coinage is simply defined as a mixed metal consisting of copper, tin, and zinc.

It may be interesting to trace the history of these particular standards in England. Much, indeed, of the history of this country is centred round this question. The debasement of a currency has always been regarded as a particularly heinous act; it is one of those things which, as Bacon says, "come home to men's business and bosoms" in such a very direct way that they are tempted to look upon it as a crime. Judged in this way the rulers of nations, in times past, have been particularly criminal; for, as the late Professor Jevons pointed out, they have been among the most notorious false coiners and depreciators of currency of which history has any record. The operations of "clippers," "sweaters," and "cullers" pale into utter insignificance when compared, for example, with the manipulations of the puissant King of "smashers" and Defender of the Faith, Harry the Eighth of England.

When gold and silver coins were first

issued they were exclusively made of the purest metals that could be obtained. The first gold coin in the kingdom was made by Henry III. in 1257; it was a penny, and of the finest gold. The pure metal continued to be used until 1343, when Edward III. caused half a grain of alloy to be added, thus reducing the standard to 994.8. These coins, which were of great beauty, were subsequently stated, in defiance of all chronological and other difficulties, to be made of precious metal, prepared by the occult processes of the celebrated alchemist Raymond

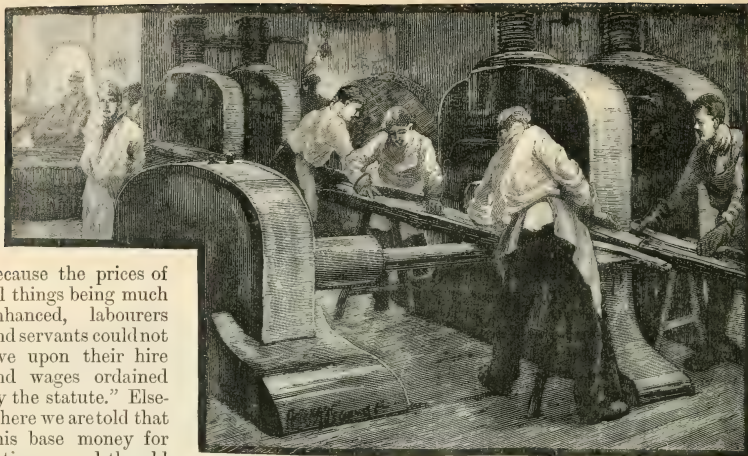
Lully. Gold of this particular fineness continued to be coined until 1526, when Henry VIII. lowered the standard to 22 carats, or 916.66. Henry VIII. succeeded to an amount of wealth greater than that enjoyed by any English monarch. We are told, on the authority of Lord Verulam, that his avaricious old father left at his death in 1509, most of it in secret places, under his own key and keeping, at Richmond, the sum of near £1,800,000. According to Sir Edward Coke, it appeared, from the Close Roll of the third year of Henry VIII., that his father



Melting Silver.

left in his coffers £5,300,000, for the most part in foreign coin. Whatever the exact truth as to these sums may be, there is no doubt that his son came into possession of an enormous private fortune, and it is equally certain that it soon went the proverbial way of a miser's hoard. "It was," says Ruding, the great historian of the coinage of Great Britain, "that the youthful monarch, to supply his riot and extravagance, had then recourse to the most disgraceful means to fill his coffers, and stands recorded with infamy as the first of our English sovereigns who debased the sterling fineness of the coins." In 1544 the coinage was still further de-

based, and in 1545 it was (again to quote Ruding) "reduced to the lowest degree of fineness which ever disgraced the English mint, excepting a small quantity of silver in the fifth year of Edward VI." Camden has left us a melancholy account of the state of England as a consequence of these arbitrary enactments of the King. "They brought," says Vaughan, "great confusion among the values of money, which, together with the excessive quantities of gold and silver which about these times began to be brought into Christendom out of the West Indies, were the occasion that the statutes of labourers and servants were no further observed,



Rolling into Strips.

because the prices of all things being much enhanced, labourers and servants could not live upon their hire and wages ordained by the statute." Elsewhere we are told that this base money for a time caused the old sterling money to be hoarded up, and rent of land and tenements, with prices of victuals, were raised far beyond the former rates. Well might Sir Robert Cotton say, in the Privy Council of another would-be debaser of the coinage, Charles II., that "what renown is left to Edward I. in amending the standard, both in purity and weight, must stick as a blemish upon princes that do the contrary. When Henry VIII. had gained as much of power and glory abroad, and of love and obedience at home, as ever any, he suffered shipwreck of all upon this rock."

It is to the credit of Edward VI. that so soon as he began to act for himself he set to work to restore the standard. Before his death the "naughtiness" of the silver was much lessened, and the old standard was finally re-established by his sister Elizabeth.

At the same time the Irish coins which, during the three former reigns, were even more debased than those of England, were restored to their original purity. This act gave occasion to the following ballad:—

"Let bone-fires shine in every place,
Sing, and ring the bells a-pace;
And pray that long may live her Grace,
To be the good Queen of Ireland.

"The gold and silver, which was so base
That no man could endure it scarce,
Is now new-coyn'd with her own face,
And made go current in Ireland."

Elizabeth, however, had but slender ground for her boast, "that she had conquered now that Monster which had so long devoured her people," for towards the end of her reign large quantities of base money were sent

over to Ireland, and it is known that on several occasions she permitted her Master of the Mint to vary from the terms of his indentures, and coin money of less weight and fineness than the law allowed. The standard of silver, however, was not altered by her when once restored, and it has remained of 925 fineness down to the present time. No gold coinage of a standard other than 916·66 (its present fineness), was issued after 1637.

The limits of this paper hardly allow us to concern ourselves with the coinage of other countries, but it may be stated that the English standard for gold exists in British India, Russia, the Turkish Empire, Portugal, Persia, and Brazil. Germany, the United States, Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland, Greece, Scandinavia, and the South American Republics, have conformed to the French standard of 900. The richest gold coin at present issued is the Austro-Hungarian ducat of fineness 986; the poorest, certain Egyptian coins of which the standard is 875.

England is the only nation which maintains so high a standard as 925 for silver. The franc, the monetary unit of France, has the fineness 835, and the silver coinage of Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland is of the same standard. In Germany and in the United States it is of the same fineness as the gold, viz. 900; in British India it is 916·6, also equal to the gold standard; in Brazil, 917; and for certain coins in the Netherlands it is 945, which is the richest

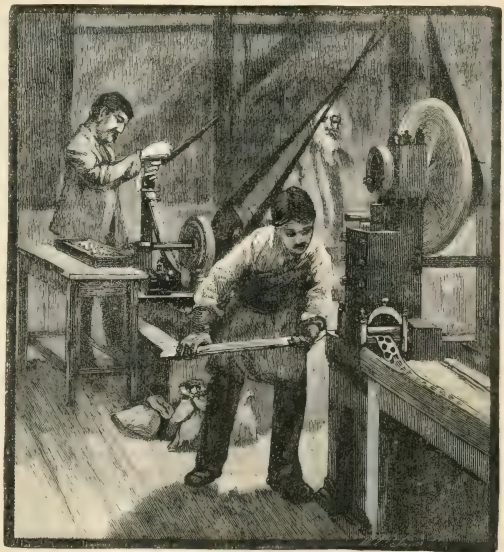
silver alloy in circulation. The poorest silver-copper alloy, on the other hand, is used in the manufacture of Austro-Hungarian kreutzers, and for the 10-öre pieces of Norway, which contain less than half their weight of silver. The Javanese employ the standard 720, for the reason that an alloy of silver and copper containing 72 per cent. of the former metal is the most homogeneous of all such mixtures.

The only triple alloy used for coinage at our Mint is the bronze for the manufacture of pence, which is composed of 95 parts of copper, 4 of tin, and 1 of zinc. This alloy was first brought into use by Napoleon III. in 1852, and adopted in England in 1861 on the advice of Professor Graham, then Master of the Mint. It replaced the copper coinage which had existed since the reign of Charles II.

The place where the coinage of a country is made is known as a Mint, and the making of the money is the prerogative of the Crown, and has but rarely been delegated to private persons. Certain ecclesiastics have, however, in time past, enjoyed the right of coining money, but the privilege of impressing their name and effigy was limited to the archbishops until withdrawn by the laws of Athelstan, who was the first English monarch to enact regulations for the ordering of Mints. In early times, when the methods of locomotion were tedious and difficult, and the transport of large sums of money was consequently hazardous, it was necessary that almost every large town should have its Mint. The number of Mints was, however, gradually reduced until, in the time of Richard I., the work of coining became concentrated in the Tower of London. In times of national disturbance, as, for example, during the civil wars of Charles I., provincial Mints were re-established for a while, but were again abolished on the restoration of order. Our national Mint remained in the Tower until 1810, when it was removed to its present site on Tower Hill.

The greater part of the bullion intended to be converted into gold coinage at the Mint

is supplied by the Bank of England, which is bound by law to purchase as much gold bullion of the proper standard as the public may bring it, at the rate of £3 17s. 9d. an ounce. Any private person may, however, take gold bullion to the Mint, and receive it again as coin at the rate of £3 17s. 10½d. an ounce, without charge for coinage. The bullion from the Bank reaches the Mint in the form of ingots, each of 200 ounces. Silver bullion is purchased direct by the Mint at its current value, which varies from time to time, and is also received as ingots, each weighing about 1,000 ounces. The first duty of the Mint authorities on receiving the bullion is to ascertain that it is of the alleged fineness, and at the same time to determine the amount of copper to be added to form the standard alloy; or, in other words, the bullion has to be assayed. The assay of gold was formerly generally made by the touchstone, or "Lydian stone," a piece of dark basaltic rock on which gold leaves a



Cutting out and Edge-rolling.

streak. By comparing the character of the streak with that furnished by alloys of known composition, and on observing its behaviour on being touched with acid, an idea of the approximate fineness of the metal was obtained. Other physical methods have

been suggested, as, for example, that of specific gravity, as indicated in the well-known story of Archimedes. The specific gravity of standard gold is 17·157, whereas that of the pure metal is 19·3. The method of assay in use at the present time is founded upon the circumstance that gold or silver containing copper is eventually obtained pure if mixed with a sufficiency of lead and heated on a suitable porous vessel or "cupel" with a plentiful supply of air. The base metals are gradually oxidized, and sink into the pores of the cupel whilst the precious metals are left pure in the form of little fused buttons. By operating on a known weight of the alloy the weight of the resultant button gives the proportion of gold or silver present. This method of separating gold from admixed base metals was described by the alchemist Geber upwards of 1,100 years ago. As a mode of assay it was officially recognised in this country in the reign of Henry II. In the case of the assay of gold when mixed with silver the operation is rather more complicated, as both metals are unoxidized by the action of air, and would, therefore, remain in the button on the cupel. Now nitric acid is an excellent solvent for silver, but it has no action upon gold. It happens, however, that if the amount of the silver in an alloy of the two metals is less than a fourth of the weight the alloy is scarcely acted upon by nitric acid; on increasing the proportion of silver the solvent action of the nitric acid upon that metal is set up. If the gold is known, or suspected, to contain silver, a further quantity of silver is added to the weighed quantity of alloy, to reduce the proportion of the gold below one-third of the mass. The fused button is withdrawn from the cupel, flattened, annealed, rolled into a strip, again annealed, coiled into a spiral or "cornet," and treated with nitric acid to remove the silver. The gold, which is left as a spongy mass retaining the form of the spiral, is heated to redness and weighed on a balance so delicate that it will appreciate the $\frac{1}{100000}$ th of a grain. The amount of alloy taken for the assay is 12 grains troy. The actual process, though simple enough in theory, is liable to certain sources of error, which are well known and guarded against by the skilful assayer. The quality of the metal being thus known, it is a simple matter of arithmetic to calculate the amount of copper which must be added to it in order to bring it to the required fineness.

The silver and copper are melted together in black-lead crucibles capable of holding

3,000 oz., in a furnace heated by coke, and the fluid alloy is well stirred by an iron rod, in order to make it as homogeneous as possible, and a layer of charcoal is thrown over it to prevent oxidation. The crucible is then lifted from the furnace by a crane and is tilted by machinery in such manner that the molten metal can be poured into a series of ingot moulds capable of forming bars about 12 inches long, $1\frac{1}{8}$ thick, and of a width varying from $1\frac{3}{4}$ to $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches, depending upon the coin required. The bars, when cold, are trimmed by a revolving file, and portions of them are again assayed in order to determine that the proper standard has been obtained.

In melting gold the pots are charged with only about 1,200 ozs., and the pouring is done by hand.

The bars are next rolled into strips or "fillets" of a thickness varying with the kind of coin to be produced. In the case of the gold, this must be done with such nicety that in fillets intended for half-sovereigns the thickness must not be more than the 1-20,000th of an inch above or below the normal amount. The bars are next annealed, and in order to equalise their thickness they are drawn between steel cylinders on a machine known as the "drag-bench," after which they are tested to ascertain that they will give discs or "blanks" of the proper weight. The round blanks are stamped out, two at a time in the case of gold and silver, and five at a time in that of bronze, by means of short steel cylinders working into holes placed on the bed of the cutting machine. The residue of the bar, known as "scissel," amounts to about a fourth of the original weight and is returned to the melting-pot. It might be thought that it would be more economical to shave off the discs from metallic rods of the proper thickness, but this has not hitherto been found practicable.

The blanks are next "marked" or edged-rolled, so as to form a raised rim to protect the impression on the stamped coin, and after being annealed, they are ready for the coining-press. In former times coins were often cast—and indeed some of the most beautiful specimens of numismatic workmanship known, such as the medals of Giulio Romano, were so made. Striking from engraved dies has, however, been practised from early times; most of the Greek and Roman coins, as well as those of India, were thus formed. The invention of the rolling-mill and of the disc cutter, which seems to have been sug-

gested by Leonardo da Vinci, who designed many of the mediæval coins, has served to perpetuate the method of striking. The impression of the dies was originally given by blows from a hammer, a method which continued to be used as late as 1662, owing to the prejudice of the "moneymen," who resisted the introduction of machinery for the purpose. The hammer was, however, gradually replaced by the screw-press, and this machine, of much the same form as that used by Benvenuto Cellini, who made coins for Pope Clement VII., is figured in Akerman's plate of the coining-room of the Tower, published in the early part of this century. Boulton, in 1790, first applied steam power to the press, and his screw-press continued to be employed in the Mint down to 1882, when the lever-press of Uhlhorn was exclusively adopted. The machine is self-feeding and throws out the stamped coins at the rate of about a hundred a minute.

The possibility of thus impressing a device upon a coin is due to the circumstance that the alloy is so viscous that under a sufficient pressure it flows into the lines of the engraved die—that is from the level parts into the reliefs—the lateral flow of the metal being prevented by the "collar" in which the blank is confined.

Each of the gold and silver coins has next to be weighed. This in our Mint is effected by automatic balances of a most ingenious and beautiful construction, whereby the pieces are separated into the three classes of "light," "heavy," and "good"—only coins in the last category being allowed to circulate. Even the "good" coins, in spite of the great care taken, are never *absolutely* of the same weight. By the Coinage Act of 1870 the standard weights of our ordinary coins are defined to be—

	Imperial grains.
Sovereign	123·27447
Half-sovereign	61·63723
Half-crown	218·18181
Florin	174·54545
Shilling	87·27272
Sixpence	43·63636
Groat (fourpence)	29·09090
Threepence	21·81818
Penny	145·83333
Half-penny	87·50000
Farthing	43·75000

But inasmuch as it is practically impossible to insure that every coin when issued shall have its proper weight, the law allows a certain variation, known as the "remedy," in which the coins must not exceed. This, in the cases of the coins specified, is respectively as follows:—

	Imperial grains.
Sovereign	0·2
Half-sovereign	0·1
Half-crown	0·90909
Florin	0·72727
Shilling	0·36363
Sixpence	0·18181
Groat	0·12121
Threepence	0·09090
Penny	2·91666
Half-penny	1·75000
Farthing	0·87500

Two-tenths of a grain in the divergence from the normal weight allowed for sovereigns may seem very small, but in the issue of a million sovereigns, the difference between the least and the greatest weight permitted would amount to £3,244.

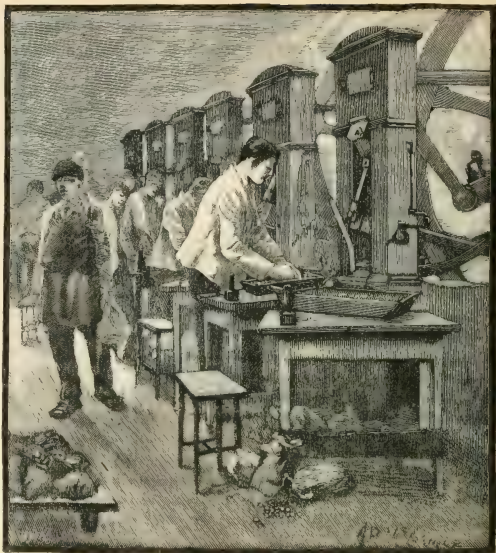
The last duty of the Mint authorities before delivering the gold and silver coin to the Bank of England, thence to be sent into circulation, is to assay a certain number of the finished pieces to ascertain that they are of the legal standard; and here again the law allows a certain variation—this in the case of the gold is ·002, in that of the silver it is ·004 millesimal fineness.

In former times the sovereign contracted with the Mint Master to supply the coinage, and in order to be assured that the terms of the contract were fulfilled it was necessary to hold periodical examinations of the money. Hence arose the ceremony known as the "Trial of the Pyx," the "pyx" being the chest in which samples of the coins were kept. Although the conditions under which coin is produced are different to-day, the trial of the pyx is still continued. From every 701 sovereigns, or 1,402 half sovereigns, equal to 15 lbs. troy, known as "a journey weight" of gold—one coin is selected; a silver coin being also selected from every 60 lbs. troy of coined silver. These coins are deposited in the pyx, which is opened once a year by a jury of the freemen of the Goldsmiths' Company in the presence of the Queen's Remembrancer, and coins are selected, weighed, and compared as to fineness with trial plates of standard fineness in the possession of the Warden of the Standards, and the jurors report to the Treasury if the coins are found to be of the proper weight and fineness.

Immediately that a coin begins to circulate it loses weight, and in the case of the gold coinage the law states that it shall no longer be legal tender when it is below a certain weight. The least current weight of a sovereign is 122·50 grains; of the half-sovereign it is 61·125 grains—a difference of about $\frac{1}{4}$ grain and $\frac{1}{8}$ grain respectively from

the normal weights of these coins. As the Coinage Act further requires that every person must "cut, break, or deface" any coin which is below the legal weight, to the loss of the person tendering it, it becomes of some interest to determine what the legal life of a gold coin, say a sovereign, is. This, according to the careful experiments of the late Professor Jevons, is about eighteen years. It is estimated that about £110,000,000 of gold is at present in circulation, as compared with £247,521,429 coined since 1816, when sovereigns and half-sovereigns were first instituted. Some of these sovereigns have been recoined, but many more have been exported or are "hoarded." It is further calculated that at the present time there is about £50,000,000 of light gold in circulation, the actual loss on which cannot be less than £650,000, to which must of course be added the expense of recoinage.

So long ago as the time of Queen Anne, Dean Swift suggested that coins might be fittingly employed to commemorate great public events. "By this means," he says, "medals that are at present only a dead



Stamping.

treasure or mere curiosities, will be of use in the ordinary commerce of life, and at the same time perpetuate the glories of the monarch's reign, reward the labours of his greatest subjects, keep alive in the people a gratitude for public services, and exalt the emulation of posterity. To these generous purposes nothing can so much contribute as medals of this kind, which are of undoubted authority, of necessary use and observation, not perishable by time nor confined to any certain place; properties not to be found in books, statues, pictures, buildings, or any other monuments of illustrious actions."

The Mint authorities, we understand, are about to commemorate the Jubilee of a Queen whose reign has been far more illustrious than that of Queen Anne, by the issue of a new portrait of Her Majesty. During these fifty years our country has progressed by leaps and bounds, through the spread of commerce and the development of its resources as a consequence of the application of science. It is surely fitting that the Jubilee coins of an age which has learned to know how much the sum of human happiness has been augmented by science should bear on them some symbolical allusion to those triumphs of science which posterity will ever count as among the chief glories of Victoria's reign.



Weighing.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

BY WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.—A BASELESS SLANDER.

WHEN it became known that Corfe was a married man, and that his wife had joined him, the staff of the *Helvetic News*, both upstairs and down, as well as the English colony generally, were a good deal surprised, and not a little excited. For several days nothing else was talked about, and the rumours concerning the cause of their separation and his reticence on the subject were many and sundry. Corfe treated the matter very cavalierly. When the head book-keeper told him that an English lady had been at the office asking for his address, he said he was quite aware of the fact, that the lady in question was his wife, and that it was only owing to the delay of a letter that he had not met her at the station.

"She would have joined me sooner," he added, "only we could not afford to keep house, and she has been nursing an old aunt from whom we had expectations. The other day the old lady died and left Mrs. Corfe a little legacy, which will help to keep the pot boiling, so she came to me at once, and I am deuced glad to have her. You have no idea how fond of each other we are."

He gave no other explanation, and when anybody suggested an inquiry as to why he had kept the fact of his being married so close a secret, he would either give a laughing reply, which meant nothing, or hint that his domestic affairs concerned only himself—according to the humour he was in.

A few days after his wife's arrival, Corfe gave another supper, and to it were invited, besides Balmaine and several other of his men friends, Mrs. Gibson, Mrs. Mayo, and the head book-keeper's wife, Madame Bland, a little French brunette. All these ladies had their doubts as to the propriety of complying with the invitation, but all ended by accepting it, for like everybody else they were dying with curiosity to inspect Mrs. Corfe. The supper, supplied by a neighbouring confectioner, was quite *comme il faut*, and Mrs. Corfe came out of the ordeal with flying colours. The men admired her, and the women could not deny that she was a lady. She played and sang so well, moreover, that nobody ventured to follow her except Corfe, who sang both to his wife's

accompaniment and that of his guitar. All remarked how fond they seemed of each other, and how greatly Corfe had improved. He seemed quite gay and showed none of his old moroseness of manner. The ladies were charmed with him, and on the way next day the Corfes received an invitation to supper from Mrs. Gibson, and to afternoon tea from Mrs. Mayo.

But the invitations were hardly despatched when there came to the ears of these ladies a tale that wrung their souls with anguish and made them bitterly rue that they had ever taken the Corfes up. It was rumoured that they were not really husband and wife, and that Mrs. Corfe, or whatever might be her name, was no better than she should be.

"I wonder how he dared!" exclaimed Mrs. Gibson. "It was a piece of gross impudence to ask us to go at all, and to think, to think—why, it's positively insulting. You will surely resent it, Edward! The least you can do is to discharge him at once."

She was a large woman with a red face, high cheek bones, a Roman nose, lofty eyebrows, and severe lips, the very picture of outraged propriety; and she quivered with indignation to her very cap strings.

"What on earth is the matter?" asked Gibson, looking up in wonder from his *Journal de Lacustrie*.

"Matter! everything is the matter. Those people—I can hardly bring myself to name them—those people are not married."

"What particular people have you in your mind, my dear? I believe a great many of our fellow-creatures are in that unhappy condition."

"You know quite well, the Corfes."

"Who says so?"

"Who says so! why, everybody says so. Mrs. Hodgkinson told Mrs. Carver, and Mrs. Carver told Mrs. Hart, and Mrs. Hart told Mrs. Mayo, and Mrs. Mayo has just told me. What would you have more? And they actually went to the chaplain's afternoon reception yesterday!"

"What all of them?"

"Why will you purposely misunderstand me, Edward? You know quite well what I mean. Corfe and—and that woman had actually the audacity to present themselves at Mrs. Hart's reception yesterday. If it

had not been for you I should never have gone near them, and I shall regret having done so to my dying day. I'll take very good care not to be taken in that way again, I can tell you. Poor Mrs. Mayo is in a dreadful state. I left her just now quite in tears; she is so sensitive, poor thing, and feels the disgrace keenly."

"What rubbish! how can she be disgraced? But tell me, first of all, how you know the Corfes are not married?"

"Have I not told you? Everybody says so."

"But how does everybody know; who told them, Corfe or his wife?"

"I should think not indeed! Do you suppose that Mrs. Hodgkinson, or Mrs. Carver, or Mrs. Hart would speak to either of them?"

"How do they know, then, that Corfe and this lady are not married?"

"Lady, indeed! don't call her lady to me if you please, Edward. Do you suppose for one moment that Mrs. Hodgkinson and Mrs. Carver and Mrs. Hart would say what they did not know, and go about telling untruths?"

And Mrs. Gibson threw back her head with an air of triumph, as if she had delivered a very telling stroke indeed.

But Gibson came up smiling.

"I do not think they would go about telling untruths if they knew it," he said, "but there is such a thing as being deceived. Do you know whether Mrs. Hodgkinson has seen Madame Coquetage lately?"

Madame Coquetage was an Englishwoman, the widow of a Swiss gentleman, and had spent the greater part of her life in Geneva.

"Yes, I believe she was there on Tuesday. But what has that to do with it?"

"A great deal. Madame Coquetage is the wickedest old woman in Geneva."

"Madame Coquetage a wicked old woman! What will you say next, Edward? It is really dreadful, the way you go on. Why, she is of the highest respectability; her maternal grandmother was a nobleman's daughter; she goes to church twice every Sunday and gave a hundred francs towards the new organ. Nobody could behave with greater propriety. You may say what you like, I call her a nice, good old lady."

"Good people don't slander their neighbours."

"I wish you would not be so obscure. What do you mean, Edward?"

"I mean that Madame Coquetage has a passion for saying people are not married. Perhaps she was never properly married her-

self. And she does it in such a way that nobody can tackle her for it. 'Very nice people, I dare say,' she will say of new comers; 'but I wonder if they are really married.' And then she will go on to tell how, some years ago, a couple came to Geneva with good credentials and were well received and asked everywhere, until it was accidentally discovered that they were not only not married; but that she had been a defendant and he a co-respondent in a divorce suit."

"Good heavens!" interrupted Mrs. Gibson, with a look of horror, "suppose—suppose the Corfes are in that position? Nobody knows much about him, and she—she looks capable of anything."

"Nonsense! She is one of the nicest women I ever met, and, unless I am greatly mistaken, as good as gold."

"And you actually dare say to me, Edward Gibson, that a hussy who is mixed up in a divorce suit is as good as gold—which means, I suppose, that she is a good deal better than I am. I never presumed to be as good as gold. Thank you, Edward," and Mrs. Gibson, rising from her chair, smiled scornfully and made a majestic courtesy.

"Don't make a f—, don't be absurd, Penelope," returned Gibson sharply. "I did not say that Mrs. Corfe was defendant in a divorce suit; but that Madame Coquetage tells a story of somebody who was, and that she never loses an opportunity of suggesting that all the English and Americans who come here are pretty much in the same case."

"So you think; but will you permit me to observe that I doubt the accuracy of your information? I know better. Madame Coquetage is not a woman of that sort."

"You think not," said Gibson quietly, yet with a humorous twinkle in his eye that boded mischief. "But what would you say if I told you that Madame Coquetage said, some time ago, that we were not married."

"Edward, it is not true. I—I—don't believe it."

"I can prove it though. She said it to Mrs. Leyland; Leyland told me, and if I had not taken prompt measures the story would have run all over the town. I wrote her a letter which rather astonished her I fancy, for until she began to talk about the Corfes she does not seem to have slandered anybody for a month or two."

"The wretched, wicked, bad, lying old hypocrite," cried Mrs. Gibson passionately. "She deserves putting in prison. I'll go to

her and tell her what I think of her, the false, deceitful old slanderer. You must send for our marriage certificate, Edward. I will show it to everybody in Geneva."

"Better not, I think, Penelope, *qui s'excuse s'accuse*, you know. I stopped Madame Coquetage's tongue in time or it might really have been necessary to do something of the sort. She made it so hot for the Wainwrights once—Wainwright was the chaplain before Hart came—that they had actually to leave their marriage certificate on view at the English pharmacy for a whole week. And all because Mrs. Wainwright had not returned Madame Coquetage's call quite as soon as she should have done."

"What a horrible woman!"

"Rather. I shall give Corfe a hint of what is going on. If he does not shut her up it may be very unpleasant for his wife. People seem more prone to believe evil of each other here than they do even at home—probably because they are so ignorant of each other's antecedents—and it must be confessed that some very queer folks do occasionally take up their quarters in the place. That's what makes some of the Swiss so shy of associating with us. They have entertained black sheep unawares."

"And you really think these Corfes are not in that category, Edward—black sheep, I mean—and that I may continue to recognise them?"

"I am sure you may. Mrs. Corfe is a charming woman."

"Charming women are not necessarily virtuous," interposed Mrs. Gibson sharply.

"Nor are virtuous women necessarily charming," thought Gibson, but he judiciously kept the sentiment to himself.

"You seem to admire Mrs. Corfe very much, Edward?"

"Oh dear no, at least not particularly. I thought she had a pleasant expressive face and nice manners, that is all," was the rather evasive answer.

"Well, I cannot say that I admire your taste. If it were not for her hair, and her eyes and her mouth and her complexion she would be quite plain, while as for her manners she is a great deal too forward and Frenchy for my liking."

Mrs. Gibson was quite right in thinking that her husband admired Mrs. Corfe. He admired her very much; and it was his admiration for her, quite as much as any kindly feeling for Corfe, that caused him to communicate to the latter the rumour he had heard from his wife.

Corfe was quite equal to the occasion. He thanked Gibson for his kindness and even showed him the marriage certificate that Esther had brought with her.

"I shall show it to nobody else," he said. "I don't care for this old woman; but I thought I should like to let you see that your confidence is not misplaced—and if you hear anything you will know what to say."

"And I shall say it, you may be sure of that, Corfe. But I should certainly advise you to shut up Madame Coquetage. If you don't, your wife may be exposed to some unpleasantness."

"If you think so, Mr. Gibson, I will certainly make an effort to shut her up. I should not like my wife to hear anything of this abominable slander. Women are so sensitive about these things."

"More sensitive than sensible sometimes," returned the editor, laughing at his own joke.

"Will you write to Madame Coquetage?"

"No; I shall see her."

And see her he did, though not without difficulty, for Madame Coquetage by no means wanted to see him. He did not say many words, yet they answered their purpose so effectually that the old gossip took care not to mention his name again in any connection until—but I must not anticipate.

Altogether Corfe came well out of the affair. He made a friend of Gibson, and silenced his detractors at the same time. He did his best also to secure the friendship of Balmaine and Delane, was always particularly gracious to them, and invited them often to his house "to smoke a cigar and drink a friendly cup of tea;" Esther did the rest. She was always bright, and—Mrs. Gibson to the contrary notwithstanding—her manner was thoroughly ladylike; she could moreover converse intelligently about politics and some other things concerning which most women know little and care less. Corfe seemed proud of her; and her love of him, without being obtrusive, was palpable, and pleasant to see.

"What I like about Mrs. Corfe," said Balmaine one night, as he and Delane walked home together from the Corfes' lodgings, "what I like about her is her unaffectedness."

"Yes," put in the sub-editor warmly. "The very first word she speaks she makes you feel at home. Why, I have only seen her twice, and I could almost fancy that I had known her for years. Did you hear her ask about my mother and my sisters? And how well she sang that Irish song! I know now why Corfe used to be so gloomy and short-tempered sometimes."

"You think it was because of domestic trouble?"

"I do. It's no business of mine, perhaps, but I would give twenty francs this minute to know why they were separated."

"Yes," said Alfred pensively, "it is rather a strange case, and the way in which Corfe explains his wife's sudden appearance is——"

"Made up. Of course it is; but I don't know that you can blame him much for that. He cannot be expected to take all the world into his confidence in a matter of that sort. Some unfortunate misunderstanding probably."

"Or jealousy?"

"I never thought of that. Yes, I should think Corfe could be jealous if he tried. But I always said he was a good fellow at the bottom, and this proves it. I once heard my father say that a good husband cannot be a bad man, and I believe it's true. And nobody could be more devoted to a woman than Corfe is to his wife. You remember my saying that he seemed like a fellow who had missed his tip?"

"Yes, I think I do remember you saying something of the sort."

"Well, I was not far wrong," said Delane, laughing, "for if he did not miss his tip he missed his wife, and that is pretty much the same thing I take it."

CHAPTER XXVII.—MURDER AS A FINE ART.

MRS. CORFE had asked the two young fellows to call without ceremony whenever they felt disposed, assuring them that they would be quite welcome, and saying, with a pleasant smile, that as they seemed fond of music she should always be glad to play for them. There was policy in this as well as kindness, for Esther wanted Corfe to stand well with the *Helvetic News* people; she had an idea, suggested by himself, that in the event of the editorship becoming vacant he would have a good chance of obtaining the situation. Corfe, who was especially gracious, cordially seconded the invitation, pressing Balmaine to come on an early day and have a game of chess with him. So one evening, about a week later, Alfred looked in at the Corfes' lodgings a second time. The little *domestique à tout faire* who opened the door told him that Madame was out, but, that if he would step into the salon, Monsieur, who was in his own room, would join him in a few minutes.

There were some books on the salon table. One was a rather elaborate work on toxicology—Corfe, as Alfred knew, had some

knowledge of chemistry—but not finding the subject very interesting Balmaine put the book down and took up one entitled "Our Mountains," in which were related many moving incidents and wild adventures among the peaks, passes, and glaciers of Alpine regions. He was deep in a story about a man who, while crossing a glacier, slipped down a crevasse into a sub-glacial stream, and, after sustaining severe injuries and undergoing terrible hardships, crawled down the icy torrent, and nearly frightened his wife to death (who thought him dead) by appearing before her with pale and blood-stained face, and clothing all in tatters, when Corfe entered the room.

"Hallo!" he said—as it seemed to Alfred rather more abruptly than he need have done—"what have you got hold of? I see, 'Our Mountains.' There are some good things in it, and some awful crams. That tale about the guide who fell down a crevasse and turned up after many days cannot be true. If he had escaped being killed on his way to the bottom he would certainly have been drowned in the water or frozen stiff by the ice."

As Corfe spoke he took up, with seeming carelessness, the book on toxicology, and put it, upside down, in the highest shelf of a little swing case that hung on the wall. Then he expressed his regret that Mrs. Corfe was out; she had gone to take supper with Mrs. Gibson, and he had engaged to fetch her home. On this Balmaine made as if he would take his departure, but Corfe pressed him to stay, saying that as it was a "hen party" to which his wife had gone he had no wish to present himself at the Gibsons' pension before ten o'clock, and when it was time to go they might walk up the street together. So cigarettes were lighted, and Corfe produced a chess-board. As a rule he played a very good game, but on this occasion he seemed to be thinking about something else, and Alfred checked him easily twice running.

"It is hardly worth while beginning another game," Corfe said somewhat testily. "I shall have to start in less than half an hour." And then he inquired if there was any further news about a sensational poisoning case which was being tried in London. He had not seen an English paper for two days.

Alfred told him the latest news, from which it appeared that the case was going very much against the prisoner, and that he would almost certainly be found guilty of the crime laid to his charge.

"Serve him right for being such a bungler," said Corfe. "He deserves to be hanged, if only for his stupidity."

"That's one way of looking at it certainly," answered Balmaine; "but don't you think that there is a Nemesis which always waits on murder—that the mere contemplation of crime upsets the balance of a man's judgment, and converts him into a bungler? How else can you account for nearly every murder that is committed being sooner or later detected?"

"A great many are not detected, *mon ami*. When the police are successful they make a big noise; when they fail they preserve a judicious silence. But if the truth were known I dare say they reckon as many failures as successes. Even in this little place two or three murders are committed every year to which no clue is found; and nobody knows how many people are secretly poisoned or otherwise made away with without anybody being the wiser."

"Do you really think there are many cases of secret poisoning?" asked Alfred.

"I have not a doubt of it, especially on the Continent, for I fancy that in England the inquest acts in some measure as a check; and Continental doctors—at any rate French doctors—are much more afraid of responsibility than English doctors. They must have something like proof positive before they open their mouths. Look at the affair of Marie Jeaneret, which occurred here only a few years since. She poisoned a dozen people, and nearly all with a very common drug, the effects of which are well known and easily recognised—before any doctor dared to denounce her."

"Twelve persons?"

"Yes, twelve, and seven of them died. She was a sick nurse, and poisoned her patients because she took a morbid pleasure in seeing them die."

"She must have been mad."

"I'm not so sure of that. But I quite admit that she was a fool; if she had done her poisoning with a little more circumspection she might have been poisoning yet."

"It is a very good thing she was not circumspect then; but don't you see that this very case confirms the theory that murder will out—that a murderer is *ipso facto* a fool, and that nineteen times out of twenty he commits some mistake, or omits some precaution, that is sure to find him out?"

"Nineteen times out of twenty? No, I don't think that. Nobody can of course say for certain; but I should certainly not think

so," returned Corfe, who spoke with great animation and appeared to be much interested in the subject under discussion. "Nor can I admit that a man who commits what society has agreed to call a crime is necessarily a fool. I suppose the greatest murderer of modern times was Napoleon Bonaparte, but you would not call him a fool."

"I am not so sure about that, and he was fearfully punished."

"Not so much as Louis XVI., and he had not the spirit to hurt a fly. If he had been a worse man he would have been a better king, and might have died in his bed. It is all very fine, my dear Balmaine, talking about high morality and that, and virtue bringing its own reward. That may do very well for women and children; but with men who know the world it won't wash. People do not get punished or rewarded according to their deserts; and a mere mistake—an error of judgment—often entails worse consequences than a crime. A ship captain in a moment of confusion gives the order 'hard a-starboard,' instead of 'hard a-port,' and two vessels go to the bottom and hundreds of lives are lost. An engine-driver mistakes a signal, and a train, freighted with passengers, is wrecked. Two such accidents cause more suffering than a whole century of murders."

"But you surely don't mean to say, Corfe, that murder is therefore justifiable?"

"Of course not. I merely wanted to point out to you the fallacy of the assumption that bad actions always entail evil consequences on those who commit them, and *vice versa*. If it were so, all the world would be virtuous. It seems to me—and I have seen a good deal of life, that the men you call unscrupulous—provided they have their wits about them—generally get the best of it."

"I don't agree with you," interrupted Alfred warmly; "I don't think it is in the nature of things that evil should triumph; and I do most sincerely believe that honesty will beat the other thing in the end—and even though it were not so it would be better to be true than false."

"As to that I quite agree with you, Balmaine, but I would just observe that if honesty be the best policy, there is no merit in not being a rogue. It is one of those sayings that people accept as a matter of course, without thinking whether they are true or false. Just like that other adage we were speaking of, 'murder will out.' They say so because they have no idea how often murderers don't out. Look at the case of this

Dr. Samson, for instance. He poisoned his nephew to get his money; but if he had wanted to be found out he could not have done it more clumsily. He buys aconitine in a shop, puts it into a powder and gives it to the boy, who is an invalid, in the presence of a third person. Before Samson leaves the house almost, the nephew falls ill and dies the very same night. Twenty-four hours later Samson is in custody. The remains of the powder are analysed and found to contain aconitine, and the incident is adduced as proof that murder will out. Now suppose that Dr. Samson, who, remember, is a physician, instead of committing such a *bêtise* had prescribed some pills and put his aconitine in only one of them. What would have happened? The nephew would either have taken one of the harmless pills or the poisoned one first. Suppose that he had done the latter, though the chances are against it, and the doctor who was called in had suspected poisoning, which is by no means certain, and caused the pills to be analysed, they would have been found perfectly innocuous, and nobody could have said how the poison was administered. If, on the other hand, he had taken three or four of the harmless pills before swallowing the poisoned one, the case against Samson would have been still weaker; and if he had used the precaution to distil his aconitine from the roots of the *aconitum napellus*, common wolfsbane, not even his worst enemy could have dared to breathe a word against him."

"Upon my word, Corfe, you make my blood run cold," said Balmaine, half in jest, half in earnest. "I shall begin to think soon you are a dangerous man. I hope you won't take it into your head some day to poison me."

"No fear of that, my dear fellow. But my father thought at one time of making me a doctor, and I attended a course of lectures at an Italian university. Ever since then medical jurisprudence has possessed a singular fascination for me, and I sometimes let the subject run away with me. Nothing interests me more than a poisoning case, and I cannot help looking at the matter from what you may call an artistic point of view, just as De Quincey did. You have read his famous essay on 'Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts,' of course."

"I began it once, but somehow I did not like it, and did not read on to the end. You would make a good detective."

"That does not follow. They say that Gaboriau, who wrote such wonderful tales of

crime, and whose detectives are simply masterpieces, once tried his hand at unravelling a real crime and signally failed. Still I fancy the *métier* of detective would suit me—if I could stoop to it. I think, though, detectives fail quite as often as they succeed. With a really clever murderer they have no chance, for he does his work so skilfully that nobody knows a murder has been committed."

"Then he must be a poisoner?"

"Well—yes, he must be a poisoner, or a *poisonneuse*, as the French say. The commonly received theory is that women are more prone to poison than men. I don't think so."

"Why?"

"Because, in my opinion, women are oftener found out than men. Being more nervous and emotional they are more apt to betray themselves and to make mistakes. It is so easy to draw a false inference. I have always contended that the number of crimes discovered is no criterion of the number committed."

"You think very badly of human nature then?"

"I do. Anyhow it has behaved very badly to me. But I say (looking at his watch), it is time to be going. Light a cigar and let us be off. But stay, I must take my wife a shawl. The night is rather chilly, and she is thinly clad. Here it is. *Allons.*"

"You are very thoughtful for your wife," observed Balmaine, who was rather struck by the inconsistency between this proceeding and the cynicism of Corfe's sentiments.

"I ought to be. She is as good as gold. You have no idea how much better I feel now she is with me again. I often wish——"

"What?"

"That I were worth a hundred thousand pounds—for her sake. Then I should—— They say money is the root of all evil, Balmaine. It would be a good deal more to the purpose to say the want of it is. But never mind, I suppose we shall rub on somehow, poor as we are. By-the-bye, how are you getting on with old Gibson?"

"Very well."

"You like him?"

"Yes."

"I don't think Mayo and Leyland do, though. I should not be surprised if there were a row one of these days. Who would succeed him, do you suppose, if he had to go?"

"Really, Corfe, I don't know. And do you think it is friendly to Gibson to discuss the contingency of his being dismissed? For that is what it amounts to."

"Well, if you look at it in that way, you know. But I confess I do not see any harm in putting the question, and you cannot feel better disposed towards Gibson than I do. If he has to leave it won't be our doing, and talking the matter over cannot hurt him."

"I do not think it can. All the same, Gibson has behaved well to me, and I have a strong feeling that it would not be good form to assume that he is going to be dismissed, nor begin speculating as to who is likely to succeed him."

"You are perhaps right," returned Corfe coldly; "so let us drop the subject. I should not have mentioned it, only I have heard hints, and thought you might like to have an idea of what is going on, and likely to happen. Of course all this is entirely between ourselves."

"Of course," said Alfred, and shortly afterwards, having reached a point where their roads diverged, they separated.

Corfe's feelings, as he went on his way alone, were not of the pleasantest, and he was much less satisfied with himself than usual. Besides saying more than he meant to say, he had failed to ascertain whether Balmaine aspired to become Gibson's successor. When a vain man is full of a subject it is apt to run away with him, and Corfe feared that he had revealed his theories on artistic murder and some other things rather more fully than was altogether prudent. Still, he did not think any great harm was done. Balmaine was too open, too frank, too green, in fact, to be dangerous. But for that he should have attributed his reticence on the subject of Gibson's dismissal to craft, and concluded therefrom that he meant to get the place if he could. As it was he gave him full credit for sincerity.

"The fellow is a fool," he muttered as he passed swiftly under the sycamores that lined the road. "I do believe he is quite capable of refusing Gibson's place if it were offered to him. All the same, I must talk no more about that . . . and it must not be poison. Poor Esther! I do wish it could be avoided. If that money had only come to her! Ah! how intensely respectable and generous I could be. I'd build a church, subsidise the parson, and keep the Ten Commandments; and Ward and those other fellows who cut me dead in Pall Mall would offer their congratulations, the confounded curs!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.—NEWS FROM CALDER.

As for Alfred, he was rather at a loss what to think. Corfe's theories about murder and

his cynical remarks generally were reviving his former distrust. He did not know whether to set him down as unprincipled or merely eccentric. On the whole, being of a charitable disposition, Balmaine inclined to the second alternative; nevertheless, he felt that Corfe was not a man that he could greatly respect, or whom it would be prudent to trust. That was one reason why (although the reason he gave was quite sufficient) he had declined to hold any conversation with him about Gibson. At the same time it could not be denied that Gibson was acting very unwisely. He left the paper almost altogether to Alfred and the two subs, did not come to the office until late in the evening, and came sometimes the worse for drink. He seemed to be doing his best, in fact, to show that he was not necessary, and that his services might be spared without detriment to the interest of the paper. Balmaine and Delane saw this with regret; Gibson had always treated them with the utmost kindness, and had it been possible they would have warned him of the danger he was running. But their relative positions rendered any such proceeding on their part impossible; a hint even would probably have been resented as an impertinence and might have done no good; hence, as Delane put it, they were compelled "to let things slide."

A few days later, Alfred had letters from Calder. The first was from Cora.

His cousin told him, among other things, that George was in good health and spirits and the confident hope of speedy promotion, and that his mother was somewhat better. As for herself—well, she had a secret, a great secret to tell him, and she warned him to prepare for a great surprise. She had begun to write a novel. The editor of the *Piccadilly Magazine* having accepted a second short story from her and complimented her thereon (he wants to get another at the same price, thought Alfred), she was encouraged to try a bolder flight. "But neither your mother, nor anybody else in Calder," she wrote, "has the least idea of what I am doing, for I have two great fears—that I shall stick fast ignominiously in the middle and never get any farther, and that even if I do finish the story I shall never get it printed. And I get on awfully slowly. I wrote the first page ten times, and the first chapter three, and still they are not what they ought to be, so please don't say anything. I have told nobody but you and George."

Not long after he received this letter there came one from Warton, evidently written in

rather low spirits, though he did his best to keep up Alfred's. That fellow Murgatroyd, from Halifax, he said, was making things look rather fishy. He told a very straightforward story, and though the clerk did not believe a word he said, it was impossible to prove that the man lied. If Balmaine could only "let on" (find Vera Hardy), it would not, of course, matter what the fellow might choose to say; he might perjure himself until he was black in the face, for anything Warton cared. But unless she or her father (and of that latter there was precious little chance) was found—and that soon—it would be all up a tree, for Ferret and Saintly Sam meant business, there was no mistake about that. Supported by Murgatroyd's testimony, they were going to file a bill for accounts. Much, of course, depended on whether John Hardy's trustees resisted the demand or consented to a friendly suit. He hoped the former, for in that case the affair might be prolonged almost indefinitely, and if there was any chance of the heiress turning up they would be encouraged to fight, as he knew for a fact that Artful hated Ferret like poison and thought the Hardy Fortune Company nothing less than a public scandal. It therefore behoved Balmaine to see that man Martino and get to know whether the girl was alive or dead, and if alive, what had become of her.

"If I only could!" thought Alfred. But Bevis as yet had made no sign, and until he did there was nothing for it but to wait. Not, however, for long. In two months at the outside the Colonel must be in Italy.

"I am thinking less about the money now," Warton went on, "though a few thousands, even a few hundreds, even a few score pounds, would be extremely acceptable to yours truly, than of taking the shine out of Saintly Sam. How I hate the smug-faced, sanctimonious old beggar! He has the devil's own luck, and nobody could deserve it less. What do you think now? He has bought that outlying estate of Lord Limefields, at Lindeth. The trustees under the settlement had power to sell it and invest the proceeds in land elsewhere; but they knew nothing of the value of the property, and Sam has got it for an old song. It lies between the railway and the river; there is both coal and limestone in it, and for building purposes it is worth almost anything. Sam has let sites for two mills already, and goes about talking of 'my estate at Lindeth' as if it had come to him through a long line of accred ancestors. And that is not all. There is a talk, though

I'll be shot if I can believe it, that Lord Limefield's second son, the Honourable Tom Townson, is to marry Lizzie and be our next member. (I once thought you had a weakness in that quarter.) Sam could return him, of course, or anybody else, and I dare say would be willing enough to have a peer's son for his son-in-law, but he would have to make a settlement, and old Saintly is awfully fond of his money; he would think pretty often before paying down—say ten thousand pounds—for the honour of being allied with a sprig of nobility. And then, from an aristocratic point of view, the Saintlies cannot be considered an altogether desirable connection. Everybody in Calder knows that Sam is a rogue, and Mrs. Sam, though a decent enough old body, is—well, not the most eligible mother-in-law imaginable. So taking one thing with another, I don't think Miss Lizzie is likely to become the Honourable Mrs. Tom Townson just yet.

"Did I tell you that Sam is buying up all the shares in the Hardy Fortune Company he can lay his hands on? He has also bought up the claims of several of the poorer Hardys; and one way and another if the fortune comes to Calder, Sam will get a good half of it. Another reason for finding that young woman; and even then I expect there will be a fight. The Saint has backed himself too heavily to win, to yield without a struggle, and if he is beaten you may be sure it won't be for want of hard swearing. Murgatroyd won't be the only man that knew the late John Hardy; there are more where he came from, and we must not forget that finding Philip Hardy's daughter will not end the matter. We shall have to prove his marriage with his Italian wife, also Miss Vera's identity, and that may not be so easy as we should like. But this is neither here nor there. It is like counting chickens before they are hatched. The thing is to find her."

"Exactly," was Balmaine's mental comment. "First catch your hare. I only wish I could catch mine. The bother is that I don't know the name she went by. Until I do know I cannot move. Confound that Martino—when will he turn up, I wonder? If I don't hear from Bevis before October I shall just write again to jog his memory. And so Lizzie has found another sweetheart already! For I do believe it is a true bill, in spite of Warton's doubts. Sam Hardy likes being important, and if he made a settlement, would get value for his money in more ways than one, and I suppose it would suit Townson very well to get into Parliament.

But I don't envy him, and he is quite welcome to Lizzie. She is not fit to be named in the same day as Mademoiselle Leonino. As if I had anything to do with Mademoiselle Leonino! I must make a fortune before I marry a wife. I wish Cora had not put her into my head, with her absurd sentimentalism. I was forgetting all about her. But she has really the finest eyes I ever saw. I wonder if we shall ever meet again."

CHAPTER XXIX.—CORFE MAKES HIMSELF AGREEABLE.

SEPTEMBER for the most part had been a bad month—showery, at times even cold, and the great majority of tourists had either hurried homeward, or betaken themselves to the more genial climates of the south. But October, as it often does in Switzerland, opened splendidly. True, the nights are lengthening, the lakes show by their waning volume that the glaciers are gaining on the sun, snow flakes repose on the rocks of the Salève and whiten the peaks of the Jura, yet the days are bright and balmy, the trees still rejoice in the glory of their autumnal foliage, and the Alps, sharply defined in the clear air, are clothed with all the splendour of their beauty and their majesty, grand as the ocean, mysterious as eternity.

Calm, too, is the lake; its azure surface, unruffled by the faintest zephyr, reflects in its gentle bosom the smiling villages on its banks, just now gay with frolic and song, for it is full vintage, and great wains are carrying to the wine-press loads of luscious grapes, gathered by lads and lasses to the music of their own laughter. A few days more and the Alps may be shrouded in storm clouds, and the lake torn by a furious *bise*, but this is St. Martin's summer, the last bright time of the dying year, and everybody seems disposed to enjoy it to the full. The Genevans still live mostly in the *grand air*—under trees, in gardens, at the doors of cafés, and open windows. None enjoy this second summer more than Esther Corfe; it has all the charm of novelty for her, she is sensitive to external impressions, and Vernon, though subject to occasional fits of gloom and bursts of temper, is almost everything she could wish, and a great deal more than she expected. The time is afternoon; he is smoking a pensive pipe and she is sewing; but every now and then she raises her head and looks towards the mountains, now radiant in the golden light of the sinking sun.

"What is the name of the mountain there, that looks so grand and solitary,

sloping upwards and crowned with trees?" she asks.

"That—that is the Voirons," says Corfe, rousing himself.

"And that far away mountain with a double peak, like two horns—what is that?"

"The Dent d'Oche. It is a long way off, and if the horns, as you call them, were not powdered with fresh fallen snow you could hardly see them."

"How beautiful it all is! It seems like a dream. What is a glacier like when you are close to it?"

"Awfully dirty."

"Impossible! See how beautifully white Mont Blanc is."

"That is the snow. You cannot distinguish the glaciers from here. But you shall see one if you like. What do you say to going to Chamouni?"

"What do I say to going to Chamouni? I feel as if I would give a something very precious—a part of my life even—to go there."

"A part of your life! Why—why—there is no danger in going to Chamouni, you know. What do you mean by saying that, Esther?" almost stammers Corfe, and he is not a man much given to hesitation in speech.

"I only meant that I would like to go very, very much," returns Esther, looking rather surprised.

"Why didn't you say so before? You shall go. We will start to-morrow."

"Are you in earnest, Vernon?"

"Never more so in my life."

"You are a dear good boy. There" (kissing him). "I thank you with all my heart. But can you get away?"

"Easily. The schools have all a fortnight's holiday for the *vendage*. We need not be away more than five or six days, and I can do my copy for the *Helvetic* before we start."

"Shall we leave first thing in the morning?"

"Certainly, by the first boat. We will take the steamer to Villeneuve, rail to Monthey, and ride on muleback from Vernayaz to Chamouni."

"Oh, how delightful! You are kind" (kissing him a second time). "I will go and get our things ready at once. We have to go out this evening, and there will be no time in the morning. What time does the steamer leave?"

"Seven-fifteen, I think."

"Hang it all!" mutters Corfe, when he

is left alone, "I wish she would not be quite so kind and loving. It makes it so confoundedly hard. Shall I do it, after all? I must—there is no help for it. No, I won't. I— Anyhow, there is no harm in taking her to Chamouni, and then, *nous verrons*. She would give a part of her life to go there! That was rather startling. Little she knows— It is an awful shame. I wish I could get rid of her without—hang me if I don't. She is as good as gold, that's true; but she isn't worth two millions. Am I sure of getting two millions, though? That is the question. I'll think it over again. To do it and get nothing, that would be a hard case. Come, come, this won't do. I'm losing my courage; letting I dare not wait on I would. And everything is in my favour. If I cannot make that girl marry me I am a duffer, and don't deserve her. I shall pose as a man of fortune, and she has been brought up like a peasant. I must go through with it—must—must—Ah! what is that?"

And Corfe started as violently as if a pistol had been fired off at his ear. But it was only Madame Marquart wanting to know what Monsieur and Madame would like for supper.

Corfe answered rather shortly that they were going out to supper; and then he informed Madame Marquart that they proposed to start early next morning for Chamouni, and should be away perhaps six or seven days.

"I am very glad to hear it, for the sake of the lady," said Madame Marquart; "the excursion will do her good. She is *bien bonne*, is Madame Corfe. The possession of such a wife ought to make you very happy, M. Corfe. You must well take care of her, and see that she does not fall down a precipice or get lost on a glacier. *Bon soir*, Monsieur."

And with a little cackle of a laugh, to show that she was only making a *plaisanterie*, the landlady left Corfe to his reflections.

"Confound the old hag! what can she mean?" Corfe asked himself. "Nothing, of course. A chance shot. But how she startled me! Gad, I must watch myself, or I shall be getting nervous and making some confounded mistake, like those duffers I was talking to Balmaine about the other day."

They left Geneva in the grey of the morning. There was a chilly feeling in the air, a fog veiled the mountains and brooded over the town, and as the boat swept through

the dark blue water, it rose and fell smoothly, and rippled noiselessly, as if it were kept down by the weight of the mist.

"It is confoundedly foggy. Are we going to have bad weather, I wonder?" asked Corfe uneasily, as he made a vain effort to scan the horizon.

"Oh, no, I am sure we are not," answered Esther eagerly. "The glass is rising, and I heard the captain say just now '*il va s'éclaircir*.' It is only the morning glory."

"Confound the morning glory! I wish there was not quite so much of it. It's awfully cold," said Corfe peevishly.

He was always in a bad humour when he rose early. "Let us go below and have some coffee while it clears itself—if it's going to."

Esther acquiesced, though she would rather have remained on deck.

A cup of excellent coffee and a couple of *feras* (little trout) cured Corfe of his moroseness. To use a simile of the ring, he came up smiling; a cigar and the gleam of sunshine which saluted them as they reached the deck, restored him to a serener temper, and he chatted so pleasantly with Esther that an American, who was one of the few passengers, remarked to a travelling companion what a nice fellow that Englishman seemed to be, and how very fond he was of his wife; and when he heard Corfe address a few words to the captain, expressed a wish that he could speak French half as well.

The lake seemed to smoke, the mist was moving over the face of the water and melting in the sun, and soon the picturesque villages, the graceful villas and sloping gardens, the gleaming meadows and gay vineyards that gem the shores of the Leman were revealed in all their loveliness. The higher valleys were still hidden, but above the billowy clouds that hung between earth and sky the sombre summits of the Jura and the glittering peaks of the Alps rose like islands in a silver sea.

Esther was greatly delighted, and expressed her admiration in the effusive language of an excited girl; but Corfe cared more for the sunshine than the scenery, with which, as he observed, he was too familiar to go into ecstasies about it. Being, however, in a genial mood and disposed to be chatty, he pointed out to his companion various places of historic interest on the shores of the lake. As they passed the ivy-mantled keep of the Château of Yvoire he related the legend of Iron-fisted John. How a certain Baron of Yvoire, who belonged to a race that

claimed descent from the god Neptune, returned home after a long absence in Eastern lands with a black horse and a Moorish servant, and how the country people gave him the name of Jean au Bras de Fer, because he had lost part of his right arm and wore an iron one in its stead—and a great deal more, including Jean's love story, which though it greatly interested the travellers, would probably not be found very entertaining by English readers.

"How much of it is true?" inquired one of the Americans, both of whom had listened to the story with great attention.

"About a tenth, I should say. Bras de Fer is an historic personage, but the exploits attributed to him are mostly legendary."

The interest shown by Esther and the Americans flattered him; he liked being a centre of observation; and he told two or three other stories, and gave useful information concerning the places they passed—lore that he had picked up at odd times, and more than once turned to profitable account by acting as amateur cicerone to parties of distinguished foreigners.

Before they reached Villeneuve the Americans, who were also bound for Châinouni, proposed that they should travel thither in company. Corfe objected that they had Cook's tickets and were going by Martigny, while he and his wife were going by Vernayaz.

"Hang Cook's tickets," said the older and the burlier of the tourists; "we would sacrifice them twice over for the pleasure of travelling with a gentleman like you, who speaks the language like a native, and knows the country better than Baedeker."

Corfe hesitated. He had reasons for not wanting company, but the compliment pleased him—it may be that a good impulse moved him—and he closed with the American's proposal.

They all alighted at Vernayaz station, rode up the tremendous and almost interminable zigzag, which the burly American declared to be a thousand times higher than Jacob's ladder, to a little inn, where they spent the night. It was agreed that they should start at seven on the following morning for Châinouni. But a few minutes after the time appointed, and when all was ready for departure, American number two appeared on the scene, and said that his friend had been taken ill in the night, and would probably not be able to leave until the next day, and suggested that Mr. and Mrs. Corfe should go on without them. After a few expressions of regret the Corfes went on alone.

CHAPTER XXX.—AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

It was a fatality. Perhaps if the Americans had joined them the terrible event which shortly afterwards befell might never have come to pass. Corfe, by one of those inconsistencies to which human nature is prone, though in the first instance he had been annoyed by the Americans thrusting their company upon him, now almost regretted that they were staying behind. It is possible that he wanted saving from himself, for there must be times when a man who is planning a deed of horror—unless he be already brutalised by crime—would fain be hindered by some external influence from carrying out his design. Corfe had experienced several of these lucid intervals; from time to time he half renounced his purpose: and the nearer he came to its accomplishment the greater became his hesitation. He never looked at Esther without feeling how hard it would be to act when the moment arrived for which he had been so long preparing. She was so bright; she enjoyed life so much, and seemed so happy. And he liked her; she was a pleasant companion; she never bored him, and her love was gratifying to his self-esteem. Yet he always came round to the same point. Even in the agonies of irresolution Vera Hardy and her fortune lured him onward. And he had dwelt so much on the idea of murder, and brooded over his project so often and so fondly, that it had come to have a positive fascination for him. It was so clever, so original, and did its author so much credit, that it seemed almost a shame not to carry it into effect. Sometimes he was in one mood, sometimes in the other; but even in his better moments, when pity and such conscience as he had left fought most strenuously against the evil influence that was dragging him to his fate, he had always, deep down in his mind, a foreboding, amounting to conviction, that he should return to Geneva alone—that this was the last journey he and Esther would ever take together.

This was his thought as he helped her to mount her mule at the door of the Hôtel de Salvan, and in spite of himself he shuddered.

"You are cold, Vernon dear," she said caressingly. "Here, let me fasten this wrap round your neck," and, suiting the action to the word, she stooped from her saddle and folded a soft white shawl about his throat.

"It is rather chilly," he replied in a husky voice, "but the sun is rising and I shall be warm presently; and, yes" (drawing a flask

from his pocket), "I will take just a *soupeçon* of cognac."

He took a good deal more than a *soupeçon*, and, as Esther observed with some misgiving, he had lately drunk more both of wine and cognac than could be good for him; but she made no remark, and they rode on for some time in silence, for the air was so sharp and keen that she covered up her mouth with a muffler, and Vernon did not seem in a mood for conversation. His mind was agitated though his face was calm, and just then talking would have been painful to him. Had he been in a more observant temper he would probably have noticed that his companion was quieter than usual, and that her countenance wore an expression pensive even to sadness. Something troubled her. Whether some old memory, a feeling that she was lavishing her love on a man unworthy of her, or a foreboding of evil, who can tell? But as the sun rose higher and the morning mist faded in his beams, and range after range of Alpine giants, clothed in dazzling white, uprose around her, their brows crowned with diamonds, silent as the dead yet resplendent in the pride of their beauty and their strength, her melancholy followed the vanished mist, and she became as excited and enthusiastic as before.

Her exclamations and remarks rather amused Corfe, but he showed only a languid interest in the Alpine world around them.

"You have seen it all before," she said pettishly, "and don't care. But however often I were to see them I do not think these mountains would lose their charm for me. You have no poetry in your soul, Vernon, or you could not look unmoved on a scene like this."

They are in a wild valley strewn with erratic blocks. Its rugged and storm-rent slopes are dotted with two or three solitary chalets, and down the middle of it dashes and boils a mountain stream, as yet, for the day is young, unmixed with "glacier milk" and as clear as crystal. Patches of pines silvered with hoar frost fringe the lower heights, and between them and the advancing snow-line may be discerned oases of green pastures, veritable emeralds of the Alps in a setting of winter.

"Hark!" exclaimed Esther, reining in her mule, "what is that?"

It is a sound overhead, as it seemed from the snow; at first a confused murmur, then swelling into a diapason of shouting and "yoedelling," mingled with the music of bells, the lowing of cattle, and the blast of an Alpine horn.

The muleteer pointed towards the pine woods.

"They are bringing the cattle down from the Alps," said Corfe.

And Esther, turning her gaze in the direction pointed out by the muleteer, saw emerging from a clump of trees a long stream of cows, goats, and young horses, followed by men and lads and lasses, the latter in gay folks' dresses, all carrying something:—milking-stools, pots, pans, kettles, and other household gear, either on their backs or their heads.

"I know, I know," almost shouted Esther, dropping her reins and clapping her hands. "I have read about it in books; I have seen it in pictures. They are bringing home the cattle from the Alps. How picturesque it all is! Oh, Vernon, I never felt before that I was really in Switzerland!"

"You are not in Switzerland now."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that we have crossed the border, and this is Savoy."

"Never mind that; I don't care about political divisions. This may belong to France, but we are in a mountain land all the same, and you must let me call it Switzerland, Vernon dear. Do you know, I feel as if I should like to stay in it as long as I live! I wonder if I shall! What do you think, Vernon?"

"I think—if you do—I hope you will live a long time," answered Corfe with outward calm, though with inward effort. The question was too suggestive to be pleasant.

"You would wish that in any case, I hope, Vernon; but I mean, do you think we are likely to stay in Switzerland a long time?"

"Tell me how long we shall remain poor, and I will tell you how long we shall stay in Switzerland."

"In that case I almost hope we may always remain poor. I think I would rather be poor in Switzerland than rich in England."

"By Jove! but I would not," said Corfe abruptly. "If I had ten thousand a year London or Paris should be my home, Esther."

"Ten thousand a year!" laughed Esther. "What a prodigious sum! Wouldn't five thousand satisfy you, *mon cher*?"

"On the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread, certainly. Yes, I should be mighty glad of five thousand a year; but really to enjoy life nowadays you should have ten thousand."

"Well, there is no telling. Perhaps somebody will leave one of us ten thousand a year, or I may die, and then you can marry money, you know."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Corfe, with an abruptness that startled and surprised his companion.

Then the subject dropped, and they rode on in silence. The conversation evidently disturbed Esther, for, much as she loved Corfe, she was neither blind to his faults nor, remembering what had happened in the past, without misgivings as to what might befall her in the future. If her jest so far became earnest that he should have a chance, even in her lifetime, of marrying money, what would happen? The question was a painful one, for her hold over him was limited to Geneva, and depended entirely on what he called his poverty. Were he by any means to become independent of the goodwill of his patrons he might set her at defiance.

As for Corfe, the mention of money had set him a-thinking once more of Vera Hardy, her millions, and the pleasures they would purchase. Vera was a fine girl. He knew that he should sooner or later get tired of Esther—*on las de manger toujours du même pain*—and there was a touch of railery in her tone just now, which he did not at all like. Yes, the game was worth the candle. To funk it now, at the last moment, would be the merest poltroonery and a great mistake. He would never have such another chance. No risk and—if his scheme succeeded—hardly an effort. A touch, possibly a scream—but that would not matter—and all would be over as quickly as a flash of lightning. And then, for the hundredth time, he mentally rehearsed the scene to its minutest details. But though he hardened his heart he could not repress a great inward fear.

"I wish it were over!" he muttered through his set teeth.

When they reached the Argentières glacier it was in deep shade, for the sun was low.

"And that is a glacier?" said Esther, stopping her mule. "Well, I am disappointed. How stern and gloomy it looks, as if some terrible crime had been committed there, and it was for ever accursed."

The scene almost justifies Esther's description. A half-darkness, rendered ghastly by looming masses of corpse-like snow, broods over the upper part of the ravine from which the glacier descends; on either side rise black and splintered rocks; the broad ice-stream is strewn with huge blocks of stone, like the fragments of a ruined world, and ever and anon can be heard the boom of a rolling boulder and the crash of a falling avalanche.

For a few minutes Esther gazed on the

wild waste of snow and ice and wreck as if fascinated. "It's awfully grand," she said at length, drawing a deep breath; "but there is something in it that almost frightens me. Let us go on, Vernon."

"I do not see anything awful in it," answered Corfe in a matter-of-fact way. "I thought you would be disappointed; people always are the first time they see a glacier. But wait until you see another or two, and by daylight. To-morrow or the next day we will go to the Mer de Glace. It is not like this."

"I am very glad, for if all glaciers were like this, I should never want to see another. It is horrible enough to be one of the ways into Hades and peopled by ghosts and hobgoblins."

"That's all nonsense," returned Corfe. "*Allons!* let us push on; it's past dinner-time, and I am getting awfully peckish."

An hour later they were in the *salle à manger* of the Hôtel du Mont Blanc, and Esther, fortified by an excellent meal, quickly got over the impression made on her by her first glacier, and declared herself eager for an excursion to Montanvert and the Mer de Glace.

CHAPTER XXXI.—THE SÉRACS DU GÉANT.

It was late on the following morning when Corfe and Esther came down to breakfast. The long ride and the keen air had acted as an anodyne, and they slept both soundly and long.

When Esther spoke of the proposed excursion, Corfe, who seemed to be in a lazy mood, said it was almost too late to start on so long a journey, and suggested that they should put it off until the morrow.

Esther looked disappointed. She little guessed that the change of plan gave her an additional twenty-four hours of life.

"The Mer de Glace is not the only thing to be seen at Chamouni," he observed with a smile; "we can make some shorter and easier excursion."

"Very well; let us set out, then," she returned, rising from the table. "The sun is bright and the day is getting on. I can be ready in five minutes."

"All right," said Corfe, lighting a cigar; "get ready; you will find me at the door. I'll ask one of the guides about the condition of the mountains and what excursion he can recommend."

Esther was nearly as good as her word. Her five minutes stretched only to fifteen. She found Corfe in conversation with a guide,

whom he called Valentine. He had come to the conclusion that the pleasantest excursion they could undertake would be to the Col de Brévent. They might make the greater part of the ascent on muleback; and though snow had fallen on the summit, they would be able, thought Valentine, to reach it without difficulty, and the view it afforded of the chain of Mont Blanc and the valley of the Sixt was superb.

In this proposal Esther acquiesced with alacrity. She would go anywhere Vernon thought best, she said, only she should like to see the Mer de Glace before they went back.

"Of course," answered Corfe; "nobody comes to Chamouni without seeing the Mer de Glace. We will go to Montanvert to-morrow, and if you like, make an excursion to the Jardin or the Séraas du Géant."

Esther said she should like very much, and the mules being brought round they started for the Col de Brévent. When they reached a hut, near the top, they dismounted, for the track had become impracticable even for mules, and snow lay thick in the hollows.

"Is that a glacier?" asked Esther, pointing to a wide stretch of snow which lay between them and the summit.

"Not exactly," returned Corfe rather loftily, for even in trifles he was never above the vanity of showing his superior knowledge. "That is merely snow, which has probably fallen during the last few days. The Brévent is clear in summer. A glacier is ice, as you will see to-morrow."

Esther was in great spirits.

"This is really mountaineering," she cried to Corfe, as the guide stamped steps for her with his feet and helped her up the snow slope. "I do so enjoy it; don't you, Vernon?"

"Very much, indeed. I like it immensely," answered Corfe, ironically, and with a half groan; for his game leg was troubling him a little, his wind had suffered from his life in Geneva, and he had quite lost his taste for mountaineering. If he had yielded to impulse he would have been very cross; but he kept his temper from policy, and Esther was too much occupied with her climbing to observe the shade on her companion's countenance.

"*Voici!*" exclaimed Valentine at length, pulling her on a ridge free from snow, "we are arrived at the summit."

And then Esther looked round and saw before her a sight the like of which she had

never yet beheld. From the coign of vantage where she stood her eye took in the entire range of Mont Blanc, now white from base to summit, except where some dark pinnacle of rock pierced the sky or the ice of a glacier gleamed like an amethyst in the sun.

"So white, so still, and so solemn," she said slowly, after a long pause. "It makes me think of death, Vernon dear."

"Why—why of death?" stammered Corfe, who stood beside her leaning on his alpen-stock.

"Because it seems to me that up yonder, on those serene heights, there can be no life, and the stillness must be as complete as that of the grave."

"Come now, Esther, do let us discuss something more cheerful than death and the grave. You make me feel quite uncomfortable."

"Why should mention of death make you feel uncomfortable? When you left me and I was in such sore trouble I often longed for death. And there may be more trouble in store for me yet—who can tell? I once heard Rabbi Simeon say that it may be a greater misfortune to live than to die; and I have sometimes thought that it is best to die when you are happy, and before fresh troubles come—if it please God to take you."

"What strange ideas you have, Esther! Why should you have such gloomy thoughts? You were cheerful enough just now."

"And shall be again presently. It was the sight of those mountains. How like eternity they are!"

"Eternity!" said Corfe with a half sneer. "What will you be saying next, I wonder? Let us change the subject. Do you see that great mass of white streaked with blue?—a little to the right, there, like a great frozen cascade?"

"Yes."

"Well, about this time to-morrow we shall not be far from the foot of that cascade," said Corfe with a curious glance at Esther.

"I hope it won't tumble on us," returned the girl pleasantly, for she was now as cheerful as a little while before she had been sad.

"No fear of that. I have too great a regard for you—and myself, too, for that matter—to run into danger. And we shall take Valentine with us, of course."

Then they descended the mountain, Vernon holding Esther's hand and paying her great attention. Once, however, she slipped, to Corfe's dismay, and if the guide had not been in front and stopped her by

running diagonally across the snow slope, she might have gone over a precipice. Corfe's anxiety on this occasion was quite touching. He could not run very fast on account of his leg, but when he came up to Esther he took her in his arms and kissed her. The incident impressed Valentine greatly, and when he was talking matters over in the evening with the guide-in-chief, he expressed the opinion that the English gentleman and wife were newly married, Monsieur seemed so fond of Madame.

Before they separated it was agreed that the guide should be at the hotel door with two mules at eight o'clock next morning.

Valentine was true to the tryst, though he had not the least expectation that his *voyageurs* would be, and nine o'clock had gone before Esther and Corfe appeared on the scene, alpenstocks in hand and ready for a start. Corfe was in one of his taciturn humours and had very little to say; but even if he had been in a more genial mood, it would not have been easy to hold a conversation while riding up the steep ascent, several yards behind his companion. But by the time they reached Montanvert he had grown quite amiable, and repeated sips from his brandy-flask (furtively taken) so effectually loosened his tongue that he became both talkative and jocular.

At Montanvert they leave the mules, and after a light repast, which Corfe washed down with the greater part of a bottle of Bordeaux, they begin the second stage of their journey. Keeping the vast ice stream to their left they follow its course along the mountain side until a spot is reached where it is possible, though not very easy, to descend on the glacier. For the bank of the moraine, worn by the weather and undermined by the pressure of the ice stream, has fallen in, and they have to climb over and double huge boulders, and Valentine has to stamp steps for them in the friable earth, just as he had done the day before in the soft snow. At length the glacier is reached, but its surface is so thickly covered with stones and soil that if it were not for the occasional crevasse they would not know they were walking on ice. But it is so rugged and the boulders are so big and so numerous that the climbers are compelled to take once more to the mountain side; yet only to go down a second time on the glacier, which is becoming gradually smoother, cleaner, and more ice-like. Above them towers the dark and majestic Aiguille Noire, before them rises the white and blue fissured crest of the

Glacier du Géant, like some mightier Niagara, arrested in mid career and turned into ice by the touch of an almighty hand. Above the glacier stretches a wide expanse of glittering snow. Before them are splintered peaks, wild ravines, and savage precipices; below them the icy sea crawls like a gigantic snake towards the valley. The wild scene is lighted up by a brilliant sunshine, and a cloud banner floats from the Aiguille du Dru in a sky of clearest azure.

But hark! what is that?

It is the crash of a stone falling from the Aiguille Noire, followed by the thunder of an ice avalanche from the Glacier du Géant. And then Esther learns that the serene heights of the Alpine world are neither so silent nor so devoid of life as she had thought, for she hears the sound of running water, and Valentine points to an eagle flying between the snow and the sun.

The guide holds Esther's hand to steady her footsteps, sometimes lending a hand to Corfe as well, for they have many ugly ice hummocks to surmount, and some awkward crevices to double. After an unusually hard scramble Corfe calls a halt, whereupon they sit down on a boulder and eat some sandwiches, and Corfe refreshes himself freely from his flask.

"Are there any *moulins* about here?" he asks the guide while offering him a cigar.

"Yes, we shall pass a big one in a few minutes—don't you hear it?"

"I think I do; not very distinctly though. But it appears to come from under the glacier."

"One can hear nothing under the glacier. It is too deep."

"Those moulins go to the bottom of the glacier, I suppose?"

"Of course; where else could they go?"

"How deep are they?"

"Who knows? Perhaps a hundred feet, perhaps more."

"What is it all about. What is a moulin?" asks Esther.

"Tell Madame what a moulin is, Valentine," says Corfe, as he takes another sip of brandy.

On this the guide explains that they are coming to a part of the glacier which is almost unbroken, where dribblets of water, instead of disappearing in the rifts, form rills which, joining together, form broad rivulets, and cut deep channels in the ice. The stream so formed sooner or later reaches a point where the ice is cracked, and the water, arrested in its course, finds its way to the bottom of the

glacier. But as the stream runs with great force it gradually shapes out a shaft, wide almost as the mouth of a coal pit, and of a tremendous depth, wherein the water plunges with a hollow and thunderlike roar.

"Now you hear it distinctly enough," exclaimed Valentine, when they were once more afoot. "Listen!"

It is a heavy rumbling sound like distant thunder, which grows louder as they advance.

"How curious," says Esther. "I should like to see one of these moulins."

"We shall be at it directly. This is a very large one."

The sound grows louder and louder, and more like real thunder, and then they hear the swish of the water and see in the smooth ice a huge cavernous hole. They draw nearer and look into its awful depths. It is a shaft bored through the blue ice, into which leaps wildly a cascade of white water.

"I say, Valentine," calls Corfe, who is a few yards in the rear, "I have left my flask down at the boulder there. I wish you would fetch it for me, I am beginning to feel a little tired. We will wait for you here."

"*Purfaitement, Monsieur.* I shall not be five minutes."

"What an awesome sight it is!" says Esther, "and what a wild scene all round! It almost makes me feel afraid."

"Nonsense! What is there to be afraid of? Yes, these moulins are very curious. Give me your hand and come a little closer."

"How your hand trembles, Vernon! Are you afraid, too?"

"Not a bit; but I am cold with sitting on that confounded boulder. I will put my gloves on. You can stand alone half a minute. But take care, the ice is very slippery and——"

The next moment a piercing shriek rings through the air, and when Valentine, who is hardly two hundred yards away, turns round, he sees only one figure standing by the moulin.

"The lady has fallen in," he says, and then he hurries back at full speed.

Corfe was bending over the moulin in an attitude of despair, his arms extended, and face as pale as death.

"She has gone!" he exclaimed wildly, "fallen into that horrible hole. I let go her hand to put on my gloves; then she moved a little forward—and—and the very same moment I heard her shriek and saw her

fall. I clutched at her dress but it was too late! It tore; see, I have a bit of it in my hand! I should not have let go her hand. Oh! I should not have let go her hand. But can nothing be done? cannot we get ropes?"

"There are no ropes nearer than Chamouni, and if we had a thousand they would be of no use. The poor lady is dead already, Monsieur. You will never see your wife again until you meet her in heaven."

"But the body," said Corfe eagerly, "can we not recover the body? Oh, my poor, poor Esther!"

"Impossible! the body is at the bottom of the glacier, and will not reappear until the day of judgment. It is a great misfortune and I shall be much blamed, Monsieur."

"Why, why should any one blame you, Valentine? You have done nothing wrong."

"Yes, I have; I neglected my duty. I should not have left you alone at the mouth of the moulin; but Monsieur asked me to fetch his flask and I could not well refuse. You will say so to the *guide-en-chef*, will you not, Monsieur?"

"I do not think you are in the least to blame, Valentine. The fault is entirely mine, and I shall say so to the chief guide and everybody else."

"A thousand thanks, Monsieur; I am sorry to trouble Monsieur about myself at so terrible a moment; but when a guide loses his character as guide he loses his living, and I have a wife and children."

And then Valentine led Corfe away from the fatal moulin, and they set their faces towards Montanvert. Corfe, who seemed to be overcome with excitement and emotion, and was probably unnerved by the drink he had taken, walked so unsteadily that the guide had much difficulty in getting him across the glacier and up the moraine. The sun had set long before they reached Montanvert, and as they went down the mountain, Valentine leading Corfe's mule, it was pitch dark.

Long before the two men gained Montanvert the sun had set in a blood-red sky. As they descended the mountain in pitchy darkness, Corfe spoke never a word, and when they reached the *Hôtel du Mont Blanc* he was in such a state of mental and physical prostration that he had to be helped from his mule and led straightway to his bedroom.

THE FRIENDSHIPS OF BIBLE HISTORY.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR JUNE.

By E. H. PLUMPTRE, D.D., DEAN OF WELLS.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Psalm cxxxiii.; Matthew v. 43—48.

FRIENDSHIP AND THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

NO factors in the life of man, as it emerges out of the selfishness of barbarism into the higher developments of soul and spirit, are of greater moment than the impulses which draw mind to mind and heart to heart in what we know as friendship. That this was felt to be so in the race to which it was given to be the leader of the world in intellect, and therefore in the discernment of the ethical relations which are the groundwork of social life, the language of Greek poets and the teaching of Greek philosophers bear sufficient witness. The words of Homer have become almost proverbial:—

"When two together go, each for the other
Is first to think what best may help his brother,
But one who walks alone, though wise in mind,
Of purpose slow and counsel weak we find."

Iliad x. 224—6.

And these were condensed into the more concise utterance of actual proverbs, such *e.g.* as "Hand claspeth hand, and finger finger helps," and the yet briefer form, "Friends have all things in common." The traditions of Theseus and Peirithōos, of Orestes and Pylades, of Damon and Pythias, were among those dearest to the Greek mind. The great "Master of those who know," Aristotle, showed how he recognised the importance of this bond of union by dedicating two whole books (viii. and ix.) of his *Ethics* to an inquiry into its nature, its conditions, and its bearing upon man's happiness and goodness.

Not less prominent is the position given to Friendship in the ethical teaching both of the Old and New Testaments. So in Prov. xvii. 17, we have "A friend loveth at all times and is" (I give what I believe to be the true rendering,) "as a brother born for adversity;" and again, in Prov. xxvii. 17, in words reminding us of one of the Greek proverbs just quoted, "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." How men prized the blessedness of a true friendship is seen in the bitterness of their complaint when the friend in whom they trusted proved unfaithful. "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could

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have borne it. . . . But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took secret counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." (Ps. lv. 12—14). A later Jewish proverb gave utterance to men's feelings as to the poverty of a friendless life. "A man without friends is like a left hand without the right." Still more striking in their resemblance to the teachings of Greek thought are the words of the Preacher: "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up the other; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." (Eccles. iv. 9, 10.) The highest sanction to this feeling of the blessing of companionship—

"United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard,"

in their "glorious enterprise," was given by the great Master when he sent forth His disciples "two and two" before His face (Luke x. 1).

An analysis of the feelings in which this desire for companionship originates would carry us deep down to the fountal springs of human actions. From the standpoint of one theory of ethics it might seem to be the outcome of the needs of man in his early struggles with the elemental forces of nature, with the brute creatures round him and with his fellows. He shrank from the sense of loneliness; he craved, as in the Homeric lines, for the strong arm and the wise forethought which could defend him from the threatening danger. He felt a certain satisfaction in rendering services of a like nature, because he knew by experience that men thought that "one good turn deserved another," that the services so rendered were not wasted as regards his own interests. If a man were helpful to his brother, it was that his brother might in turn help him. Friendship had its birth, on this theory, in a calculating and clear-sighted selfishness.

The same view might be taken of some of the more subtle manifestations of the feeling which leads to friendship. All experience shows that a man delights in his friend's esteem or praise; that at first he shrinks from manifesting his own infirmities or frailties to him; that afterwards, when he

gains more confidence, he is willing to make him, as it were, his confessor or director, to seek his advice and counsel in order that he may attain his approval. Here also, as might be expected, the theorist who makes self the centre of all things has an explanation ready to his hand. A man desires the approval of his friend because praise is pleasant to him. He will give that approval in the hope of receiving payment in kind. This may work for good, in leading the man to do right things, and to avoid evil and baseness; but it has no higher element. The stream of selfishness is, as it were, filtered, and flows clearer, but friendship, as thus explained, is after all little more than what has been called a "mutual admiration" society.

Those who take a higher and, as I believe, truer view of man's nature, will, on the other hand, recognise in the emotions which we group together under the head of friendship, affections implanted by the Author of that nature, the Father of the spirits of all flesh, for the education of mankind, individually and collectively, to a higher life. They take the man out of himself. The love of man for man, like the true love of man for woman, becomes a purifying and ennobling element; it stimulates to brave and righteous deeds; it helps in hours of weakness and distress; it "blesses him that gives and him that takes;" it is blest alike in the hopes of its first dawn, and in the long twilight of memory after death or separation. Even in its imperfections, in its failure to realise the ideal which it presents to the imagination, it fulfils, like other earthly failures, no ignoble mission. It leads the seeker after that blessedness which is found in friendship, through the human friends who change and disappoint, to the eternal Friend in whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read 2 Samuel i. 17-27; John xi. 18-45.

DAVID AND JONATHAN.

It lies in the nature of the case that the friendships of which I purpose speaking in these papers were of the old heroic, unselfish, disinterested type, in which alone the great teachers of mankind have recognised a true affection worthy of the name. "The wise man," to use the words of one such teacher, Seneca (*Epist.* ix. 8), "needs a friend, not as Epicurus taught, that he may have one to sit by his bed when he is ill, or to help him

when he is poor or in prison, but that he may have one by whose bed he may sit, whom he may rescue when attacked by foes." This holds good, if I mistake not, in a special manner, of the representative instance which I have selected from the history of the Old Testament.

As the beginning of this friendship is recorded in the Old Testament, the affection seems to have sprung up at once, love, as it were, at first sight. "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (1 Sam. xviii. 1). He sees the young warrior fresh from his victory over the giant champion of the Philistines, and this is the result. His whole heart goes out to one in whom comeliness of form and feature was the outward symbol of a noble enthusiasm, a dauntless courage, an entire consecration. Reading this narrative, however, in connexion with what precedes it, there seems reason to believe that it was not the first time that the two had met. Some years or months before, when David was in yet earlier youth, Jonathan may well have seen or heard him as he stood with his harp before Saul, and soothed the frenzied king to calmness and peace (1 Sam. xvi. 23), and may have admired and loved the promise of a noble manhood and of princely gifts, which were even then conspicuous. Anyhow, at this second meeting, the friendship, before nascent, sprang into full maturity, and on the part of Jonathan (obviously the elder of the two), it was one of the fullest self-surrender. All that was his, robe, sword, bow, and girdle, he transferred to his friend. He rejoiced without grudging in the fame of the young warrior as it came to surpass his own. He protected his life, first by pleading his cause in words, afterwards at the risk of his own life (1 Sam. xix. 4, xx. 33). He prays, hoping against hope, that his father's heart might be turned, so that he might not have to make his choice between the two, but when the time of decision came, he was faithful to the friend with whose soul his own soul was one. For that friend he has nothing but the wish of a self-surrendering friendship. He sees that the sun of David is rising, while that of his own house is setting, without a pang or murmur. All that he desires is that he may be remembered in that not far-off day. "The Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father. And thou shalt not only, while yet I live, shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no,

not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth" (1 Sam. xx. 13, 14). At an interview between the two, when each might well have had at least a dim foreboding that they might not meet again, we read how David's outward gestures showed his profound reverence for the princely friend to whom he owed so much, how "they kissed one another, and wept one with another," till David, in the quaint English of our Authorised Version, "exceeded" in his overmastering sorrow (1 Sam. xx. 41, 42). Once more, in a yet more critical moment, when Saul was seeking David's life and driving him from one refuge to another, there was the actual last parting. Fearless of the danger to which he exposed himself, the prince sought out the fugitive, and "strengthened his hand in God." He dreamt his dream of a future not to be realised. "Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth." Once more, as hoping in that future, "they made a covenant before the Lord," ratifying all past covenants of heart-affection (1 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17). And then came the end, and Jonathan fell with his father in the fatal battle of Gilboa, and their dead bodies were shown in ghastly triumph on the walls of Beth-shan, till the men of Jabesh-Gilead, who remembered how the heroes had delivered them, rescued them, and burnt them, and gave them a temporary burial-place within their own territory (1 Sam. xxxi. 8—13).

These are the few brief facts that meet us in the sacred record. It is no idle stretch of fancy to read something more between the lines, to picture the two friends as sharing the dangers of battle and the joy of victory; joining in the prayer and the praise in which the gifts of the minstrel-poet would make him the leader and Jonathan the follower; watching the brightness of the stars and the glories of an eastern dawn; looking forward to the time when they would work together to realise the idea of a righteous kingdom, which Saul had not realised. Such memories as these must have been in the mind of the Psalmist when he poured out his heart-sorrow in the marvellous elegy which, even alone, would have made his name immortal. "From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. . . . Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death

they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. . . . I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (2 Sam. i. 17—27).

And we note, with at least some satisfaction, that amidst the changes and chances, the failures and the sins of David's after life, the memory of that early friendship was with him still. He sent to the men of Jabesh-Gilead to thank them for the service they had rendered (2 Sam. ii. 5), and at a later date brought the bones of Saul and Jonathan and his other sons and buried them in the sepulchre of Kish his father (2 Sam. xxi. 13, 14). He sought out the one surviving son of his friend and showed him kindness, and kept him as an honoured guest in his palace and at his table (2 Sam. xiv. 6—13). He spared him when the other sons of Saul were sentenced to death at the request of the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 7). We may well believe that his acceptance of Mephibosheth's excuse for his apparent desertion was, in part at least, due to his memories of the earlier days, when he and Jonathan had one heart and mind (2 Sam. xix. 24—30).

What other possible influences that friendship may have had on David's inner life has been so well summed up by a great master-mind, himself, as his writings show, not without a full experience of the joys and sorrows of friendship, that I cannot do better than end by reproducing the lines by Cardinal Newman, which appear in the "Lyra Apostolica."

"DAVID AND JONATHAN.

"O heart of fire! misjudged by wilful man,
Thou flower of Jesse's race!
What woe was thine, when thou and Jonathan
Last greeted face to face!
He doom'd to die, thou on us to impress
The portent of a blood-stained holiness.

"Yet it was well; for so, mid cares of rule
And crime's encircling tide,
A spell was o'er thee, zealous one, to cool
Earth-joy and kingly pride;
With battle-scene and pageant, prompt to blend
The pale calm spectre of a blameless friend.

"Ah! had he lived, before thy throne to stand,
Thy spirit keen and high,
Sure it had snapped in twin love's slender band,
So dear in memory.
Paul's strife unblest,* its serious lesson gives,
He bides with us who dies, he is but lost who lives."

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Isaiah xii. ; John xxi. 15—25.

PETER AND JOHN.

The records of the Old Testament contain but one memorable friendship. Those of the

* Acts xv. 39.

New Testament present two examples, each of which brings before us subject matter for study and meditation. In the one case we have an example of an affection which ended only with life. The other is an instance of that with which human experience makes us but too familiar, of a friendship broken, at least for a time, by a serious difference in opinion, never, it may be, revived in its outward companionship, yet lingering still in the memories of those who were thus divided. It was of that friendship that Cardinal Newman wrote in the lines just quoted—

"He bides with us who dies, he is but lost who lives."

It is scarcely necessary to dwell at length on the early companionship of the two disciples of the Galilean lake. They were natives of the same city. They were partners in their earthly calling (Luke v. 10). They must have attended the services of the same synagogue, and "walked in the house of God as friends." Together they searched the Scriptures for the promise of the consolation of Israel, and when the voice of one crying in the wilderness was heard, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," together they went to the baptism of John. The younger of the two was the first to hear the witness of the Baptist that the Lamb of God had indeed come to take away the sin of the world, and he sought to bring his friend to the feet of the great Teacher in whom he had found the Christ (John i. 41). Together they left their earthly calling to follow the divine Master (Matt. iv. 18—22, Luke v. 11), and before long were placed by Him in the foremost group of the disciples whom He chose to be apostles (Matt. x. 2). Together they were present in the more impressive incidents of the ministry of the Lord Jesus, at the raising of the daughter of Jairus from death to life (Mark v. 37), at the transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1), at the utterance of the great prophecy in which the destruction of Jerusalem foreshadowed the judgment of the world (Mark xiii. 3). They went together to prepare the upper room for the last Passover (Luke xxii. 8). They shared in the slumbrous sorrow of Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 37). They went together into the high-priest's palace to be present at their Master's trial (John xviii. 16). One failed in that hour of trial and denied his Lord, and while his younger friend was standing at the foot of the cross, remained in the solitude of his shame and confusion of face. When all was over he would seem to have sought comfort and sympathy from his comrade. And

they were once again together on the morning of that first Easter day, looking into the empty sepulchre, which told them that their Lord had risen (John xx. 2). From that time they were more inseparable than ever. They shared with the other disciples in the manifestation of the risen Christ. The question which Peter asked after the veil which hid his own future had been in part uplifted, "And what shall this man do?" (John xxi. 21), bore witness of the intensity of his affection. And, so far as we know, nothing ever cooled the warmth of that affection. The two friends were together in the Temple when they healed the crippled beggar (Acts iii. 1). They were joined in the first great expansion of the apostolic work in the journey to Samaria (Acts viii. 14). They were of one mind and heart when they gave the right hand of fellowship to the apostle whose work was to be wider, though not higher or nobler, than their own (Gal. ii. 9.) One was to survive the other by some forty years, but we may believe that he looked back on the memory of his early friend with thoughts in which all that was most precious in the past was illumined with the glow of a new and brighter hope stretching into the eternal future; that those memories must have been with him in their fullest power when he remembered and recorded the question and the answer of which I have just spoken.

Studying, as we may rightly study, the characters of the two apostles, we may, I believe, see in them an instance of the friendship which grows out of the companionship of men whose characters are complementary to each other. The melody which gave its sweetness to their lives was one of harmony rather than of unison. In Peter we note the fervid zeal, the prompt confession, the impetuous friendship which answered to the name which his Master gave him, of the "rock" apostle (Matt. xvi. 18; John i. 42). He is more prompt in speech than any of his fellows, takes the lead in action, and, after his Lord's departure, in government and direction. It is given to him to hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to open the door of faith to the Gentiles, as in the case of Cornelius (Acts x. 47, 48), to shut that door on one who was unworthy of admission, as in the case of Simon Magus (Acts viii. 20, 21). But with this impulsiveness to good there was also an impulsive weakness, which marred his completeness. He was sensitive to shame and fear. He proved himself of little faith when he found himself on the

stormy waters of the Galilean lake (Matt. xiv. 30), of little courage when he stood in the court of the high-priest's palace, and, in answer to the questions of soldiers and maid-servants, denied the Master for whom he had said that he was ready to go with Him to prison or to death (Matt. xxvi. 69—75). The same weakness of nature betrayed him at a later period into a like inconsistency, when he, who had been chosen to admit the Gentiles, shrank, through fear of the party of the circumcision, from the logical consequence of his own act, and took up a position which compromised at once the freedom and the Catholicity of the Church (Gal. ii. 11, 12). In St. John we have, it need hardly be said, a character of a very different stamp. There is a burning zeal which needs—as when he sought to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritan village (Luke ix. 54), or forbade the ministry of one who seemed to him unauthorised and uncommissioned (Mark ix. 38)—to be restrained and purified. There was the temper that seeks great things for itself in the kingdom of heaven, as other men seek great things in the courts of princes (Matt. xx. 20—24), which called for warning and reproof, but there was no weakness. The “disciple whom Jesus loved” was, we must believe, worthy of His love. If Peter was more forward to confess his Lord, John drank in His words with a more intense eagerness, and a greater capacity for understanding them. To him, and not to Peter, was given the fullest proof of confidence when the words were spoken which made his life for many years one of seclusion rather than activity, “Behold thy mother;” “Woman, behold thy son” (John xix. 26, 27).

That higher friendship, we may well believe, made him what he was to his earthly companion. He had learnt from his Lord what a true friend should be, gentle, long-suffering, kind, fervent in zeal, clothed in humility. Peter's growth in grace was helped by the deeper experiences of the “beloved disciple.” The memory of the “wonderful love” that had drawn them together, was a purifying and sustaining influence in the declining years of St. John.

I summed up the lessons of the friendship of David and Jonathan in the words of one of the great masters of thought. Those which rise out of the friendship of St. Peter and St. John may well be conveyed in the words of one whom he loved with a true affection, though the currents of thought and feeling at last bore them in different directions. It is not too bold a thought to believe

that the verse which I quote from the “Christian Year” of John Keble may be often in the mind of John Henry Newman with a power to soothe and comfort.

“Lord, and what shall this man do?”
Ask’st thou, Christian, for thy friend?
If his love for Christ be true,
Christ hath told thee of his end;
This is he whom God approves,
This is he whom Jesus loves.”

ST. JOHN'S DAY.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Psalm lxxvii.; Acts ix. 23—31.

PAUL AND BARNABAS.

The early friendship of St. Paul and Barnabas is suggested as a natural inference from the facts of their maturer years. When the apostle of the Gentiles returns to Jerusalem for the first time after his conversion, it is Barnabas who brings him to the apostles and guarantees, as it were, the genuineness of that conversion (Acts ix. 27). When the latter finds his expanding work at Antioch growing beyond his strength, he turns to Saul of Tarsus to help him, as the one on whom he could most rely (Acts xi. 25, 26). After working together at Antioch they go forth on the first great missionary enterprise, which was to carry the Gospel to the Gentile as well as to the Jew (Acts xiii. 2). The previous intimacy which these facts suggest was in itself probable enough. The Levite of Cyprus may well have profited by the teaching of the schools of Tarsus, or have sat among the scholars who looked to Gamaliel as their master.

In this case, however, the friendship was, for a time at least, broken. The question whether the disciple who had forsaken them as they were just entering on the threshold of their enterprise, was worthy to be trusted, was in itself, it might seem, a small one; but it was just the “little rift” that widens into a chasm. There came what Newman calls “Paul's strife unblest.” The contention, the “paroxysm” (I give the very word which St. Luke used, Acts xv. 39), was very sharp, and each spoke words, the irrevocable words, which made it impossible to work together. With this difference, there was joined the wavering, temporising policy which led Barnabas, for a time, to appear indifferent where his friend was zealous, and to interpose an obstacle to the universality, the true Catholicity, of the Church of Christ (Gal. ii. 13). We do not know whether the friends ever met again, and the probability is that they did not. The only gleam of light on the feelings with which, after their rupture,

one at least of the two looked on the other, is seen in the way in which his old friend's name comes to his lips. When St. Paul speaks of his own life of self-supporting labour, it is in the words "I only, *and Barnabas*, have we not power to forbear working" (1 Cor. ix. 6). When he commends the disciple, whose change of purpose had been the beginning of the rupture, to the good offices of the Colossians, it is with the reminder that he is "sister's son to *Barnabas*" (Col. iv. 10).

The friendship now before us presents another instance of characters that are drawn to each other because their temperaments are not identical but complementary. In Saul of Tarsus we have the fiery glow of one whose zeal for God may pass to the very verge of fanaticism or madness (Acts xxvi. 11); keenly sensitive, large and far-reaching in his aspirations and his plans, quickly moved to indignation, to anger, or to tears, with gifts of utterance that enabled him to hold the peasants of Lystra, or the Epicureans and Stoics of Athens, or the multitude of pilgrims and citizens at Jerusalem, in rapt attention (Acts xiv. 14—18; xvii. 22—31; xxii. 1—21). Wherever he went, with whatever companions, he was as sure to be conspicuous as the chief speaker, as he was when, on that ground, he was identified with Hermes, the god of eloquence (Acts xiv. 12). The whole nature of Barnabas appears as of a calmer order. There is something significant in the fact that while the name given to him as indicating his special gift might have been rendered "son of prophecy," St. Luke, following, we may believe, in the footsteps of the Gentiles and Greek-speaking Jews of Jerusalem and Antioch, gives as its equivalent "son of consolation" (Acts iv. 36). It is a natural inference from this that men missed in him the fiery-winged speech which was the most conspicuous element in the prophetic character, and that they recognised

the presence of the gentle and persuasive power which, starting from the insight of sympathy, is able to adapt its words to the inmost thoughts of men's hearts, to pour in its oil and wine upon the soul's wounds, to bind it, as "with the cords of a man," by the ties of kindness and compassion. Barnabas, as we have seen, felt the need of the more commanding energy, the greater organizing power of St. Paul. Paul, in his turn, must have felt the preciousness of the full confiding trust which he found on his return to Jerusalem after his conversion at his friend's hands. The two gifts which the apostle brings into close juxtaposition as "helps" and "governments" (1 Cor. xii. 28) seem to embody what was specially characteristic of each of the two friends. There is something suggestive, if I mistake not, in the fact that after their separation St. Paul fell back upon the friendship, the filial friendship, of the affectionate and devoted Timotheus. He had lost one who was as a brother; he found, by way of compensation, one who was both a brother and a son.

Yes, in this case also, we may believe, as in those of David and Jonathan, of St. Peter and St. John, that "They sin who tell us love can die," if the love has been in the outset true, unselfish, pure. The history of all times of movement in thought, religious, social, or political, shows us how differences of opinions or of creed may interrupt the old familiar intercourse, the sympathy of heart and will. But the pale, calm spectre of the past has, in such instances, a soothing and a purifying power. It may stir to noble enterprises, strengthen men to resist temptation, or soften the asperities of controversy, and temper the bitterness of dogmatism with the promptings of a wider hope. The friendship wakens out of a death unto the higher potency of a risen life, and "he who lives" is not altogether lost, but abides, loved with a dearer love, for ever.

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

JOHN HOWARTH, builder and timber merchant, was a small man who mistook himself for a big one. He rode nine stone, or thereabouts, and walked with as solid and stolid a deliberation as if he rode twenty.

He dressed as it befitted a big man of the old school to dress—John Bull fashion, in boots and breeches, blue cutaway coat with brass buttons, high false collars scraping at his bit of side whiskers, blue bird's-eye neckerchief, and a hat rather broader in the brim and lower in the crown than common. Below

his little rotund waistcoat a bunch of seals exuded from a very tight fob, and the builder, putting his small shoulders back with a wonderfully undeceptive air of being six feet, and as broad as a door, fingered the seals constantly.

The inside man corresponded pretty closely to the outside. He was not often of the same opinion for five days together, and was as incapable of a lasting enmity as of a settled idea. But he had somehow arrived at the belief that he was an unshakable, unmalleable, adamantine sort of person, and superior to all such influences as those by which the weak permit themselves to be cajoled or driven.

The summer air in the neighbourhood of Howarth's house was fragrant with the scent of pine-boards, and the spiteful noise made by a circular saw, which bit its steam-driven way through timber in a great shed in the rear of the house, was like the sound of a prodigious wasp in a prodigious passion.

The builder stood, with his shoulders squared and his nose in the air, at his own gate, caressing with the finger and thumb of his right hand a chin shaven as clean as a new-laid egg, whilst his left hand toyed with the bunch of seals. The finger and thumb on the clean-shaven chin conveyed a pleasant sense of personal niceness. The handling of the seals carried, as it always did, a sentiment of wealth and size and importance—a sentiment vague and undefined, but none the less agreeable on that account. There were wide-spread fields before him, and he looked at them as if he owned them, and felt like the lord of the manor.

When a thing happened to another man the builder knew how to regard it with an eye of tolerable shrewdness, and could estimate its proportions (provided they were such as to be within his grasp at all) as accurately as the general run of men could do. But when a thing happened to himself it took so different a colour from any it could possibly have worn in occurring to another that his judgment became perhaps a trifle confused. If Will Hackett had married another man's daughter, and had run away from her after a mere three months of married life, Howarth, not being quite so adamantine as he fancied himself, would have pitied the man, and have thought the posture of affairs unhappy. But since it was his daughter who was deserted by her husband the fact had little more effect upon him than to make him feel that he was, if possible, of greater importance than ever in the parish, and an object of

profounder interest. His mind was a combination of peep-show and whispering-gallery, and, looking into it and listening in it, he saw and heard grouped neighbours engaged always in one contemplation and discussing one theme. He was not only the centre of the universe to himself, but, to his own unconscious apprehension, to other people also. It was almost a necessity of nature that people should be interested in John Howarth. John Howarth's affairs were so profoundly interesting to himself that it stood to reason that other people should be interested in them.

This innocent misapprehension was mainly responsible for the generally-received opinion that Howarth—though a shrewd man of business, and as good a judge of the worth of standing timber as could here and there be found—was the deadliest bore in five counties.

If there was one point in his character—which, being his own, could hardly be less than absolutely flawless—he admired more than another it was his power for dignified reticence about his own affairs. His confidence that he could, when he chose, be as secret as the tomb, gave him, quite naturally, a greater freedom when he chose to be communicative, for it is evident that a man who runs no danger whatever may do more things that look courageous than another man may who knows himself to be in peril. The steel-clad knights of old chopped up their social inferiors in leather with lighter hearts than many of them might have carried if they had been in leather and their social inferiors in steel. Being so perfectly armed as he was against any temptation to grow garrulous about his own concerns, Howarth was at liberty to talk about them when and where he pleased, and to whom he chose. So he talked about them everywhere and always, and to anybody who would listen.

Whilst he stood sunning himself in a conscientious rectitude, which made him feel positively benevolent towards the world at large, he heard a footstep, and, turning to the left, saw Hepzibah approaching him with a basket on her arm. He made himself a little bigger than usual, and stepped ponderously—as became a man of his figure—into the road. Hepzibah at once displayed an inclination towards a detour, and struck out into the middle of the horse-road. Howarth, comfortably understanding that a person of Hepzibah's social position would naturally be humble in his presence, took a step or two into the horse-road to encourage her in

accosting him. Either Hepzibah's humility or—which was scarcely possible—her desire to avoid the honour of passing a good-morning with the builder, sent her back to the footpath. Howarth, by a sort of majestic chance, returned to the footpath also, just in time to intercept the gaunt domestic.

"Mornin'," he said. "Fine weather if it holds."

Hepzibah, thus arrested, stopped short, with an eminently unconversational aspect.

"Yes; the weather's right enough."

"Ah," said Howarth, "it's fine likely weather, and it's pushin' the fruit on beautiful!"

He lifted the edge of the snowy napkin which partially covered the contents of Hepzibah's basket, and condescendingly selecting a particularly ripe gooseberry tasted it, and nodded approval. "I suppose," he asked, "you've been up to Mother Jordan's garden for these?"

"That's so," said Hepzibah, making a movement to get past him.

"Fine sunny bit o' land," said Howarth. "The old woman seems to get everythin' to ripen a bit earlier than other folks. Her little gell's in service with my daughter, Mrs. Hackett."

Hepzibah made no response, but looked straight over Howarth's shoulder, and, having been intercepted in her last effort to escape, stood stock still, with an air of resolute patience.

"How's the young master?" asked Howarth. "I've heerd say as he's got a medal o' some sort for savin' Shadrach Randal's life. Is that true?"

"He's got the medal right enough," said Hepzibah, with the same forbidding aspect; "and dear enough it might ha' cost him."

"Yes, yes," assented Howarth. "Dear enough it *might* ha' cost him, to be sure. He's a valiant chap, is young Blane, and a fine feller altogether. Between you and me," he continued, taking out his confidential stop, "it's begun to seem to me to be a bit of a pity as I hadn't found that out earlier."

"Oh?" said Hepzibah, shifting her basket from one arm to the other, and looking straight before her. "That's come to be the opinion of a good many people, let me tell you."

"That's likely, too," said Howarth; "there's few men o' sense as I'm not at one with in regard to most questions."

"It's a pity you weren't at one w' most men o' sense w' regard to that question some months ago, Mr. Howarth," returned Hepzibah.

"I suppose folks are a-talkin'?" said the builder.

"They generally am," replied Hepzibah, "about one thing or another. There's some on 'em," she added, making a forward move again, "as has got nothin' better to do."

"What are they saying now?" asked Howarth, lifting up the napkin again and selecting another gooseberry.

"Saying?" repeated Hepzibah; "there's some on 'em sayin' things as ought to make some folks' ears tingle."

"Ah?" said Howarth; "and what might they be?"

"Well, amongst 'em," returned Hepzibah, steadily looking through the questioner's hat, "they say it's a bit of a pity for a gell to be born of a father and mother as carries nought but clockwork in their insides."

Howarth was disconcerted for a moment, and chose a third gooseberry from the basket Hepzibah carried. She tucked down the napkin decidedly, as if to make an end of this friendly pilfering, and readjusted the basket so as to be out of Howarth's reach.

"And what might ha' started 'em on that tack?" asked the builder.

"It's a common way o' thinking," answered Hepzibah, "as a gell's natural protectors is her father and mother. If I was t' open my mind, Mr. Howarth, I might say things I should be sorry for. And, letting that stand aside, I've got other things to think about. As for what the folks are saying, there's a many of 'em as is rare and ready to say afore your face what they say behind your back."

"Behind my back!" said Howarth ruffling. "And what do they find to say behind my back?"

"Ask 'em," returned Hepzibah grimly; "there's some on 'em 'll tell you."

"Very well," said Howarth. "I ask the first I come across. I ask you."

"Oh, well," replied Hepzibah ominously; "when a thing's asked for it doesn't take much of a bold face t' offer it, does it, Mr. Howarth? They're saying, the most of 'em—since you will have it—as it's nigh on a fortnight now since your daughter's husband left the place for the Lord knows where. They're saying you let the poor thing marry a drunken wastrel with your eyes open. And they're a-saying as you and your wife, as ought to be the only ones i' the world as the poor thing's got to look to, have left her there—to starve for all you know, or seem to care. And there's some

of 'em saying it'll be a bit of a pity if Jack Howarth isn't stoned i' the market-place next Friday. Now you've got what you asked for, Mr. Howarth, and I'm glad of it, for it's a weight off my mind as I'd a deal rather have off than on it, and I'll say good mornin'."

Therewith Hepzibah departed, bolt upright, and Howarth, with his finger and thumb at his clean-shaven chin, looked after her with an expression altogether piteous and crestfallen.

CHAPTER XI.

It was essential that Mr. Howarth's spiritual barrel-organ should grind out a tune of which he could approve. If anything occurred to disarrange the machinery, there was nothing easier in the world than to find a new tune and to persuade himself that it was no more than a natural variation of the old one. In face of Hepzibah's news his sentiments at once became fatherly, and he was completely aware that he had been fatherly all along, and had only waited for a propitious moment to declare his benevolent intentions. It had hitherto been his opinion that it was Mary's place to come to him; he knew now that it had been his opinion all along that it was his place to go to her—after waiting, as a matter of course, quite properly until now.

Seeing things thus clearly, he walked round to the back of the house, to save the trouble of admitting himself by the front door, and encountered Mrs. Howarth in the kitchen.

"Fanny Ann," said Mr. Howarth, "I'm thinkin' it's about time we went down street and took a look at Mary. We've had no news of the wench now for full a fortnight, and it's nigh on that time since that young villain of a Hackett cut and left her."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Howarth, "I could ha' told you how that match would ha' turned out all along."

"Couldst?" demanded her husband. "Then it's a pity thee dissent."

Mrs. Howarth was one of those stout women who appear to have grown fat on vinegar. Popular fancy parallels fat with contentment, and extreme leanness with tartness of temper, but facts decline, as they so often do, to give anything like universal support to theory. Mrs. Howarth, though fat beyond the common measure, was an exemplar of moaning meekness. She was a prophetess by profession, but forbore to practise, contenting herself by the mere

announcement of her prophetic instinct after the event. She was invariably hurt that her opinion had not been asked for in time to establish the righteousness of her claim to her own especial gift, and invariably on being questioned beforehand answered with ambiguous givings forth, such as "Them as lives to see it 'll know the end of it"—to which dark utterances she afterwards appealed in melancholy triumph.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Howarth, "I could ha' told you what would ha' come o' that there marriage. You was full of it. You was all for marrying the gell to a gentleman. And where's your gentleman now, John? Ah, where is he?"

"That's just what I should like to know," responded her husband, posing himself in vivid consciousness of his own physical majesty. "I should like to have my hand on that young villain's collar."

"And them as was theer would see how that'd end," said the wife.

"End?" said the incensed father. "And how would it end?"

"It ud end," replied Mrs. Howarth, safely venturing on prophecy in respect to this extremely improbable contingency, "in his borrowin' a five-pound note, an' the two of you sittin' down to drink together."

"It ud end," her husband declared, with a solemn and impressive gesture of the right hand, "in his getting the soundest hoss-whippin' one man ever gave another."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Howarth, with her meekest air of mournfulness; "and what ud he be doing the while, John?"

"Fanny Ann," replied Mr. Howarth severely; "do you think as there'd be nothing in a father's eye in such a case? Do you think as that young rip ud dare so much as look at me?"

Mrs. Howarth distilled an acid tear from either eye, and wiped them away with the corner of her apron.

"You'd ha' took no notice of anything I might ha' said, John," she answered, "and that's why I kep' silence. But we'll go and see the gell if you think as go we'd best; though, for my part, I don't see what's to come of it."

"This'll come on it, anyhow," said Howarth, venturing into the domain of candour, if with one foot only. "I've waited as long as I think fit to wait, and now our goin' 'll stop the tongues as are beginning to wag again' us, Fanny Ann."

"It was Mary's place to ha' come to us, John," said Mrs. Howarth.

"There," returned her husband, "you and me's at one. It was her place to come to us, but sence her has not thought fit to do so, we must make it our place to go to her. Get your things on, and we'll go down at once."

When Mrs. Howarth had made her preparations, the pair walked down the street together, and Howarth noticed, though his wife did not, that their progress towards their daughter's house, and their arrival at its door, created a considerable amount of public interest. He felt this to be befitting, and the internal barrel-organ having set itself to the air of fatherly abnegation, he walked with much self-satisfaction in time with the tune.

Now, almost at the moment when Howarth arrested Hepzibah on her homeward walk, his daughter had found her way to the actual borders of despair. There had been no further news from her husband, and, of course, no further remittance from him. The little maid's monthly wage happened to be payable that day, and it also happened that the provisions of the house were so far reduced that they would last for the day only. To keep the maid under these conditions was an obvious impossibility. To dismiss her at a moment's warning without an equivalent for notice in the way of salary was equally impossible. So Mary Hackett's last twenty-four shillings went to the rosy-cheeked maid.

She had lived very sparingly since her husband's flight, but one or two little debts which he had left unpaid had been claimed, and, slender as her resources looked, and slight as were her hopes of their renewal, she had felt bound to make the payments.

"You can go to-night after tea," said the mistress, "and here are your wages."

The maid, partly understanding the position, began to cry.

"I have no fault to find with you," her mistress continued, "and I shall be glad to give you a good character; but I have no further need of you, and——"

She was about to say that she could not maintain her longer, but pride forbade that disclosure, and she left the girl to form her own conclusions.

It was almost immediately on the top of this scene that her father and mother presented themselves. Mrs. Howarth's was not, perhaps, much of a motherly heart to go home to, but it was the only refuge Mary was likely to find, and she would fain have gone to it. But mamma, having made up her mind that she was the person injured in this

melancholy business, and the one creature to be commiserated, entered with a mien so dolefully resigned, and so inapprehensive of sympathy, that her daughter's footsteps were arrested half way towards her, and Mary stood still in what she felt to be an atmosphere of accusation.

Howarth, with one hand at his seals and another at his chin, made himself as large as he could, and looked about him as if he gazed upon a scene of open desolation.

"A pretty market you've brought your pigs to, miss!" said he.

Of the two, he had been rather more eager for the marriage than she had. It had been half to please him, and because his consent seemed partly to sanctify the effort, that she had imposed upon herself the task of drawing the prodigal from his evil ways.

The barrel-organ was going to the tune of paternal kindness still, but it was only natural that before the internal air made itself audible it should at least be asked for. Perhaps it was not surprising, all things considered, that no verbal demand was made for it. This was the first visit the forsaken wife had received since Will's departure, and she felt herself profoundly aggrieved.

"You speak," she said, "as if I had been to blame."

This and the faint show of indignation with which the words were spoken put the father out of tune altogether.

"I reckon," he said with some asperity, "as when a gell's husband runs away from her after no more than three months as there's pretty likely to be some sort of a reason for it."

Mary's reply to this was disingenuous, or at least she felt it to be so.

"You have no right to say he has run away. He has left home on business. There is his letter."

"M—m," said Howarth, after having deliberately read the letter through, and handed it to his wife. "Think he's going to be prosperous, does he? Well, I hope he may. But it looks very much as if I'd got a burden back again as I thought I'd got rid on."

This was intended to mean no more than that his daughter should come home with a due and proper sense of her own poor deservings, and of the parental magnanimity. In point of fact, it was Howarth's way of approach to a friendly understanding, but there are methods of approach which have the look of retreat, and this was one of them.

"You need not fear, father," answered Mary, "that I shall be a burden to you."

"No?" said Howarth satirically. "Well, that's a blessin', any way."

"It's never been my way to be one o' them complainin' creatures as ud make you believe as all the worries i' the world was on their backs, and none of 'em on *my* shoulders," said Mrs. Howarth. "But if I've held my tongue it's niver been for want o' troubles to talk about, if I'd been one o' them as does the talkin' easier than the sufferin'. I've had enough to put up with this last five-and-twenty year, and if I'd been one of the complainin' sort I've had plenty to complain about. But that was niver my fashion, and I'm not a going to alter my ways at *my* time o' life. But this I *will* say—"

And the hearers bowed themselves below the vocal storm. The builder had a sort of figurative umbrella to set up against it, which he had used on so many occasions that he knew how to trust its shelter. He began to build an imaginary house. This house was his hobby, and had been for many years, and he would have risked the enterprise long ago if he had not kept common sense enough to know that it would have ruined him. He began to go over the plans for it now, and in fancy's eye he saw the foundations dug out, and the first bricks laid. His wife gave him time, and he made such progress with the sweet work that he had all but got the windows in when she finished her discourse, and silence recalled him to the actualities.

The mother's tearful protestations hardened the girl's heart. She would have asked for bread and they gave her a stone. The mere right to live without labour, with reproach for the wages of idleness, had no enticement for her, and the manner of giving the stone was as sterile of feeling as the gift itself. She would have melted at once at a word of sympathy. There was, indeed, such a dull impending storm within that if she had heard but one solitary tone of kindness, it would have served for the electric spark which breaks the clouds into rain, and the tempest would have calmed her spirit and left a sense of healing in the air. It broke now in no soft and beneficent rains, but in sullen inward lightnings.

"Is this all you have to say to me?" she asked, with defiance in the tone and in her eyes.

"What d'ye expect we should have to say to you?" asked her father. "Say as we're glad to see thee chucked over by thy husband, and sent back to be a weight on our old age?"

"I shall never be a weight on your old

age," she answered. "I will work for myself and never ask you for a crust."

"You'll make a nice hand at workin' for yourself," said the mother, and took up her parable again at such a length, that Howarth, turning to the blessed exercise of fancy, had the carpet down in the drawing-room before she had made an end.

From the parents' point of view it was absolutely necessary that Mary should be convinced of her own unworthiness, and should demand aid before they were justified in giving it, and to do them such justice as they deserve, the couple were much readier to give all the help that was required than they professed to be. But they had made it a *sine quâ non* that the help should be asked for, and their daughter had made it a *sine quâ non*, on the other side, that it should be offered before she would accept it. Thus, when the mother's second Jeremiad was finished, and Howarth's house of air was almost furnished, Mary put something like a definite end to the possibility of negotiation.

"I shall never ask for anything from you," she said.

Howarth's heart—for he owned such an organ, though it was not of the largest, and was something of the toughest—was a little stirred at this, and he was almost on the point of saying that the help might be had for the asking. But he deferred that kindly impulse, and the girl went on, with flashing eyes and heightened colour:—

"I have done no wrong. If wrong has been done at all, I am the sufferer by it, and you have no right to come here and talk to me as if I were left alone in the world by any fault of my own."

"Pride and hunger," said the mother, "are poor companions, Polly, and you'll find that out afore long. I don't see as we've made much by coming here, John," she added, addressing her husband, "and I think we may as well go home again."

This manœuvre was designed to do nothing more than to bring Mary at once to terms. It had a contrary effect; for Howarth, rising, to point his wife's speech by a show of willingness to obey her, Mary advanced to the door, with more than actually necessary vehemence, and throwing it wide open, stood on one side with heaving bosom and pale face and scornful eyes, as her parents left the room.

"Her wont be long o' that mind, John," said the mother, as the two came upon the street together.

"Her'd better not be, for her own sake," the builder answered.

And so they made their consciences tolerably easy, and waited for the next overtures for peace to come from their daughter, under the profound impression that they had made offer of the olive-branch and that the offer had been refused.

In the meantime the little maid, having received permission to go home, had started off to apprise her mother of the fact that she had lost her place. The maid was garrulous, as maids are at times, and she had such a budget of news to open as she had never carried before. She told the wondering old woman, her mother, how Mr. Hackett had run away nobody knew where, and how Mrs. Hackett had no money left, she was quite sure, and how the shelves were bare in the larder, and how, when she had asked if she should call on the baker or the butcher or the grocer with orders, her mistress had answered quietly in the negative. And it chanced that whilst the maid was telling this doleful story Hepzibah arrived upon the scene in search of a further consignment of fruit for preserving, and was at once made a partaker of the news.

"Do you mean to tell me," asked Hepzibah, "that there's nothing to eat in the house?"

"There's barely as much," said the maid, "as 'll serve for tea-time."

The kindly Hepzibah sat miserably astonished at this intelligence for a minute, and then brightened.

"It's lucky for him," she said, "I spoke my mind to old Jack Howarth a'ready this morning, for if I hadn't I'd ha' had to ha' gone to him now, for all so big as he thinks himself. But look here, my dear," she added, grown suddenly confidential, "this affair of Mrs. Hackett's ain't a thing to be talked about."

"No," said the maid solemnly, she would not breathe a word.

The maid's mother, who was perhaps the most inveterate gossip in the township, promised a similar secrecy.

"And now," said Hepzibah, "have you left your place, or are you going back again?"

"I've got to go back for my things," said the maid, "and I've come to get mother's wheelbarrow to bring 'em home on."

"Well, then," said Hepzibah, "you be there in half an hour in the back kitchen, and I shall come round to you and have something to say to you."

There was an air of benevolent mystery

about Hepzibah as she said this, which excited the curiosity both of maid and mother; but she contented herself by mystic nods and smiles, and having secured her supply of fruit, departed. She left the basket at her mistress's house and ran with a gaunt and jerky gait, at which anybody unacquainted with the nature of her errand might have laughed, to her mother's.

"Hes that there rabbit-pie been cut into yet?" she demanded breathlessly.

"No," said her mother. "I was a-keepin' it for to-morrow."

Hepzibah marched straightway to a cupboard in the corner of the kitchen and there possessed herself of a substantial pie, which she proceeded to fold up in a snow-white cloth, securing this by half-a-dozen pins drawn from different parts of her own person. The old woman looked on at this for a while in dumb astonishment.

"What on earth," she asked at last, "beest goin' to do with the pie? It isn't like thee, Hepzibah, to come and steal thy mother's victuals!"

"I'll get time to-night," said Hepzibah, "and come up and make a new 'un; but I want this now." And to the old lady's infinite astonishment she took up the pasty and marched off with it, still breathless from her run.

She bore it straight to Mrs. Hackett's house, and, entering by the back door, confronted the maid, who was already there awaiting her.

"Now, mind you," said Hepzibah, warning the maid with great solemnity, "what you have got to do now has got to be handled very proper and polite. You've got to take this here pie to Mrs. Hackett, with Mrs. Blane's best compliments, and to say"—and here Hepzibah began to blush and had some difficulty in encountering the maid's glance—"you've got to say as Mrs. Blane had two o' these made, expecting company as never came, and as she's afraid as it'll grow stale upon her hands, and as she hopes that Mrs. Hackett will be so good as to accept of it."

Now, this is by no means an uncommon form of rural civility; but it happened unfortunately for Hepzibah's fraud that Mary Hackett and Mrs. Blane had never been on terms to offer each other this sort of homely rustic kindness. And when Hepzibah had gone and the maid, nothing doubting the story she had to tell, but being fully able to divine the real intent of the gift, approached her mistress with the pie and Hepzibah's

tale together, it seemed to Mary's outraged feelings the cruellest insult she had yet received. She was a little creature; but for a mere instant she seemed to tower, and she stood over the trembling maid like a statue of indignation. It cost her much trouble to quiet herself, but in a little while she succeeded.

"Take the pie back to Mrs. Blane with my best thanks for her kindness," she said, "and tell her that I can make no use of it."

The maid, charged with this message, which seemed to her mind to make the deadliest possible breach in politeness, would willingly have abandoned the pie by the roadside, and indeed lingered a good five minutes in front of Mrs. Blane's house before she dared to ring the bell. When at last she plucked up courage to do this, and was rehearsing her speech in preparation for Hepzibah, the door opened and a bearded face appeared, kindly in expression by nature, but looking at this moment stern and white enough to frighten the maid's wits away altogether.

"What is it, my dear?" he asked her gently, seeing that she was alarmed, though he had no guess as to the cause.

"It's not my fault, if you please, sir," said the maid, "but missus won't keep the pie, and she sends it back to Mrs. Blane with her best thanks."

"Oh," said Blane; "and who is your mistress?"

"Mrs. Hackett, if you please, sir," said the maid.

Ned Blane dropped the pie dish, which went to pieces within its diaper cover. He stooped with an expression of grave pain to recover it, and stood with it in his hands—a wet and sticky mass—as he looked down at the girl.

"Mrs. Blane," he said, "sent this to Mrs. Hackett?"

"Yes, sir."

"Thank you," said Blane quietly, "that will do."

The girl having discharged her errand, made the best of her way back, glad that it was over, and Blane having closed the door walked straight into the kitchen, where his mother sat in her customary place by the side of the hearth.

"Mother," he said, depositing the wrecked pie on the table and turning upon her in grave reproof, "this is an insult."

"Lawk a mercy!" cried Mrs. Blane, "what's an insult?"

"Your sending this pie to Mrs. Hackett."

"Pie to Mrs. Hackett!" said his mother in great astonishment. "What's the lad talking about, in the name of wonder? I've sent no pie to Mrs. Hackett!"

At this instant Hepzibah, who had been attending to some duties in the rear of the house, bounced suddenly into the kitchen, and hearing these words stood transfixed with a sense of her own guilty deceit.

Blane looked up at her and read the truth in her face at a glance.

"It was you," he asked, "who sent this pie to Mrs. Hackett?" Hepzibah paled and held on to the latch of the door for support. "You sent it as coming from my mother?" Hepzibah was silent and looked as if she were being charged with murder. "Why did you do this?"

"Why? Deary me, Mr. Edward," said Hepzibah recovering herself a little, "how you do talk and how you do look at a body over a little bit of civility like that. The poor thing's never gone and sent it back again?"

"What is the meaning of all this?" said Blane, stern and cold.

"The meaning of it"—said Hepzibah, shaking herself back into courage by an effort—"the meaning of it is as I wanted to do the poor creature a kindness as her pride wouldn't stand."

Blane turned as pale as Hepzibah had been a minute earlier.

"A kindness?" he asked. "What do you mean?"

"Mean!" said Hepzibah, half crying with the shock of her recent detection and the wretched sense that she was giving intense pain to the one creature she loved best on earth. "What should I mean, but that the poor creature's starving."

"Dear me!" said the lymphatic Mrs. Blane, in a voice as much moved and as expressive of tender interest as if she had asked a question about the weather. "Are you talking about Polly Haworth, Hepzibah?"

The young man turned about and stood for a minute with one hand on the table near the broken pasty. A curious little gasping sound escaped him. It was so slight that it did not attract his mother's notice, but Hepzibah went white again and made a movement towards him with her hands outstretched, as if she would fain protect and soothe him. He seemed to hear the step behind, and, as if to avoid it, he walked from the kitchen without looking round and went heavily up to his own room.

CHAPTER XII.

A MAN'S virtues and offences are always in accord with each other. This dogma is neither so profound nor so shallow, by a good half, as it may seem at first sight to different minds. The mean man's virtues are mean, the brave man's vices have at least the credit of being courageous. There is a sort of family likeness between every man's moral strength and his moral weakness. The observer knows that the vice and the virtue are alike cut out of the same piece of humanity.

This being admitted, as it must be, it becomes a matter of profound surprise to detect Ned Blane in the act of forgery. Yet, when he had sat in his own bedroom for some half hour, he arose and shook himself, and set about that task with an air of resolution. He took pen, ink, and paper, and having set a page of his own handwriting before him, he began to write in a legal-looking hand, pausing every now and then to make sure of the form he commonly employed for a given letter, and then painstakingly avoiding a likeness to it. The letter, when completed, ran thus:—

"71, Kesterton Square,

"Birmingham,

"June 30, 1857.

"MADAM,—I am instructed by Mr. William Hackett to forward to you the enclosed.

"Your obedient servant,

"JNO. HARGREAVES."

He addressed an envelope, and then, having unlocked a drawer in his dressing-table, took from it a Bank of England note for ten pounds, and folded it up and sealed it with the letter.

"I have business in Birmingham, mother," he said as he entered the kitchen with the forgery in his pocket. "I shall be back before dark if I can catch the coach, but if I don't manage that, you're not to sit up for me."

Hepzibah looked at him with a timid inquiry, and as he left the room arose and followed him, laying a hand upon his arm.

"Well?" he said almost sullenly, without turning to look at her.

The hand which had touched him very gently and appealingly at first, tightened upon his sleeve, and began to tremble strongly. At this he looked over his shoulder and met Hepzibah's beseeching gaze. There were tears in her eyes, and he noticed a curious little throbbing in her throat, as if

a pianoforte hammer were tapping from within.

"Don't break your heart, Master Edward," she besought him, speaking with great difficulty. "Don't go to the bad for her! There's nobody as is worth that, my darling! What good can that do?"

"Don't worry about me, Hepzibah," he said miserably; "it isn't worth while."

"What else have I got to worry for if it ain't the child I nursed when I was a child myself?" said Hepzibah, holding to him with both hands. "And, oh, as I should ever ha' lived to have to ask you such a thing! But, oh, my darling, do, do come home——"

She paused, and Ned filled up the broken sentence.

"Sober, I suppose," he said.

"Oh, do, dear, do!" she begged him, clinging to him.

"Very well," he said with a gloomy laugh—two little spasmodic sounds, as far from merriment as light from darkness—"you shall have your way for once. You pretty generally get it here."

He stooped and kissed the hard-featured face, and Hepzibah, dropping her head upon his shoulder, clung to him, and shook with silent tears and internal sobbings.

"I've got your word, dear?" she asked when she could trust herself to speak.

"Yes," he answered. "Good-night, Hepzibah."

He set out on his seven-miles walk, and having posted his letter in the town, turned back. A certain halfway house tugged at him as if it had a cord about his heart, but he broke past it with a rage of resolution, and walked straight home, and at once went up to his own bedroom. Hepzibah heard the assured and steady footstep, and was thankful for the news it brought her, though the feet went like lead, and had not even a memory of their old lightness.

Next morning Ned Blane's criminal pretence was delivered into Mary Hackett's hands, and she felt her heart altogether cheered and strengthened by it. She wondered still at the personal silence her husband kept, but at least here was proof positive that he was not the heartless creature she had found herself beginning to believe him. He had not found it in his heart to forsake her, and to cast her back upon her parents. And she herself could face the world again. He had really gone away on business of some sort, and though she was still inquired about him, she had no longer the shame of being

forced to believe that the affairs he had spoken of were no more than an abominable pretext. Will had his faults, and grave enough they were, even when she could make the lightest of them, but as, on a gloomy day, even a transient gleam of sunshine brings brightness whilst it lasts, so this halting and imperfect news of her husband and his intentions brought contentment to her spirit.

But now came a consequence of the letter which the forger had not anticipated. Before the welcome bank-note was so much as broken for the purchase of household necessities Mary sat down and wrote a letter to that imaginary John Hargreaves, who lived in the imaginary Kesterton Square.

"SIR,—I should be greatly obliged if you would furnish me with my husband's present address. I am afraid that recent letters may have miscarried."

If this little blind were something less than absolutely truthful, she posted it all the same, and salved her conscience with the hope that it *might* be true. Two or three days later her inquiry came back again, directed and re-directed in half-a-dozen different hands, and at last officially marked "Misdirected. No Kesterton Square in Birmingham." This amazed her, and awoke new anxieties. Obviously Will was moving in crooked ways, and was in hiding from her. It was easily possible that he might be concealing himself in so large a town as Birmingham, and, inspired by some feeble hope of meeting him, she took the coach into town day after day, and walked wearily up and down the principal thoroughfares, thinking that perchance she might catch sight of him.

She had never known it until now, but she was a little short-sighted, and a thousand times her heart leapt within her in the crowded street as she imagined that at last the errant husband was in sight, and she would advance, fluttering from head to foot, to meet an absolute stranger. No habitude of failure lessened the shock of hope and fear and disappointment, and she would go home—if the place were worth calling home—by the coach at night too tired to care for anything. Her whole life seemed to have grown into one constant dull and empty ache.

She had borrowed a directory and had hunted up the names of any and every quarter of the town which might by any possible stupidity have been miswritten as Kesterton Square, and she had some wild notion of calling at all the seventy-ones in

all these different streets and lanes, roads, squares, and places, until she should alight upon the mysterious Hargreaves.

It seemed a strange and ghostly sort of life to lead, for she was altogether alone now, and hardly ever exchanged a word, except upon matters of mere necessity, with a fellow-creature. She called upon nobody, and nobody called upon her. Those people of the little township who had at first been indignant against John Howarth and his wife for their neglect of their daughter, supposed now, naturally enough, since Mary went on living in her husband's house, that the builder supplied the necessary funds, and so forgot their indignation. The girl's singular position was talked of eagerly for a while and was then dismissed from memory. When anybody who had known Hackett came from a distance, there was a little spice for the narrator in the tale of his disappearance. But even this could not last for ever, and the history, though rustic annals die hard, began to flag in interest.

Then, as if Mary had not had trouble enough upon her shoulders already, a new one descended upon her, and she began to be certain that the house, night after night, was being watched, and became assured that the watcher was always the same person. The first suspicion which occurred to her came when, on a moonlight night about the middle of July, she threw open her bedroom window and looked out upon the deserted road and the tranquil widespread fields. She had no light, and the house and its neighbour threw their joint shadow on the road before her, and on to the hedge which faced their doors. Beyond the distinctly marked line of shade upon the field, the moonlight lay in a broad vapoury whiteness, in which objects, though easily discernible, took strange and fantastic shapes. She had sat at the open window for a good five minutes, drawing in a sad tranquillity from the moonlight and the silence, when a dry stick cracked behind the hedge and drew her startled gaze to the spot whence the sound proceeded. Following this came complete silence. She listened till the wide air made a singing in her ears like the lingering echo of the waves which children find in sea-shells. Hearing no repetition of the sound, but suspecting rather than discerning an added bulk of darkness somewhere in the shadows, she closed the window, drew down the blind, and watched through the merest crevice between the bars. That something darker than the shadows began to move, and the cracking sound, heard more faintly through

the closed window than before, again reached her ears. The moving object stole under the hedge for twenty or thirty yards, growing distinct from the other shadows whilst it moved, and melting back into them again whenever it stood still; and then, passing over a stile, appeared in the moonlight of the road, at that distance and in that light recognisable only as a man:

Mary never sat at her open window again after this, but she was often tempted to watch, and the watch was almost invariably rewarded by the earlier or later detection of the figure. Who the man was and why he was there she could not guess. Once a suspicion crossed her mind, but she dismissed it with shame and anger that such a thought should have occurred to her. It was to the effect that her husband mistrusted her, and had set a spy to watch the house during his absence, and report to him if it were entered. But one night, as she sat in the darkness in the lower room before the hour of moonrise, she was aware of the shadowy watcher pacing dimly up and down, trusting solely in the darkness, and taking no advantage this time of the shelter of the hedge.

Vaguely as she had made out his aspect, she knew him for the same, and as she watched his goings to and fro the door of the neighbouring house was suddenly thrown open, and a broad ray of light darting from it, fell full upon the mysterious prowler's face. The face was, of course, Ned Blane's.

Mary was in a permanent mood now to be easily indignant, and she rose up in wrath against this intrusion upon her privacy. What right had he, or any man, to hang about the house in that way, watching her and spying upon her? Some sense of the unobtrusive and wordless devotion of the watch touched her here, and brought her down from the heights of anger to which she had ascended. And yet the proceeding was intolerable, and sooner or later was sure to be discovered, to bring about new whisperings of scandal and new unmerited sorrow.

Blane had recoiled at the sudden ray of light, and had disappeared before these varying thoughts and emotions had well had time to course through her heart and mind. But now he was back again, pacing up and down in the darkness. She could see the pale blur of his face turned steadfastly towards the house.

She determined to ignore him, and withdrew herself from the window. She would not even know of his being there, but that was difficult. Even when she had gone to her

bedroom, and having prepared for her night's rest had blown out the light, she peeped again through an interstice in the blind, and saw the dim figure still going up and down.

The morning after this discovery Mary received a second letter from the mysterious Hargreaves, enclosing a second ten-pound note with the same formula as before. At first she did not notice any difference of address, but by-and-by her eye lighted upon the first line of the communication, and she saw that it was dated, not from Kesterton, but from Chesterton, Square. The forger had relied upon his memory, and his memory had played him false.

She had returned the borrowed directory a fortnight before, and not caring to ask for it again, she set out at once for the great town, determined, if possible, to unravel the mystery, and at least to discover if Chesterton Square stood in as airy a situation as its forerunner. There was no Chesterton Square to be found or heard of, and she came back troubled.

That night the watcher came again. A painful fascination impelled her by this time to keep as regular a watch for him as he evidently kept upon the house, and as he came in sight a suspicion burst upon her mind with so vivid and sudden a light that it looked like certainty. She lit a candle hastily, ran upstairs, and emptied the contents of a drawer upon the bed, and from the tumbled heap of papers before her, after a search of a moment or two, took a letter from Ned Blane to her husband, and setting this and the communication from John Hargreaves side by side, came, in spite of the stiff disguise of the legal-looking caligraphy, to the swift conclusion that they were written by the same hand.

It was bitter enough in all conscience to have been deserted by her husband, even though she confessed to herself that she had never loved him; it was heartbreaking to be deserted by the people of her own flesh and blood; but to be insulted by the cheating charity of a rejected lover seemed tenfold worse than all.

She descended to the dining-room, and taking the bank-note from the table on which it lay, crumpled it wrathfully in her hand and walked swiftly from the room into the hall, and from the hall into the roadway. The furtive watcher was away at a round pace in an instant, but she followed and called upon him by name.

"Mr. Blane! I will not be avoided. I order you to listen to me."



BISON ON THE MARCH.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.—OUT OF THE DEPTHS.

ON the evening of his return to Duke Street Brian walked round to his club, where a number of letters, many of which had been forwarded from Beekton months before, were handed to him. The first that he opened was from the club secretary and contained a formal reminder that his subscription was overdue; the second was from Messrs. Berners, enclosing their little account for music published; two others were small bills which he had forgotten; then there were some business communications from the lawyers, and finally, a kindly, scolding letter from Mr. Potter himself, who wrote:

"Where you are I cannot discover, and evidently your brother does not know, since the only address that he is able to give me is that of your club. Although he has not told me so, I gather that you are not in receipt of any allowance from him, and your own resources must have been exhausted long ago. Now, will you, my dear boy, do me the favour to remember that I was your father's friend, though he did try to quarrel with me sometimes, and will you, if these lines reach you, look in at the office some morning and talk your position over with me? It may be that you are earning a living for yourself, but I cannot think that likely, and I greatly fear that you are in want. You have no right to be in want when you own a property which would realise enough, if disposed of, to make you easy; and you ought not to consider yourself bound by a wish which your poor father certainly would not have expressed if he could have foreseen its effect upon you. Your brother, as you probably know, has been less scrupulous, with a good deal less excuse. I would wager a moderate sum that you haven't so much as given a thought to the expenses which attach to the mere possession of the Manor House. Your brother, I believe, has up to now paid the wages of the old couple who live in it, and I suppose the Beckton gardeners look after the grounds as formerly. In short, you have practically no choice but to sell the place, although I should not advise your doing so immediately, as, from what I hear, it is likely to increase rather than to diminish

in value, owing to the extension of building which will shortly be taken in hand in its vicinity. Meanwhile I hope you will allow me to be your banker."

If Mr. Potter had known his correspondent a little better, he would assuredly have omitted that reference to Gilbert's disregard of the trust reposed in him. Brian read the words with the deepest indignation and shame, and the sensible counsel contained in the remainder of the letter was wholly thrown away upon him by reason of them. All his old resentment against his brother, which had cooled down to a great extent during the months that had elapsed since he had left home, blazed up again with redoubled force. It galled him to think that Gilbert was defraying expenses which, as the old lawyer had rightly surmised, he had failed to take into account; but he could only resolve that the debt should be paid off as soon as possible, and that the Manor House should never fall under the control of such a traitor while he had two arms to work with.

A pair of well-developed arms may, no doubt, be considered a serviceable possession, the only conditions necessary to render them so being, firstly, that they should have been trained to perform some special kind of work, and, secondly, that the said work should be provided for them. It was Brian's misfortune, not his fault, that his arms were of little use, except for organ-playing purposes, and that nobody at that particular moment appeared to want an organist. Luck often seems to fall to those who are already lucky and wealth to those who are already rich. It must be assumed that Brian's evil star was in the ascendant at this time, for he could get no bid for his services, modest as was the price that he placed upon them. His friend Phipps, too, as he learnt from the hall-porter at the club, had gone to Italy, leaving the date of his return uncertain, so that the scores which had been prepared for his inspection had to be laid aside. Finally, Mr. Berners, while acknowledging with thanks the receipt of the amount due to him, regretted that he must report a complete failure in the sale of Mr. Segrave's charming and original compositions. He gave many reasons for this, which might have been found consolatory by some com-

posers; but Brian, who wanted money and not reasons, found them a little beside the mark.

Poverty is not exactly a crime, but it is necessary, as we all know, to treat paupers very like criminals, in order to discourage the others, and although Brian was not yet reduced to craving relief at the hands of the parochial authorities, a time came when he fared scarcely better than if he had been brought to that dismal strait. To remain in Duke Street was out of the question. He removed himself and his belongings one day to a little room in a side street in Westminster, where he had seen a ticket up, and where the tipsy, slatternly landlady was willing to let him live or die, as the case might be, without interference of any kind. There was a pawnbroker's shop hard-by, whither he betook himself on the morning after his change of quarters, and whence he presently emerged, with a guilty, hang-dog air, leaving his watch behind him. As for food, he found, upon calculation, that he could exist for about a month by means of restricting himself to one meal a day, and even from that, which he partook of at a greasy eating-house, he generally rose feeling half-famished. Every morning he sallied forth mechanically in search of employment, walking many miles to answer this or that advertisement, and every evening he returned, defeated and worn-out in body and spirit. Once, hurrying down Pall-Mall, he almost ran into the arms of Sir Hector Buckle, who came swinging out of the War Office with a red face and his umbrella over his shoulder. Brian instinctively lowered his head; but indeed he need not have felt alarmed, for by this time he was a very shabby and disreputable-looking young man, with a broken hat and holes in his boots—a young man whom no respectable person would have been likely to recognise. Sir Hector, who may have been having an unsatisfactory interview with the authorities, passed on, muttering, "Confound you, sir! why can't you look where you are going?" and for one moment poor Brian felt a desperate inclination to follow him. He was so desolate and wretched; the sound of a friendly voice would have been so welcome, and a five-pound note of such inestimable value! But he put the temptation away from him with a sort of shudder and hastened off, not daring to think too much about it.

Another, and in some ways a more painful encounter was in store for him. One afternoon, when he was wearily crossing the

road close to Buckingham Palace, on his return from the customary fruitless expedition, he was within an ace of being knocked down by a carriage which dashed through the iron gates that lead to the Mall. The coachman shouted angrily at him; he sprang back, and the carriage swept past. A lady, beautifully dressed, who was seated in it, with her head in the air, threw a careless glance at him and then looked away. It was Beatrice Huntley. Of course she had not recognised him, and he did not for a moment imagine that she had; yet, somehow or other, her contemptuous indifference cut him to the heart. He stood gazing after her until the carriage disappeared, and then broke into a laugh which ended in something not unlike a sob. "What a fool I am!" he exclaimed aloud. "I am in love with a woman who would draw her skirts away if I passed too close to her on the pavement. She will fulfil her destiny, I suppose, and marry some great swell, and I shall fulfil mine by dying like a rat in a drain."

The truth was that he was suffering from a badly nourished body, and from a brain which consequently was out of gear. That he should die of hunger, or even allow himself to fall into the extremity of poverty, rather than break an engagement into which he had really never entered, was preposterous; and if his faculties had been unclouded, he must have seen that it was so. But he was incapable of reasoning, and indeed of thinking to any purpose. He had a dim notion that the sale of the Manor House was a subject upon which he must not suffer his mind to dwell. He would not call on Mr. Potter because he felt that he had no strength for argument; and so he plodded stupidly on, thinking that if there were any justice in heaven or on earth, some way out of his difficulties would eventually be provided for him.

One hardly knows whether it would be consolatory or the reverse to believe that only the unrighteous are driven to beg their bread. Either way, the theory would be a somewhat difficult one to maintain in the face of daily experiences. Brian Segrave's misfortunes, it may be conceded, were of his own creating; only, as he was honestly convinced that they were not, a day came at length when hope and faith alike deserted him and he found himself confronted by a temptation far worse than that to which he was so determined not to yield. He had always thought, as most people think, that suicide, apart from any question of morality,

is a coward's remedy; he had believed, as probably most people believe, that under no imaginable circumstances would it occur to him to take his own life. But his present circumstances were such as had hitherto been barely imaginable to him, and he was beginning to feel that they were also unendurable. A general who has staked the issue of a campaign upon a battle is almost expected to court death when he knows that he has lost that battle. At any rate, nobody thinks the worse of him for so doing; and though a distinction may be drawn between the bullet of the enemy and the bullet of your own revolver, the distinction is more obvious than the difference. Brian, having lost his battle and being thoroughly sick of life, took to wandering down towards Westminster Bridge after dark and watching the black flood of the river from the embankment as it swept seawards. It was a dangerous habit for a half-starved man to contract.

Yet, as matters fell out, that dangerous habit of his proved the saving of him. For one evening as he was leaning over the parapet, gazing down at the water and wondering how long it would take to drown, and whether he would be fool enough to strike out when he felt himself sinking, a certain parson, who was hastening homewards after holding a mission service on the south side of the river, caught sight of him and paused to see what the dejected-looking young man in the shabby clothes would do next. This parson had had a good many years' experience of London life and London misery; his practised eye could tell almost at a glance to which division of the great army of the destitute and despairing a given unit belonged, and he perceived, what Sir Hector Buckle and Miss Huntley had failed to perceive, that the figure with its back turned towards him was that of a gentleman in extremities.

Presently the subject of his scrutiny took off his hat and laid it down upon the parapet beside him. The gesture is said to be a significant one; it was, at all events, enough for the parson, who advanced at once and, gripping the other's shoulder, called out sharply,

"Now, you sir, what are you about here?"

Brian wheeled round and saw, with as little surprise as one feels at impossible meetings in a dream, the man who of all others was most likely to be of service to him at this critical moment of his life.

"Monckton, old fellow," he said quietly, "I can't do it. I haven't the pluck or I haven't the cowardice—I don't know which it is."

Then a sudden dizziness overcame him; the ground seemed to be rising and falling; his sight grew dim, and for a time he was delivered from his troubles quite as effectually as if he had been at the bottom of the Thames.

When he came to himself he was lying on his back on the floor of a chemist's shop; Monckton and a policeman were bending over him, and as he opened his eyes, the latter remarked:

"*He's* all right, sir. Had a bit of a fit, that's all. Just what I told you."

"Excuse me, constable," broke in the chemist, a little bald-headed man in blue spectacles, "that was my view of the case, not yours. I said at once, 'This is a seizure, due to failure of the heart's action, which may have been brought about by a variety of causes.' *You* said drink. It is what members of the force invariably do say, and I must warn you that the assumption is a highly reprehensible one."

The chemist and the policeman had a little altercation over this, in the course of which Brian rose to his feet and was surprised to find that his legs would not support him. He dropped into a chair, and Monckton gave him some brandy and water; soon after which he found that he was being driven away in a cab, with his friend beside him.

"You are not to speak," Monckton said. "You are coming home with me, and when you have recovered yourself a little you can talk as much as you like. There's no hurry."

In truth, Brian had neither desire to speak nor power to think. He was only vaguely conscious of having been delivered from a great peril, and was willing to do as he was told by one in whom he had always placed implicit trust. But when he had been restored with some decently cooked food and a pint of champagne he felt another man and was able to give some account of himself. Monckton, who was well-off, had a flat in Victoria Street, where he lived when in London, and which contained a spare bedroom. This he insisted that Brian should occupy, and indeed the latter would have been sent off to bed at once if he had not resisted.

"There's nothing the matter with me," he declared. "To speak plainly, I fainted from hunger as much as from anything else, and I'm as sound as possible again now, thanks to you. I'll tell you what; if you had such a thing as a tobacco-jar on the premises, you might let me have a pipe and a talk with

you. I shan't sleep comfortably on any other terms."

So Monckton gave him what he wanted and listened to him while he told his tale. The two friends discoursed together until the night was far advanced. Perhaps, as their conversation was of a strictly private nature, it may be as well not to intrude upon it. For the purposes of this narrative it is sufficient to say that Monckton had no difficulty in overcoming the obstinacy which had resisted Mr. Potter's appeal. We are all apt to sneer at those who make unconditional surrender of their private judgment to a fellow-creature; and yet that would be by far the wisest thing that most of us could do if only we were acquainted with a fellow-creature better and wiser than ourselves. It was Brian's good fortune to possess such an acquaintance, and his merit to be aware of it. With a good deal of what Monckton said to him he was able to agree, and in the rest he was able at least to acquiesce.

"The long and the short of it is then that the Manor House must go," he observed at length with a sigh.

"It seems to me that you will have to sell the place," answered Monckton. "It is a pity, of course, but you have a perfect right to part with it, and, indeed, for the matter of that, I think you would be wrong not to part with it."

Brian sighed again. "I don't believe I shall ever have the heart to go back to Kings-cliff," he said. "I shouldn't so much mind about the land that Gilbert has sold, if it weren't for the treason of the thing—very well, then; I won't call him any more bad names. I say, I don't so much care about that; I always used to wish that the poor, dear old governor himself could be persuaded to make a little money in the same way. But to think of the Manor House being razed to the ground and the abomination of Buswellism standing in its place! Oh, it's quite enough to think of it; I would rather remain in exile than look upon such a sight."

"It doesn't necessarily follow that the Manor House will have to be pulled down," Monckton remarked.

"Oh, yes, it does. When Gilbert wanted to buy it from me and offered me such a long price for it, I half suspected his intentions, and now I haven't a doubt about them."

"But you are not bound to sell the property to your brother."

"If I sold it to Buswell, the result would be the same, I suppose."

"No doubt; but there is the chance of your meeting with a purchaser who would keep the house as a residence. I think your best plan would be to instruct your lawyers to sell, but to explain that you would take less from such a person than you would from Mr. Buswell or any other speculator."

Brian smiled and shook his head. "I'll do so, if you think it worth while; but it's only a thousand to one chance."

"Such as it is, you may as well allow yourself the benefit of it. Of course, you can't expect to be paid to-morrow, or next day; so you must let me supply you with pocket-money in the meantime, and I hope you'll stay on here and keep me company as long as I am in London."

"Well," said Brian, "it's a relief at all events to think that I shall be able to pay you. You've been awfully good to me, Monckton. I wish I could do something for you in return."

"If you really want to do something to please me, you can let bygones be bygones and make friends with your brother again."

Brian nodded, but looked a little gloomy over it. "There has been no actual quarrel between us, you know," he observed. "I don't intend to hurl reproaches at him, but I can't say that I think he has behaved well either to me or to my father."

"No; you can't say that, I admit. But you can say nothing at all, and you can forgive. This evening you were not very far from committing a worse crime than your brother has been guilty of, and I suppose you fully expect to be pardoned for it."

"Is Gilbert to get off scot-free then?"

"Yes; so far as you are concerned. I want you to forgive him freely and to let it be as if he had never offended against you at all. Nothing short of that will satisfy your conscience, you'll find."

"Well, it's rather a pill, Monckton; but I'll try," answered Brian.

It did occur to him that his mentor's system would be a somewhat impossible one to carry out to its logical conclusion, and he was half tempted to ask him whether, if he were wrongfully dispossessed of property to which he had a good legal title, he would or would not bring an action against the trespasser; but he believed, as has been said, that his friend knew better than he did, and this belief restrained him from the utterance of captious objections. Whatever Monckton might have done in the above supposititious case, it will be admitted by most people that his advice to Brian was right and sound, and

that the latter was wise in deciding to follow it. And so our hero went to bed, having passed through the darkest day of his life.

CHAPTER XXV.—IN PARK LANE.

THE work of the world is for the most part done by people of whom nobody ever hears. The political machine and the social machine are under the ostensible control of personages who are well to the front; but these brilliant beings would be sorely perplexed and the machinery would soon come to a standstill but for such experienced, unambitious and unobtrusive members of society as Sir Joseph Huntley. Sir Joseph had sat in Parliament for a matter of fifteen years and had perhaps addressed the House some twenty times in the course of that period. He was an invaluable man for committees; he had served on many Royal Commissions; whatever he had to do was always done thoroughly, if rather slowly; and he was considered to have strong claims upon his party. He was, however, extremely good-natured, by no means pushing, and entirely devoid of eloquence; and these, of course, were so many excellent reasons why his claims should be ignored.

In private life he enjoyed a certain popularity. Those who possess immense wealth, are given to hospitality, and are connected by marriage with the chief territorial families in the kingdom, must be afflicted with some singularly unpleasant personal qualities if they are to escape a certain popularity. Sir Joseph was not so afflicted; but when that much had been said for him there really was not a great deal more to say. During the winter the members of the local hunt saw him on an average once a week—a thick-set, middle-aged man, with a round, good-humoured face, and short reddish whiskers; a man who knew where most of the gates were, and was not above asking when his information was at fault. At the great shoots which took place periodically on his estate he was wont to be present with a walking-stick in his hand, and was content to applaud the prowess of others. The remainder of his time he spent in the congenial and entrancing study of blue books. In London, when he was not at the House, or reading the newspapers at the Carlton, or taking his daily canter in Rotten Row, he was generally occupied in dodging his wife's guests. As he had a very large house, and as nobody particularly wanted to catch him, these manoeuvres were seldom unsuccessful. "How it has come to pass that Joseph is my brother, and

that I am Joseph's sister, is one of those inexplicable mysteries in the presence of which the brain reels," Miss Huntley would sometimes say.

Lady Clementina fully concurred. Lady Clementina thought it would be no bad thing if Beatrice were a little more like Joseph; and what Lady Clementina thought it was her custom to say. That, perhaps, was why her popularity was somewhat less than her husband's, although her notoriety was so much greater. She differed from Sir Joseph in that she was a decidedly ambitious woman; she resembled him in being hopelessly conventional and orderly in her ideas. Ambition and conventionality rarely pull well together, and Lady Clementina's aspirations, which were many, seldom managed to fulfil themselves. She aspired, amongst other things, to be a leader of society, but knew—and was deeply mortified by the knowledge—that she had never attained to that proud position. Her wish, in truth, was to lead at all times and in all places, and had she succeeded in doing so, her character would doubtless have been an amiable one: for she loved those who submitted to her ruling. But she did not and could not succeed, lacking the necessary qualifications for leadership. Her father, the old Duke of Devonport, who had not been a very rich man, had spent the last years of his life in comparative retirement, leaving the hospitalities of Devonport House to be dispensed by his son and his daughter-in-law, and inviting as few people as possible to stay with him in the country. Thus Lady Clementina had seen little of fashionable society in her youth, and when she had entered it, somewhat late in life, as the wife of Sir Joseph Huntley, had been unable to pick up its tricks of speech and manner. Also, being by nature busy and energetic, and having consorted almost exclusively with her inferiors, she had acquired patronising and dictatorial ways which nobody liked and which not a few persons hated. She spent her husband's money liberally, and, upon the whole, judiciously. She entertained on a truly magnificent scale; her charities were numerous and regulated with due discrimination; she took a sincere and active interest in everybody's affairs, from those of her servants upwards. But her servants wished that she would leave them alone; her relations would never consent to meet her in private, if they could possibly avoid it; and though hosts of people dined and danced in her house all the season through, very few of them had a good

word for her. Her attempt to set up a political *salon* failed ignominiously.

All this, together with the fact that she had no children, gave Lady Clementina's disposition a tinge of acerbity and disappointment, perceptible in the ring of her voice, in the movements of her tall, angular person, in the set of her rather thin lips, the restlessness of her faded blue eyes, and the two perpendicular lines which rose from the bridge of her hook nose to the fringe of yellowish-brown hair which concealed her forehead. With her sister-in-law she had never been able to get on at all. The girl, according to her view, was wilful, fanciful, and by no means as respectful as she should be. She had ideas of her own upon all sorts of subjects, propriety included; and the worst of it was that, being of age, she had it in her power to put them into practice. And a pretty beginning she had made by going off to a watering-place for the whole winter, with an ex-dancing mistress for her companion! Nevertheless, Lady Clementina meant to be very kind to Beatrice; and just now it was her purpose to insure Beatrice's happiness as well as that of Lord Stapleford, a young cousin of her own, by arranging a marriage between the pair. Lord Stapleford wanted money rather badly, and if Beatrice did not want a home and an indulgent husband, the more shame for her; because assuredly she ought to want both.

On the evening of Miss Huntley's arrival in Park Lane she had to listen to a lengthy harangue, delivered in Lady Clementina's high-pitched, slightly querulous voice, and constructed with that careful attention to detail which had rendered her ladyship the terror of the charity committees, mothers' meetings, and other assemblages, where she presided over the deliberations of her sex. Beatrice submitted to be lectured, answered to the best of her power the thousand and one questions put to her about her manner of life at Kingscliff and the acquaintances that she had formed there, and, at the expiration of an hour, candidly avowed her motive for displaying a meekness which could hardly be accounted as one of her natural attributes.

"I knew all this would have to come sooner or later," she remarked, "so I thought I would take it in the lump. May I be permitted to observe that you require a very long time to say a very simple thing, Clementina? When your homily is boiled down and the essence of it is extracted, it seems to amount to nothing more nor less

than, 'Keep your eye on your sister-in-law, and your sister-in-law will pull you through.'"

"I suppose," said Lady Clementina, "that that is a quotation from some refined source or other which my ignorance prevents me from recognising. I dare say it expresses what I mean quite accurately enough for the purpose. I certainly do think that you would be wiser to place yourself at least nominally under my care until you marry, and I certainly do not think that it is advisable for a girl of your age to go rushing about the country with a superannuated ballet-dancer by way of a chaperon."

"Nothing could be truer or more prettily put," answered Beatrice. "Of course I have been rushing about the country for the last six months, not living at a quiet little west-country watering-place, as some of my friends supposed; and it is notorious that Miss Joy was the star of the ballet until she was driven to seek other employment by the weight of years. Clementina, do you propose to go on like this? You can, if you like; only, if you do, you will drive me away. Whether that would be a misfortune for either of us I am not quite sure; but I will admit that I don't want to be driven away. I want to enjoy my season and to go about a good deal, and I am quite aware that I can't do that without your support. All the same, I would rather sacrifice my prospect of amusement than be bullied."

"You are very peremptory," said Lady Clementina. "Your brother and I wish you to enjoy yourself, and I shall be most happy to take you about; but really I cannot promise to act as your chaperon and at the same time to abstain from uttering a word of disapproval if you behave foolishly, as I am afraid you are very likely to do. That would be rather too one-sided a bargain."

"No doubt it would," agreed Beatrice, with an air of conviction. "It isn't as if you had any private ends to serve by saddling yourself with me; nothing but your kindness of heart induces you to undertake such a troublesome job, and when I commit the acts of folly that you anticipate I must try to accept rebuke in a becoming spirit. Only don't traduce Miss Joy again, please, because that I will not stand."

Lady Clementina gave a sort of snort, but made no articulate rejoinder. She was not afraid of her sister-in-law, because, to do her justice, she was afraid of nobody; but, not wishing to mar poor young Stapleford's prospects, she mentally resolved to say no more about Miss Joy. As that lady had

gone to stay with some distant relations, upon an indefinite leave of absence, and might very likely never be heard of again, it was comparatively easy to be generous to her.

It must be a pleasant thing to be young and beautiful and an heiress. The situation—as those who are neither young nor beautiful nor heiresses are fond of reminding us—has its drawbacks; but an impartial observer must admit that these are outweighed by its advantages. Beatrice Huntley, whose spirits were subject to frequent fluctuations, and who could not be described as an altogether happy person, had come to London bent upon enjoying to the full such pleasures as circumstances had placed within her reach; and she faithfully carried out her programme. It was not her first season; but it was the first in which she had been conscious of complete independence, and that gave it something of the charm of novelty. It is needless to say that admirers, old and new, speedily gathered about her like flies about a jar of honey, their impatient buzzings affording her no little amusement. She was full of engagements of every sort and kind; she had an unlimited supply of the most lovely frocks that money could buy; she never found a spare five minutes in which to sit down and read or think; and when she reached home in the grey dawn she was so tired that she fell asleep the instant after her head had touched the pillow. At the age of twenty-one a life of that kind is exciting and entertaining, however unprofitable it may be. Beatrice found it so; indeed there were moments when she thought that she could never be really satisfied with any other kind of life, and that the lot of a woman of fashion was, after all, that for which she was best fitted.

When in this mood she looked with not unkindly eyes upon Lord Stapleford, a grown-up Eton boy, who had excellent health, an excellent temper, a great love for all sports and pastimes, and quite a fair average allowance of brains. People who have more than the average allowance of brains are not always pleasant people, and it is said that they are seldom pleasant husbands. Lord Stapleford in any conceivable capacity was sure to be pleasant. He belonged to that class of Englishmen whom we are accustomed to consider as typical of our race, although, perhaps, the assumption would hardly bear a statistical test; he was not a handsome young man, having too square a face, too large a mouth, and a snub nose; but his complexion was clear, his shoulders

were broad, and he always presented a clean, healthy, and smart appearance, which was agreeable to the eye. He chose to declare that Miss Huntley was his cousin, called her by her Christian name, soon became intimate with her, and did not persecute her with nearly such marked attentions as did certain other frequenters of the house in Park Lane. At a later period his demeanour underwent a change; but that was because he subsequently did what he had never intended to do, and fell over head and ears in love with the beautiful heiress. In the beginning of the season he was heart-whole, and consequently exhibited himself at his best.

"How I wish I were you!" Miss Huntley exclaimed involuntarily one afternoon, when he was sitting opposite to her in her brother's library, with his elbows on his knees and the contented smile upon his lips which was as much a part of his customary equipment as the bouquet in his buttonhole.

"Wish you were me!" he repeated. "Why, in the name of goodness, should you wish that?"

"Well, for one thing, because you look as if you hadn't a care in the world," she answered.

"Oh, haven't I just got cares, though!" retorted Lord Stapleford. "That's all *you* know about it. Now if I were to say that I should like to change places with you, for instance——"

"But you couldn't say such a thing without palpable insincerity," interrupted Beatrice; "there never yet lived the man who wanted to be a woman. What are these heavy cares of yours, if one may ask?"

The young fellow laughed and made a gesture to simulate the turning of his pockets inside out. "A chronic deficit," he answered, "is the source of them all. I wonder what it feels like to be able to buy everything that one wants!"

"I don't know; the things that one wants are seldom in the market. Wealth is a very overrated possession."

"So rich people are always saying, and disgustingly ungrateful it is of them. If they don't appreciate what they have got, it ought to be taken away from them and given to others who would. There's no doubt that money is terribly thrown away upon some of them. Upon our friend, Sir Joseph, for one. With two or three thousand a year he would be as happy as possible. Clementina is different; Clementina is expensive, though discontented."

Lady Clementina, who, with a visiting-book at her elbow, was busily writing cards of invitation at the other end of the room, looked round for an instant to say, "Don't be impertinent."

"Now, Clem," retorted Lord Stapleford (never would it have entered into the head of any other living being to address her ladyship by that diminutive; but Stapleford was a great favourite with her and privileged to take liberties), "you give your mind to your work, or you'll be getting into trouble again, as you did the other day, when you forgot all the V's and W's. Why don't you keep a secretary or a companion or somebody to do these things for you?"

"Just because a secretary or companion would always be getting me into trouble," answered Lady Clementina. "It was Beatrice, not I, who made the mistake that you speak of; and it will be a long time before I ask her to help me again."

She resumed her task of addressing envelopes and tossing them into a basket; and Lord Stapleford, reverting presently to his subject, was beginning, "If I had a trifle of seventy or eighty thousand a year, the first thing that I should do would be to hire a man to perform all my duties for me," when the butler came in and delivered a card to Beatrice, who, after examining it, inquired: "Have you shown him into my room?"

On receiving an affirmative reply, she rose and said: "Well, I am afraid I must tear myself away. We shall meet somewhere to-night, I suppose."

"I say, Clem," called out Lord Stapleford, "do you approve of this sort of thing? Here's some cheeky beggar demanding a private audience of Beatrice—and getting it too!"

"My approval," answered Lady Clementina, "depends entirely upon who the beggar may be. Not that Beatrice pays much attention to my approval."

"He isn't a beggar at all," said Beatrice; "he is a country parson, vowed to celibacy. He wouldn't interest either of you; but he does happen to interest me, so I shall keep him to myself." And without further explanation, she withdrew.

Sir Joseph, in the kindness of his heart and the prudence of his mind, had caused a bright little sitting-room, overlooking the Park, to be furnished and set apart for his sister's use, having with some little difficulty obtained Lady Clementina's consent to an arrangement which offered obvious advantages. It was here that Beatrice found

Monckton gazing abstractedly out of the window, his hands, which were clasped behind his back, holding his shapeless felt hat, his trousers turned up, and a pair of thick boots upon his feet, just as if he had been still at Kingscliff. That very unfashionable figure, standing beside a table littered with invitation cards, and intervening between her and the unceasing stream of carriages outside, struck her with a sense of incongruity which, however, by no means lessened the warmth of her welcome.

"It seems so odd to see you here!" she exclaimed. "But I am more than glad to see you, and it is very good of you to have come."

"To tell you the truth, I have come on a matter of business," said Monckton.

"You needn't have been in such a desperate hurry to tell me that you haven't come for the pleasure of seeing me."

"I didn't mean it in that way," Monckton answered, smiling; "I only felt that I ought to offer some apology for claiming a few minutes of your time. You are very busy in the pursuit of pleasure, aren't you?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "It's the only thing to be done."

"Do you really think so? And has the chase been successful, so far?"

"I really think that half measures are a mistake; and as for success, I may say that I have had as much as was possible. You are not going to moralise about Dead Sea fruit, I hope. That has been said so many, many times, and you are much too wise to believe that anybody ever listens to such tales until the dust and ashes have become palpable."

"It is the misfortune of a great many truths to be truisms," remarked Monckton; "but I think you will admit that I don't often preach out of the pulpit, and if I did, I shouldn't attempt it with you. You will have, as you say, to get your own experience, and as soon as I have stated my errand, I will leave you to proceed with it."

"You will have a cup of tea first, at all events. You are looking very pale and fagged, do you know. Is it exciting or depressing to conduct a mission?—or a little of both, perhaps, like a London season? What a funny epoch we live in, with our missions and revivals and Salvation Armies and peculiar social developments! A dispassionate observer from another planet would think we were all running away from something, wouldn't he? And I wonder what he would think we were running away from?"

"You are rather unjust," observed Monckton.

"Of course I am; what else can you expect? You are a standing rebuke to me, and I defend myself as best I can—which isn't very well. Such a lot of good resolutions made down there at Kingscliff, away from all this hubbub, and not one of them kept! Well, we won't talk about it. What is the matter of business that you spoke of? If it's anything that I can do for you I'll do it, though it should be the reclaiming of the inhabitants of a back slum."

"How would you set about doing that, Miss Huntley? No; it is a simpler matter, and I am not particularly sanguine about it. I only happened to remember a word or two that you said to me just before you left Kingscliff, and I thought it might be worth while to let you know that the Manor House is for sale."

"You don't mean to say so!" exclaimed Beatrice. "This is most interesting—and most fortunate. Of course I will buy it. Ought I to telegraph? Is there any fear of my being forestalled? Has he offered it to his brother?"

"I think you will be in ample time if you write to the lawyers to-morrow and open negotiations; but no doubt you will have competitors as soon as it is known that the place is in the market. Probably you will like to hear the price before coming to a decision."

"Oh, bother the price! It won't be more than £20,000, I suppose?"

"Well, no," answered Monckton, laughing; "we may safely assume that it won't reach that figure."

"Then the Manor House is mine. Now tell me, what has made him resolve to sell the place so suddenly? I dare say I can answer that question for myself, though. Poor fellow! Will he have any objection to me as a purchaser, do you suppose?"

Monckton did not reply immediately. The secret of Brian's hopeless attachment had been imparted to him with the rest of that luckless young man's troubles, and he felt pretty sure that it was an open secret to Beatrice.

"Brian could have no objection to you as a *bonâ-fide* purchaser," he said at length; "but I fancy that he would object rather strongly to your buying an estate which you did not want, in order to help him out of his difficulties. I hope he won't take it into his head that that is the case."

The effect of this gentle caution was not

quite what Monckton had anticipated. Miss Huntley drew herself up, frowned, and rejoined, coldly:

"I really do not know what should lead him to imagine anything so ridiculous. I like Mr. Brian Segrave very much; but I am hardly intimate enough with him to commit the impertinence of offering him a present of £20,000 or £10,000, or whatever it may be."

"I beg your pardon," said Monckton, a little disconcerted. "I have good reasons for knowing that you are generous and impulsive, and it occurred to me that your fancy to buy the Manor House might be only another piece of impulsive generosity. I don't know that any such notion will occur to Brian."

"Well, I trust not," Beatrice answered, smiling again. "Nothing is more disagreeable than to be suspected of quixotry upon insufficient grounds. Besides, I am not best pleased with your friend at the present moment. He might have given himself the trouble to call upon me, I think."

Monckton, being doubtful whether Brian would like the straits to which he had been reduced to be made known to Miss Huntley, merely observed that an organist who had daily avocations at Streatham could hardly be expected to find time for calling in Park Lane. "However," he added, "Brian has left Streatham now, and, if you like, I will tell him that you wish him to call."

"Oh, pray don't let him consider himself bound in any way," she returned. "The chances are that he wouldn't find me at home if he did call."

"I don't think," hazarded Monckton, as he rose to depart, "that I shall advise him to call."

Beatrice coloured very slightly, but looked her visitor full in the face and scarcely affected to misunderstand his meaning.

"As you please," she answered briefly. "Shall I see you again before you leave London?"

Monckton answered that he would come again if he could manage it; and as soon as he had left her Miss Huntley remarked aloud:

"It would do that dear, good Mr. Monckton no harm to be just a little bit more of a man of the world. It isn't everybody who would like to be accused in so many words of having fallen in love with his *protégé*."

CHAPTER XXVI.—BRIAN'S LUCK TURNS.

MONCKTON walked away from Park Lane, as unconscious of having suggested the idea

alluded to by Miss Huntley in her soliloquy as he was innocent of entertaining it. He certainly did not think that Miss Huntley was enamoured of Brian Segrave, or that there was the least probability of her ever becoming so; but he did think that, if the young man paid his respects to her, she would be unable to help flirting, or seeming to flirt, with him. For that he did not incline to blame her very severely. He was more of a man of the world—more, at any rate, of a student of human nature—than she gave him credit for being, and he knew that young women, as well as young men, pass through a period of life during which it may be expected that they, too, after their fashion, will sow their wild oats. They do not, as a rule, mean much harm, nor, in truth, do they often do much; still it will occasionally happen that they come across an exceptional member of the opposite sex and break that exceptional person's heart. Monckton deemed it inexpedient to tell Brian that Miss Huntley had intimated a wish to see him; he even went a step farther and decided that he would say nothing about her intention of purchasing the Manor House property. She was a little bit too capricious to be counted upon; she might change her mind; it was extremely probable that her relations would use their endeavours to make her do so, and it was as well to avoid premature announcements which might only pave the way for disappointment.

Therefore he kept his own counsel, though much tempted by Brian's pale face and pre-occupied mien to violate it, and did not even mention that he himself had been in Park Lane that afternoon. And on the following day he was removed from temptation's way by an urgent appeal from his second in command at St. Michael's. Monckton, though an admirable organizer, had the defect which is common to so many admirable organizers, of making himself too exclusively the mainspring of his work. When he took a holiday of ten days or a fortnight, parochial arrangements were pretty sure to fall out of gear. They had fallen out of gear now, and as the mission upon which he had been engaged in London was at an end, he felt bound to return home forthwith and resume the reins of government. But he persuaded Brian to remain on in Victoria Street without him.

"You will do me a real service by keeping the rooms aired," he declared. "Let me hear from you when you have struck your bargain. I hope it will be a good one."

"It's pretty sure to be that," Brian answered with a sigh. "Old Potter has written to me quite enthusiastically about it, praising you up to the skies for having 'restored me to sanity,' as he calls it, and promising to do his very best for me. He is evidently in high glee at the prospect of playing off Buswell against Gilbert, and is only afraid of my closing with the first offer that comes to hand. He wants to know why I should care whether the house remains standing or not after it has passed out of my possession. It wouldn't be very easy to explain a wish of that kind to a hard-headed lawyer, would it? However, there isn't the shadow of a chance that my wish will be fulfilled; so it doesn't much matter."

Being thus wisely resigned to what appeared to be inevitable, Brian anticipated no particularly delightful news from Mr. Potter, who called upon him in person a few days after this, and whose countenance, as he entered, was beaming with the double satisfaction which an honest man feels in having served a friend and a lawyer in having done a smart stroke of business.

"Well, young man," said he, "I congratulate you upon your choice of friends; Mr. Monckton seems to be possessed of common sense. To be sure, I might say as much for myself; but then you don't choose to treat me as a friend—won't even answer when I write to you! Well, I forgive you; and what's more to the purpose, I believe I've sold your property for you. Subject to your approval, that is."

"Ah!" said Brian, drawing in his breath, "and who is the purchaser? Gilbert or Mr. Buswell?"

"Now, isn't that just like you! My good fellow, the first question to ask is, what is the price offered?"

"I don't so much care about that," said Brian.

Mr. Potter raised his hands and turned up the whites of his eyes. "He don't so much care about that! And this is a fellow who has been made acquainted with poverty, mind you!"

"Exactly; that's why I don't mind. I can live upon a very small income."

"Can you indeed? I should have thought differently; but I am glad to hear that it is so, for your income won't be a large one. You can't call £550 a year a large income."

"Five hundred and fifty a year!" repeated Brian in amazement.

"Well, yes; I take it that that, or perhaps a trifle more, would be about the figure, at

four per cent.; and it's best to be contented with four per cent. in these days. You see, you must deduct something for expenses from the £15,000 which I hope to obtain for you."

"My dear Mr. Potter, you can't mean to tell me that anybody has offered £15,000 for the Manor House!"

"Why not? It is a fair price. I will even go so far as to say that it is a good one; but when Hemmings and Hawkins, in writing to us upon the subject, thought fit to make use of the expression 'exorbitant,' we replied at once that they mistook the people with whom they had to deal, that if their client was dissatisfied with our terms she was in no way compelled to agree to them, but that it would be quite useless to attempt to beat us down. In fact, I could see plainly enough that their client had given them *carte blanche*."

"Who is their client?" inquired Brian eagerly.

"One Miss Huntley, a daughter of old Joe Huntley the contractor; you must have seen her down at Kingscliff last year. I mentioned that you were particularly anxious to sell the Manor House to somebody who would use it as a residence, and the answer that I received was that such was Miss Huntley's present intention, but that she could not bind herself with regard to the future. That was as much as anyone could say; because, of course, you have no power to exact conditions."

At the sound of Miss Huntley's name Brian's heart gave a great leap, and it must be confessed that for a moment he did entertain the surmise which Monkton had been so promptly snubbed for putting forward. "I hope to goodness you said nothing about my being hard up!" he exclaimed.

"Naturally I did," returned Mr. Potter sarcastically. "I stated that you wanted £15,000; but that so pressing was your need of money that you would accept £5,000 rather than lose a chance of selling. You evidently take me for a congenital idiot, and I ought to feel much flattered by your condescending to employ me, under the circumstances."

Brian laughed. "It is I who am the idiot," said he; "but really you have rather taken my breath away. I had no conception that I was the owner of such a valuable property. Since I can't keep it myself, I am delighted that it is to go to Miss Huntley. I would sooner she had it than anybody else, and I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Potter, for doing so well for me."

Mr. Potter rubbed his hands. "I think,"

he observed modestly, "that we have done pretty well. Possibly you might have got more by waiting a year or so; but that would hardly have suited you; and, taking into consideration your wish that the purchaser should have no connection with the building interest, I think, as I say, that we have done pretty well. Mr. Buswell, I fear, will be disappointed when he hears of the transaction."

"Yes," agreed Brian meditatively; "and so, perhaps, will my brother."

A smile of subdued but intense satisfaction overspread Mr. Potter's features. "And so, perhaps, will your brother. It is a pity that he was not first in the field, and I should not be surprised to find that he was rather annoyed with me for not offering him the refusal; but then, as I shall point out to him, it was my bounden duty to forward your interests and carry out your instructions from the moment that you did me the honour to place your affairs in my hands. I may take it, then, that you authorise me to come to terms with Hemmings and Hawkins? The lady, it seems, is in rather a hurry."

Brian gave the required authority without any hesitation. His characteristic indifference with regard to money matters prevented him from entering the protest which Mr. Potter had secretly feared, for indeed £15,000 was the outside value of the Manor House estate, and it was certain that the purchaser, if she intended to reside there, would have to expend a considerable sum on repairs. But Brian did not trouble his head about that. What interested him far more, and engrossed his thoughts for a long time after Mr. Potter had left him, was the question of whether he should or should not call upon the lady with whom he was about to drive so hard a bargain. She had unquestionably given him permission to do so, and there seemed to be no good reason why he should not avail himself thereof; but he had become so accustomed to the idea of her being utterly and for ever beyond his reach that he had some difficulty in overcoming it. Possibly, too, he may have half-consciously dreaded lest, by renewing acquaintance with her, he should lay up for himself memories less agreeable than those upon which his love now subsisted. But a debate of that kind could only have one issue, as Brian himself must have been aware; for at last he broke into a subdued laugh, muttering, "As if anything on earth, except the lack of a decent suit of clothes, could keep me away from her!"

The barrier referred to had now been removed, thanks to Monckton's insistence, and although it was too late to call on Miss Huntley that day, Brian was able to go and dine at his club, a thing which he would not have ventured to do without a renewal of his wardrobe. It seemed as if the tide of his fortunes, after ebbing for so long, had now turned in earnest; for the first person whom he saw on entering the club was little Tommy Phipps, and Phipps, instead of instantly taking flight, came forward in the most cordial manner and shook him by the hand, exclaiming: "So here you are at last, Segrave! I have been seeking you high and low for an age—at least, I should have been seeking you if I had had the faintest notion of where to seek. I wonder whether you recollect a suggestion I made to you last winter about an opera of which you were to provide the music and I the words."

"I recollect it so well," answered Brian, "that I have composed a lot of airs which I thought might be suitable for it, and which I meant to show you long ago, only I couldn't get hold of you."

"Oh, well, I've been abroad, you know," the other observed, with a passing twinge of compunction. "I am very glad to hear that you haven't dropped the idea. What are you doing to-night? Could you dine with me and discuss matters?"

Brian answered that he could and would, with great pleasure; and shortly afterwards he was favoured with an outline of the drama whereby Mr. Phipps hoped to add fresh laurels to those which already adorned his brow.

"I must tell you, Segrave," the latter premised, "that I am not a mere librettist. If I were, I should only be called upon to supply a certain amount of doggerel to suit your composition and I couldn't reasonably ask for half profits, which is the arrangement that I propose to make with you. This work, if it ever comes to anything, will be as much mine as yours. The music, I don't doubt, will be first-rate; but the dialogue and the situations which I shall contribute won't be altogether bad, I trust. My belief is that the public nowadays is not a bit more willing to tolerate rubbish set to good music than bad music combined with a good play; and, for my part, I think the public is right. I don't know whether you agree with me."

Brian having nodded assent, the dramatist continued: "I'll just give you an idea of the kind of thing I have in my mind. I should name it, I think, *The King's Veto*, and the

plot would be something like this: the tenor would be the king—call him Conrad, King of Democratia, if you like—who suddenly and quite unexpectedly finds himself a reigning sovereign, owing to the death of his cousin, who has been drowned in the Royal yacht, together with the heir apparent and the rest of his family. Conrad had been upon the point of contracting a morganatic marriage with the soprano, Phyllis, a charming young person, but not of royal blood. Of course his accession to the throne puts this arrangement, which had been sanctioned by the late king, out of the question, and the first thing that his ministers tell him is that he must not only give up all thought of it, but ally himself as speedily as possible with his distant kinswoman, the Princess Octavia (contralto), lest the dynasty should become extinct. Now, at this time Democratia is in the throes of a constitutional crisis, the advanced party having brought in a measure for the extension of the suffrage to—to—well, say to the criminal classes and lunatics, and having carried their bill by a large majority, Conrad, who cares very little whether all his subjects or only nine-tenths of them have votes, but who cares a great deal about Phyllis, inquires into his constitutional powers and is delighted to find that he possesses a right of veto. He immediately informs the ministry that unless he is allowed to marry the girl of his heart, he shall exercise it. They assure him that the right of veto is never exercised and that he daren't do such a thing; and he proves the contrary to them. Whereupon they resign, and the other side takes office. The other side, after due reflection, decides that the extension of the franchise ought not any longer to be made a party question and re-introduces the same bill, with the same result. This, you will perceive, brings Democratia pretty near to a revolution, and we shall have an animated debate in the Chamber upon the question of whether it is or is not competent for Parliament to abolish the king's veto."

"Won't that approach burlesque?" suggested Brian.

"Not if we have proper costumes. I admit that it wouldn't do to put on the stage an assembly in trousers and frock-coats; but sixteenth-century attire will make it all right, and the scene will give you a good opportunity for choruses. Besides, you will have plenty of pathos by-and-by. The villain (and baritone) will be Prince Otho, a connection of the Royal house, who has designs

upon the throne, and who naturally eggs Conrad on. Then there will be a socialist plot for the assassination of the king and establishment of a republic, and Otho will mix himself up in it, meaning to use the conspirators for his own purposes and get rid of them afterwards. Now, I'm sure you see what can be done with these materials—Phyllis, perceiving her lover's danger and determined to renounce him rather than let him sacrifice himself for her; the ministers, in a mortal funk lest anarchy should supervene and their occupation be gone, surrounding their beloved sovereign with detectives and guards, and Otho carrying on his schemes with every prospect of success. You could bring in a most affecting *aria* and *duo* where Phyllis takes leave of Conrad—"Bid me not stay!—Lovers to-day—Part but to meet when life passes away"—that sort of thing, you know, and then the usual rumty-tumty about sever and never and for ever—I think it might be made to go with a very pretty swing. For the *finale* we should have a masked ball at the Palace—obviously the conspirators' only chance. Phyllis, who has joined them for certain reasons, engages to lead the King out into the gardens, where the charge of dynamite is to be placed, declaring herself ready to lay down her life for the sake of her country—an offer which they are only too happy to accept. That makes things quite simple for her. All she has to do is to persuade Otho to assume a domino exactly resembling his Majesty's, draw him aside upon some pretext, and so keep her word by dying for her country, because, from the moment that both she and Otho are removed, Conrad's throne will be safe. The dynamite, of course, hangs fire; the assassin in charge of it, seeing that he has failed, rushes forth and stabs Otho to the heart. Then follows the discovery of the plot, the recognition of Phyllis's heroism, and her elevation to the rank of Queen Consort by the unanimous consent of a grateful people. That's only a rough draft; I shall improve upon it when I come to work out the details; but I think it gives ample scope to the musician, don't you?"

Brian nodded. The skeleton of Phipps's drama seemed to him to be promising; and as the evening went on and his companion, who was in a communicative mood, told him something of the profits earned by popular playwrights, he became more and more sanguine, inwardly laying the foundations of various airy castles. He did not know a great deal about the woman whom he adored;

but he had a strong impression that success of any kind would appeal powerfully to her: already, in prophetic fancy, he "saw the bright eyes of the dear one discover She thought that he was not unworthy to love her." It was perhaps neither surprising nor inexcusable that he should have forgotten for a time the social gulf which yawned between him and a lady of Beatrice Huntley's wealth and celebrity: anyhow, he was not suffered to forget it long. For between eleven and twelve o'clock there strolled into the smoking-room of the club a fair-haired young man in evening dress, who, on espying Phipps, called out, "Hullo, Tommy! how are you getting on? Been writing any more plays lately?"

And while Brian was thinking that the features of the newcomer were not altogether unfamiliar to him, Phipps responded:

"My dear fellow, I'm going to write something that will make you applaud with all your hands and feet—a joint affair this time. By the way, let me introduce you to my friend and future colleague, Mr. Segrave. Lord Stapleford, Mr. Segrave."

"Not my old friend Segrave major?" said Stapleford. "By jove! it is though. Don't you remember me, Segrave?"

"To be sure I do," answered Brian, who, indeed, had been in the same division with Stapleford at Eton. "I was sure I knew you, only I couldn't put a name to you."

A short conversation over bygone days followed, and then Stapleford said,

"I wonder whether you have anything to do with a certain Segrave from whom my cousin Beatrice has just bought a house somewhere down in the west."

"I have sold, or rather I believe I am about to sell, the only house that I possess to Miss Huntley," Brian replied. "I didn't know she was your cousin."

"Of course she's my cousin. At least, her sister-in-law is, which is much the same thing; and a nice rage her sister-in-law is in with her for buying your house, by that same token. What she's doing it for goodness only knows! She swears she means to spend the winters there in future, but I hope she don't mean it."

Phipps chuckled. "That sort of winter quarters wouldn't exactly suit you, eh?"

"Good heavens! no," Stapleford replied unguardedly. "Why, there's no decent hunting to be had within a hundred miles of the place!"

"After that incidental admission," laughed Phipps, nudging Brian with his elbow, "I

presume we may offer our respectful congratulations. When does the event come off?"

This innocent allusion to an engagement which everybody had been speaking of as imminent for weeks past was not very well received. Stapleford looked annoyed for a moment; then, assuming an air of stony unconsciousness, replied, "I don't know what you mean," while Brian started up hurriedly, and said in a somewhat husky voice that he must be off.

There is no such thing as being prepared for a shock. The blow, when it comes, is not the less stunning in its effects because it has been foreseen; and Brian, who, ever since his departure from Kingscliff, had been telling himself at intervals that Beatrice would certainly marry before long, stumbled out into the street with a sickening conviction that all the musical and dramatic triumphs which the world could offer would be of no solace to him now. He had not heard Stapleford's disclaimer, and, if he had heard it, would not have believed in it.

"What a consummate fool I must be!" he ejaculated. "To think that I have been nursing a remnant of hope all this time!"

Possibly he may have been a fool; but if all those who cherish hope unconsciously be fools, then without doubt he had something like the entire human race for his associates.

CHAPTER XXVII.—GILBERT SEES BREAKERS AHEAD.

GILBERT SEGRAVE was as good a landlord as his father had been before him. Agriculture had not the charm for him which it had had for the old man; but he was not a whit less interested in the improvement of his property; and as he now had command of more ready money than Sir Brian had ever possessed, he was able by judicious expenditure to avoid that reduction of rents which was beginning to press heavily upon some of his neighbours. Judicious expenditure is a very different thing from loss, and it caused Gilbert's tenants to regard him with friendship and approval. He was anxious, for many reasons, that they should so regard him. Among other things, he wanted them to vote for him when the time should come; and he believed that they would vote for him, in spite of Tory leanings and some distrust of the newly-enfranchised labourers.

One morning as he was walking homewards, after sanctioning, against the judgment of his bailiff, some drainage works which a farmer had asked him to take in hand, he

was surprised to see a stout little old gentleman in black broadcloth and a tall hat trotting up the avenue. Mr. Potter had not visited Beekton since the day of Sir Brian's funeral, nor had it ever been his custom to do so without previous warning. He explained himself, after shaking hands with Gilbert and accepting the latter's invitation to luncheon.

"There are one or two trifling matters to which I wished to call your attention," said he, "and, being here, I thought I might as well communicate with you by word of mouth."

It was not until the matters referred to, as well as an excellent luncheon, had been disposed of that Gilbert asked:

"And what has brought you to Kingscliff, Mr. Potter, if it isn't an impertinent question? Not pleasure, I'm quite sure; and I thought we were your only clients in these parts."

"So you are—so you are," answered the old lawyer, sipping his wine. "What good claret this is! The days of good claret are nearly over now, more's the pity. Yes; I have no clients hereabouts but yourselves—you and your brother."

"My brother!" echoed Gilbert, lifting his eyebrows and smiling. Then as a sudden light broke in upon him—"Oh, I see! he has made up his mind to sell the Manor House at last. Much the wisest thing that he could do, in my opinion."

Mr. Potter closed his eyes and nodded. "I quite agree with you; it is what I have advised all along. And I am sure you will be glad to hear," he added, looking up abruptly, "that he has got a capital price for the place too."

Gilbert coloured with annoyance. He quite understood Mr. Potter's malignant satisfaction and thought to himself, "You old wretch! you came here on purpose to triumph over me."

But the thrust had been delivered too suddenly to be successfully parried, and he could not refrain from saying:

"I think I ought to have been told that the place was for sale. Both you and Brian must have known that I was anxious to buy it, and in all probability I should have been ready to offer as good a price as Mr. Buswell."

"Ah," observed Mr. Potter placidly, "I was afraid you would be vexed that the property should have slipped through your fingers; still, in these cases, one must stick to the rule of first come, first served; and

really, as your legal adviser, I don't know that I could have recommended you to give quite as much as Miss Huntley has done. By the way, Miss Huntley is the purchaser, not Mr. Buswell."

"Miss Huntley!" ejaculated Gilbert, to whom this announcement was not less surprising and scarcely less unwelcome than the preceding one; "what in the world does she want with the Manor House?"

"I can't say; I don't know the lady. Hemmings and Hawkins, who conveyed her offer to me, state that she proposes passing a part of every year there; but as she is rich, young, and also, I am told, handsome, her plans may be looked upon as liable to modifications. Of course she will always be able to sell, though whether at a loss or a profit will depend upon circumstances. I should be sorry to assert that she has made a bad bargain. Her father was a long-headed man, and possibly she has inherited some of his astuteness."

"I think you might at least have let me know before you completed the transaction," Gilbert repeated presently.

"How could we, with these people pressing for an immediate reply, and practically allowing us to name our own terms? Still, I don't wonder at your being disappointed."

"I did not say that I was disappointed," returned Gilbert, to whom Mr. Potter's smile was fast becoming intolerable. "If Miss Huntley has offered you a fancy price, I could not have competed with her; and, indeed, the Manor House might have proved as much of a white elephant to me as it probably will to her. My only feeling is that Brian has behaved in a rather unbrotherly way to me. That, however, is nothing new."

"Ah!" said Mr. Potter.

"Yes; and now that he is, as I suppose, in a measure independent, there seems to be less chance than ever of his making friends with me. I regret it very much indeed; but I am glad to think that the quarrel is, at all events, not of my seeking."

"Ah!" said Mr. Potter again.

There was evidently nothing to be done with this exasperating old lawyer but to get rid of him as soon as possible, and Gilbert was rejoiced to hear him say that he must catch the afternoon express to London. His disappointment was greater than he had expressed; greater also, perhaps, than Mr. Potter suspected. For some time after he had been left alone he sat, with his head upon his hand, pondering over the signifi-

cance and results of Brian's unbrotherly conduct, and his apprehensions were summed up in the ejaculation which escaped him at last: "What will Buswell say to this, I wonder?"

Any doubts that he may have entertained as to that were soon set at rest by the arrival of Mr. Buswell himself; and the face of Mr. Buswell, as he bustled into the library where Gilbert was sitting, was red, and lowering clouds were upon his brow.

"Well, Mr. Segrave," he exclaimed, without even going through the formality of an ordinary greeting, "you *have* let us in nicely this time and no mistake! What was you thinking about, sir, to let your brother dispose of his property to anybody but you or me?"

"Pray sit down, Mr. Buswell," returned Gilbert, who was not best pleased with the other's manner. "I have only just heard of the sale of the Manor House, and I confess that I have heard of it with considerable regret. My brother is free to make his own arrangements, and I dare say that I might not have been able to prevent him from making this one even if he had consulted me, although I quite see that it would have been better for you, and indeed for Kings-cliff, if you could have acquired the land and built upon it."

"Better!" cried Mr. Buswell, "why, it's essential; neither more nor less than that. I've told you all along that we must have the Manor House property, and I pretty generally say what I mean and mean what I say."

"Really, I am very sorry, Mr. Buswell, but I don't see how I can help you. It seems to me that you had better address yourself to Miss Huntley."

"What!—and have to pay twenty thousand pounds for land that we might have got for eight or ten! Mind you, Mr. Segrave, this is a matter that concerns you as well as me. I told you I could get you into Parliament, and, to speak plainly, I can keep you out of Parliament too."

"How will you benefit by keeping me out of Parliament, Mr. Buswell?"

"That's not the question; and perhaps I should rather have said that you may be kept out in spite of me. There's a certain number of votes that you can secure by showing people that you have the welfare of the place at heart, and unless you exert yourself, those same votes 'll be given to your opponent, whoever he may be, if it's only to punish you."

"In other words, the Manor House estate is to be the price of my election."

"Not a bit of it, nobody's asking you for a bribe. But self-interest, Mr. Segrave, is at the root of all human actions, and if anyone tells you it isn't, don't you believe him. We want that land at a reasonable figure; we've looked to you to get it for us, and we look to you still—that's all."

"Then you will be disappointed, I am afraid. How am I to get the land for you?"

"Ah, that's your affair. I know what I should do in your place! but maybe I should put your back up if I mentioned it."

"You can mention it," returned Gilbert sh. rly.

"Well," said Mr. Buswell, with a chuckle, "I should marry the lady, that's what I should do. By all accounts, she wouldn't be unwilling. Now after that, I'll wish you good-day. I see you don't much relish my putting my oar in; but your best friend couldn't have given you more sensible advice. Think it over, Mr. Segrave, think it over. I'll be bound to say that the longer you think of it the better you'll like it."

He retreated without giving Gilbert time to administer the rebuke which his impertinence merited. He was certainly very impertinent; still, as he had boasted, his advice was sensible—or would have been, if the young candidate for parliamentary honours had been free and heart-whole. Gilbert, who was neither the one nor the other, could not help thinking it over and verifying, after a fashion, the prediction of its author; for the idea of his possible marriage with Miss Huntley soon ceased to make him angry. Not for an instant did he dream of being false to Kitty, only he wondered whether, supposing that there were no Kitty in existence, Miss Huntley would have deigned to look favourably upon him, and the popular impression of which Mr. Buswell had made himself the echo filled him with a certain complacency. But this was an unprofitable subject of speculation; what preoccupied Gilbert longer was the question of why Miss Huntley had bought the Manor House at all—a question to which the ostensible reply seemed to him altogether inadequate. And when he had given up that enigma, there remained for consideration the more serious one of how he was to get himself elected without fulfilling Mr. Buswell's conditions. The scarcely veiled threat of that worthy was not to be misunderstood or disregarded, yet what he had named as the price of his support was virtually unattainable.

When one rock breaks the even flow of a

prosperous career, it is well to keep a lookout for others. Some days after Gilbert had received the unwelcome visits described above, he drove over to the other side of the county in order to be present at a Conservative demonstration and *fête*, organized by Sir John Pollington and others and held in the grounds of that patriotic baronet. No invitations to this gathering were issued, a charge of sixpence for admission being exacted, lest unpleasant things should be said about the refreshments and prizes which were provided at Sir John's expense and freely offered to persons of all shades of political opinion. Gilbert had been advised to put in an appearance among the other country gentlemen, and although he would fain have avoided entering upon the territory of a man who persistently declined to see him when they met, he judged it best not to render himself conspicuous by absence.

Many of his own supporters, including Admiral Greenwood, welcomed him on his arrival. It was a beautiful day, the well-timbered, undulating park was thronged by the multitudinous rulers of this favoured land, who were competing against one another in hurdle-races and sack-races, playing kiss-in-the-ring, and otherwise disporting themselves, while the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood looked on in benign sympathy.

"I call this a great success," said good-natured Admiral Greenwood, rubbing his hands. "I like to see people happy, whether they're Liberals or Conservatives, don't you? Not much fun for poor Pollington, though, I expect. A pretty state his grass will be in to-morrow morning. And after all, the Tories are hardly likely to get a single extra vote for all their trouble."

"Don't be too sure of that," retorted a Conservative lady, who was standing beside him. "We aren't trying to catch votes by providing the electors with a day's pleasuring. The pleasuring is only the bait, the speech is the hook by which we hope to land them."

"Pollington's speech?" asked the Admiral incredulously.

"No, though he is very convincing, if people would only listen to him. But we have a trump-card up our sleeves, as you shall see presently."

And indeed, after the sports had been wound up and the prizes distributed from a platform which had been erected beneath a spreading oak, the real business of the day

began. Sir John harangued at considerable length and with undoubted weight, exposing the countless blunders of a discredited administration; but perhaps he was a trifle too weighty for his audience, and his tone throughout was one of unqualified gloom. He obtained a *succès d'estime*. Other speakers, more or less dreary, followed him and were listened to with resignation by some and undisguised impatience by others. Then arose a stoutish, middle-aged man, with a smooth-shaven face, a cock nose and a twinkle in his eye. He advanced to the front of the platform, his hands tucked under his coat-tails, and took a deliberate survey of the sea of upturned faces below him.

"This is their trump-card," whispered the Admiral to Gilbert; "Pollington has been telling me about him. He's a man called Giles, a Q.C., and a rare good speaker, they say."

Mr. Giles soon showed that he possessed at any rate that essential condition of popular oratory which Sir John Pollington lacked; for he made the crowd listen to him. He passed lightly over foreign affairs, remarking that that subject had been pretty thoroughly dealt with in the admirable speeches which they had just heard, and that if Liberal statesmen had any defence to offer of their policy in Egypt and Afghanistan, all he could say was that it hadn't yet been put into an intelligible shape. But he should like to say a word or two about the great benefits which these same statesmen were promising to bestow upon the community if only they were restored to power in the new parliament. And then he began to be extremely funny. He ridiculed the theory that subdividing land would make it more productive—a theory which might serve well enough to elicit a round of cheers from Birmingham artisans, but which would hardly go down with farmers, or with farm-labourers either. He was very good-humoured, he told some capital stories, made one or two telling points and kept his audience on the broad grin from first to last.

"Free education, compulsory sale of land, and all the rest of it, these are tempting offers, gentlemen; but the worst of them is that our Radical friends don't propose to pay for them out of their own pockets. Oh, dear no! Yet somebody must provide the funds; and if you don't know who'll be called upon to fulfil that humble, necessary function, I think I can tell you. Why, the ratepayers! And by the look of most of you

whom I see here to-day, I'm sadly afraid that that means yourselves. I, too, am a ratepayer; and my experience—I can't say whether it's yours or not—is that my rates are quite heavy enough already."

And so forth, and so forth. The speech was well received, and Mr. Giles retired amidst prolonged applause.

"What do you think of that, Mr. Seagrave?" a voice well known to Gilbert whispered in his ear.

"I think it would be a very good thing if we could get the gentleman over to our side," answered Gilbert, laughing. "Who is he? Do you know anything about him?"

"I know just this about him, that he's likely to be your opponent at Kingscliff, and that it'll take a good man to beat him," was Mr. Buswell's reply. "A man who, as I told you the other day, can show that he has the welfare of the place at 'eart," he added significantly.

Gilbert turned away. Until lately he had flattered himself—indeed, Buswell had as good as assured him—that he would have a walk over; but now it seemed that this had been rather too hasty an assumption. Under the circumstances, it was a little provoking to find Admiral Greenwood bubbling over with laughter at the enemy's jokes, and quite set upon making the enemy's acquaintance, with a view to asking him to dinner.

"You had better get Sir John Pollington to introduce you," said Gilbert, and sauntered away across the grass with Kitty, to whom, if to no one else, he felt that he might fairly look for sympathy.

But even Kitty, it appeared, was not sympathetically disposed on that inauspicious day; for she opened the conversation by saying:

"I am so delighted to hear that Beatrice Huntley has bought the Manor House. She used to talk about it sometimes; but I never thought that she really meant it. Aren't you glad?"

"Considering that I particularly wanted to buy the Manor House myself, I can't say that I am," answered Gilbert, with a touch of asperity. "When I made Brian an offer for it some months ago he gave me to understand that he had no intention of selling; but I suppose he couldn't resist the temptation of making a good round sum and serving me a nasty turn at one blow."

"Oh, I am sure he never meant to serve you a nasty turn!" cried Kitty.

In the depths of her honest little heart she

was conscious of not being quite as delighted as she ought to be at the prospect of her friend's acquiring a permanent establishment at Kingscliff; but that Brian should be provided with means sufficient to live upon seemed to her to be a subject for unmixed satisfaction, and presently she made a timid remark to that effect.

"I am quite with you there," declared Gilbert, who seldom suffered himself to display temper for more than a moment; "only I confess that I should have been better pleased if he had consented to deal with me instead of with Miss Huntley. You may be right in taking the most charitable view of his conduct, but it is certainly unlucky that he should have done the only thing that it was in his power to do to imperil my election."

"I don't understand," said Kitty.

But Gilbert did not care to be more explicit. He changed the subject, and soon afterwards took his departure. As he drove home, he said to himself that although clever women may not be altogether desirable as wives, a certain degree of intelligence is no such bad thing. Hitherto Kitty had always backed him up blindly and submissively, but when he had stated what was no more than the simple truth, that Brian had placed his election in jeopardy, she had looked almost indignantly at him and had declared that she did not understand. Surely she might have understood that much! And then, for the second time, he fell to wondering what his future lot in life might have been if he had not happened to lose his heart to Kitty Greenwood.

THE BLIND READER.

JUST at the corner of the street,
Where meet the tides of human feet,

She sits; a pity on her face,
That will not pass nor change its place,

Rests, mixing with a look that fain
Would hint of uncomplaining pain;

And that expectant gaze that lies
Forever in unseeing eyes,

As if in thought she, too, must wait
Beside the thronging city gate,

For Him whose gentle finger-tips
Once drew from eyes their long eclipse.

All this is on her pale sad face,
As still her thin white fingers trace

The words her patient lips repeat
To passers-by upon the street,

Who hear them not, or, if they hear,
It is but with a feverish ear,

That, deaden'd with the city's din,
Has lost the power of drinking in

Those quiet messages that speak
Of comfort to the worn and weak.

Thus, day by day, she sits and reads,
A tone within her voice that pleads;

And, just at times for listeners
Who look up to those eyes of hers,

Children, who gather round her knee,
In silent awe to hear and see,

And watch with motionless surprise
Her speaking lips and sightless eyes.

Is it the story as of old,
In answer to the over-bold?

That Truth before she bows her head,
To enter with her gracious tread,

To give her welcome sweet and fair,
A child's heart must be beating there?

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

BIBLE CHARACTERS.

BY THE LATE CHARLES READE, D.C.L., AUTHOR OF "IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND," ETC.

III.—NEHEMIAH.

ONCE in the history of mankind a mortal man told a nation its history in detail, predicting the near and the distant future so distinctly that both seemed to lie equally close to his eye on one map of events. (Deuteronomy xxviii, xxix, xxx.)

In our little (so-called) predictions we go by two guides—experience of the past, and shrewd calculation of the future founded on that experience. But this diviner had no help from either of those guides to the future; on the contrary, the things he fore-

told were unprecedented, inconsistent with each other, incredible, and to human reason absurd.

(1.) You shall drive out all the nations that now inhabit Canaan; shall take that land and hold it.

(2.) If you keep the divine law I have just promulgated, you shall enjoy that country, and its soil shall teem with fruitfulness.

(3.) If you do not keep this divine law, that land and you shall wither under every curse that can strike man, beast, and soil, and at last you shall be driven out of it.

(4.) If after that you shall repent, and turn again to God and His commandments, He will pity you, and turn your captivity, and restore you, and punish your enemies, who have afflicted you with His consent, but with no good motive on their part.

Now here was a string of inconsistent improbabilities.

(1.) The land of Canaan was held by warlike tribes, with cavalry, chariots of war, and walled cities.

The Hebrews were a half-armed infantry, encumbered with a mob of women and children. They had no strongholds, but must advance on the Canaanites from tents, and retreat to tents whenever worsted, either in skirmish or drawn battle.

(2.) To conquer Canaan and its cities from tents, they must by degrees master the art of war so thoroughly that, with their proved superiority as soldiers, and the fortresses acquired by that conquest, no nation could dispossess them, still less transplant them to a distance.

(3.) Suppose, as a wild hypothesis, the improbable conquest and incredible transplantation of such a people accomplished; that expatriated mass would then, as a matter of course, blend with the greater nation that received them.

(4.) In two more generations the absorbed and absorbing people would be so compact, that it could not possibly be decomposed, and the Hebrew multitude return spontaneously by miracle as they had been exported by miracle.

Yet every tittle of the incredible and contradictory romance Moses foretold came true.

That half-armed infantry drove out the warriors of Canaan, and took their land, and obeyed God's law there, and reaped the promised blessings *till Joshua and the elders who knew him and survived him were all dead:*

a remarkable fact, which merits profound study, and has been skimmed accordingly. But they left a few idolaters, and these leavened them, so that in time idolatry and the true worship flourished side by side. Sometimes one had the upper hand, sometimes the other. Neither was ever extinct. Now nations are not like individuals; they cannot be judged at all in the next world, and even in this world they must be judged by their majorities. This people, then, were judged in this world by their fluctuating majorities, and alternately cursed and blessed for about nine hundred years. Yet, though the double prediction of Moses was all this time recorded, and read out at times to the people, and though alternate blessings and curses were its running comment and illustration, they could never make up their minds unanimously whether to worship the God of Israel and be blessed, or false gods and be cursed.

At last, when they were proved incurable in Canaan, the long-predicted chastisement fell on them. Israel, being the greater idolater, was carried away captive first. Judah soon followed, and her desecrated Temple was despoiled and destroyed. Part of the nation was slaughtered in battle or famished on the road; a few thousands of the lower sort remained at home, but without their temple, their rites, their national existence. The cream of Judah and Israel were really transported to Babylon and its neighbourhood, by a monarchy which had long practised that prodigious kind of transplantation. (See Herodotus, *passim*.)

Even now, according to Moses, this people might repent, and if so, they would return to their own land, and their captors suffer in turn.

But, humanly speaking, what chance was there that Israelites or Jews would unlearn idolatry at Babylon? Why, what had all their idolatry come of? Imitation. Under the early Judges they could not as a nation withstand the example of a few conquered idolaters, who worshipped false gods in groves for want of temples. In the height of their glory their wisest king was decoyed into idolatry by the example of his intellectual inferiors, his wives and concubines. Imitation and example set them bowing at one time to a contemptible fish-god; at another to a fiend whose worship entailed the burning of their children. Now at Babylon idolatry was example and authority into the bargain. At Babylon idolatry was glorious, sublime; had every charm and

seduction to win the sensual understanding and divert it from the unseen God.

If you and I and an archangel had been endowed with absolute power, but left to our own wisdom, human and angelic, I am persuaded that neither that archangel nor you nor I should have sent the Hebrews to Babylon to unlearn idolatry; so wide and impassable is the gulf between the sagacity of created beings and the genuine prescience that marks their Creator—for constant prescience implies omniscience.

Babylon, bright centre of captivating idolatry, commenced an everlasting cure of Jewish idolatry, which punishments, blessings, miracles, could never effect in the land of Canaan. I keep in reserve a comment or two on this historical curiosity.

Meantime, "sweet were the uses of adversity." The captivity roused great examples of faith, revived the necessity for miracles—and so miracles came—reawakened the lyre of Judah, which had slept since the days of David, and stirred up the noblest army of prophets that ever preached in any period of Hebrew story.

The Book of Daniel, the most sustained and grandest of all the prophetic and historical books, was written in Babylon itself, and partly in the Chaldaic tongue.

Ere long that impregnable city, Babylon, falsified its past history, defied all human probability, and bowed to Hebrew prophecy. Behind its enormous walls, it had laughed invaders to scorn for centuries; yet it was taken, a few years after it had torn that suffering people from their land.

Cyrus, descendant of the conqueror, had no sooner succeeded to the throne of Persia, to which Babylon and Palestine were now equally subject, than he issued a most remarkable edict; he alleged Divine inspiration, and by order of the Most High—as he declared—invited the Jews to go up to Jerusalem and build the Temple to Him whom he, Cyrus, proclaimed to be the true God. He restored to the Jews their sacred vessels, and assisted them with his vast resources.

The leader of this return was Zerubbabel. When the returned captives laid the foundation of the new Temple, there came a touch of nature which never, whilst books endure, shall pass from the memory of mankind. The young and the middle-aged praised God with shouts of joy; but many of the priests and Levites, who were ancient men, and had seen the first Temple in its glory, wept with a loud voice; so that such

as stood apart could not discern the noise of the shouts of joy from the noise of the wailing of those aged men.

Yet the leaders of the heathen nations that were settled in Judea baffled this good work by their intrigues for twenty-one years, and then at last the Temple was built and dedicated. But none of those poor old men lived to weep again, comparing the finished Temple with Solomon's in all its glory.

Besides the new Temple and its services, the restored Jews had prophets, especially Haggai and Zechariah, and no doubt there was a great revival. But it is clear that in the course of years there was a decline; and fifty-seven years after the rebuilding of the Temple, Ezra went up from Babylon to purify the degenerating descendants of those pious patriots.

The support Ezra had from Artaxerxes, king of Persia, and consequently of Babylon, his touching gratitude to that monarch and to Him who "is enthroned in the heart of kings," the abuses he found rampant, his tears and ardent prayers to God, his temporary success, and the great revival of the law he inaugurated, *Dei gratia*, are written in the last four chapters of the book that bears his name.

About fourteen years after this revival, and ninety-two years after the edict of Cyrus, Singleheart stepped upon the scene. He was a Jew, born probably in Persia, and rose, in spite of his origin, by rare ability, to a high place in the service of Artaxerxes. His title was cup-bearer; but all such titles are misleading. He was a statesman and a courtier, and it was only one of his duties to taste the wine before he poured out for the king, and so secure him at his own risk against poison. This royal favourite, bred in soft Persia and lodged in those earthly paradises, the summer palace and winter palace of his monarch, had yet "Jerusalem written on his heart."

It was what they call winter in Persia, but what we should call balmy spring. Singleheart, better known as Nehemiah, was leading a life of delights with the king at Shushan, when Hanani, a pious Jew, who had gone with a company to visit Jerusalem, returned from that journey. Nehemiah questioned him eagerly about their city and countrymen.

Then Hanani and his fellows hung their heads, and told Nehemiah that the remnant of the captivity in that land were in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusa-

lem, also, was broken down, and the gates burned with fire.

See now how Jerusalem was beloved by her exiled sons! Born, bred, and thriving in soft, seductive Persia, the true-hearted Jew Nehemiah was struck down directly by these words. He who had a right to stand on the steps of the greatest throne in the world sat down upon the ground, and fasted and wept and prayed before the God of Heaven; and this was his confession and his prayer: "O Lord God of heaven, we have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments which thou commandedst thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, 'If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among all nations; but if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though you were cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet I will gather you from thence, and will bring you into the place that I have chosen to set my name there.' O Lord, I beseech thee, let thine ear be attentive to the prayers of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

Public men are slaves as well as masters, their consciences seldom their own, their time never. Neither their pleasures nor their griefs can be long indulged. The bereaved statesman is not allowed to be quiet and to mourn; he must leave the new grave and the desolate home for his arena, sometimes must even take part in a public festivity with a bleeding heart. This very thing befell Nehemiah. Like the poor actor who must go from a home with a coffin to play his part in comedy, and laugh and fool with the rest, sad Singleheart had soon to rise from his knees, and don his gay raiment and mingle in a brilliant and jocund scene.

Great Artaxerxes gave a superb banquet to his nobility: the queen was there—no every-day event. You may let loose your imagination without fear; it will not go beyond the splendours of the Persian court on that occasion. Gold plate by the ton, gorgeous silk dresses of every hue, marble pillars, fountains, music, lights to turn night into day, slaves, sultanas, courtiers resplendent as stars, and all worshipping their sun Artaxerxes; smiling when he smiled, laughing when he laughed, applauding him to the echo, and thinking it little to say of this king of monarchs what Eastern adulation could say

later on of a little trumpery prince, "It is the voice of a god."

It was Singleheart's duty to present the cup to this earthly divinity. So he took up the golden goblet, filled it ceremoniously, and offered it with a deep obeisance, as he had often done before; but now for the first time with a sorrowful face.

This was so strange a thing in him, or indeed in any courtier, that the king noticed it at once; even as he took the cup his eye dwelt on this sad face, and he said directly, "Why is your countenance sad?"

Nehemiah was too much taken aback to reply. The king questioned him again. "You are not sick?"

Still no reply.

"This is sorrow, and nothing else."

Then Nehemiah was sore afraid, and I will tell you why. His life was in danger. Even a modern autocrat like Louis XIV. expected everybody's face to shine if he did but appear, and how much more an Artaxerxes! What, wear a sorrowful face when he was presiding over joy and gaiety, and gilding them by his presence! If he had ordered this melancholy visage away to prison or death, it would have been justified by precedent, and loudly applauded on the spot by all the guests.

But though Nehemiah felt his danger, yet the king's actual words were not menacing, and the courtier found courage to tell the simple truth. He salaamed down to the ground. "Let the king live for ever!" After this propitiatory formula, he replied, "Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and its gates are burned with fire?"

These are brave words, and can be read aggressively; only that is not how Nehemiah spoke them. It was his to propitiate, not to offend, and his tones were broken-hearted and appealing, not contumacious.

You must read the words so, if you would be one in a thousand, and really understand them.

The king answered him accordingly. "What do you ask of me?" said he.

Then Nehemiah set us all an example. He did not answer the king out of his own head, and pray for wisdom six hours afterwards, because it was bed-time. He prayed standing on the spot, and, like a skilful gunner, shot the occasion flying. Strengthened by ejaculatory prayer, the soul's best weapon, he said, "If it please the king, and if thy servant has found favour in thy sight, pray

send me to Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it."

The king's answer was rather favourable. He was unwilling to lose a good servant for ever, and asked him how long he wished to be away; but this was as much as to say he should go upon conditions.

When that one point was settled, and leave of absence conceded, Nehemiah got bolder and bolder. He asked for passports where needed, and an order on Asaph for timber, etc. The liberal monarch granted all, and even volunteered a cavalry escort to see him safe to the end of that long and perilous journey. In recording the first of these petitions the autobiographer, Nehemiah, suddenly informs us that the queen was sitting by the king's side. This looks as if he connected her somehow in his own mind with his petition and the king's bounty, and rather favours the notion that she was the famous Esther, and sympathised then and there with her sad countryman by look or gesture.

So Singleheart left the lap of luxury and rode with his escort from Shushan to Jerusalem. This ride passes for nothing in the Biblical account; whether it is so we can best ascertain by doing it ourselves.

He reached Jerusalem, and showed rare wisdom the first day. Instead of proclaiming himself and his credentials, and going boldly to work, he lay quiet three days, doing nothing and learning everything, especially who would be likely to support him, who to oppose him.

On the third day, in the middle of the night, he rose and took with him, not his Persian escort to make a clatter of hoofs and

a parade, but a few trusty men on foot, and even to them he did not reveal "what God had put into his heart to do at Jerusalem." So, with his secret locked at present in his breast, he passed out by the gate of the valley and rode round the city, and under the silver light of the moon and stars viewed the clean gaps, the burned fragments of the gates, and the jagged breaches in the walls of the holy city. It was the right time to gaze on a great and fallen city: such a ruin is sad but beautiful in that tender light.

The same stars that shone above it and upon it had glittered upon Solomon's temple, his impregnable walls, his imperial power.

As Nehemiah looked on this contrast, piteous yet lovely beneath those unchanging stars, he wept, he prayed, he drank in the scene; and methinks it never left his mind in the good fight he fought thereafter by night as well as day.

Nehemiah was a layman, and had a layman's good sense in religion; walls were necessary to the safety and glory of the city. They were also necessary to true religion. Idolaters must be kept out of the city, or idolatry could never be kept out of the Jewish mind. The whole history of the nation showed this.

Fresh from that starlight picture Nehemiah went to the Jewish nobles, priests, and princes, showed the powers he held under the hand of Artaxerxes, and urged them to rebuild the walls and revive the national glory. He has not told us what he said; but it is clear he found words of rare eloquence; for they all caught fire directly, and cried out, "Let us rise and build."

(To be continued.)

SOME PHASES OF ANIMAL LIFE.

By THE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.

I.—THE GREGARIOUS INSTINCT.

WHY should some animals always herd together, while others, though belonging to the same group, and indeed, being near relatives, keep themselves aloof from each other?

Thus the rabbit is always found in company, while the hare is essentially a solitary animal. The bison of America is never found alone, and in former times counted the numbers of its herds by thousands. Yet the buffalo of South Africa and the arnee of India are comparatively solitary animals.

So it is with the antelopes. The gazelle lives in small herds, while the number of a springbok herd rivals that of the bison in its best days. Yet in South Africa there are several species of antelope, such as the duykerbok, the rhoode-bok, the blue buck, and others, which are only to be found alone, or at the most, in pairs.

I may mention that we find similar examples among the birds, such as the chaffinch, the starling, and the dunlin or ox-bird.

The wolves and jackals hunt in packs,

while the fox, which is closely related to both these animals, hunts alone.

The same remarkable discrepancy is seen even among insects, particularly in the hymenoptera. There are social bees, wasps, hornets, and ants. Each of these groups has its solitary representatives, which in many cases so closely resemble their social relatives that none but a practised eye can distinguish the one from the other.

The gregarious instinct is manifested in various ways. Some animals, such as those which have already been mentioned, are permanently gregarious, and are always in personal communication with each other. Some are only partly gregarious, and at distant intervals are subject to some strange instinct which compels them to associate together in countless myriads. Others again, although they have their dwellings in close proximity to each other, are only social out of doors, each family considering, like Englishmen, that their home is their castle. We will take a few examples of each of these types.

Chief among the permanently gregarious animals is, or rather was, the bison of North America (*Bison Americanus*).

Only a few years ago the bison simply blackened the prairies with its countless multitudes. It formed the very life of the red man, just as the seal tribe are the life of the Eskimos of the present day. The tent or "wigwam" in which he lived was made of the skins of the bison stretched over a framework of poles, very much like the piles of hop-poles stacked for the winter. These simple dwellings could be erected in half an hour, and taken apart in fifteen minutes.

Then, a pair of poles being fastened to each side of a horse, so that the ends trailed on the ground, the skins were tied across the poles, and upon the skins were placed the rest of the simple baggage. In this way a large encampment could be removed in a wonderfully short space of time, thus suiting the restless nature of a race which depended on hunting for livelihood.

The robes in which the natives envelop themselves in cold weather were made of the skins of the bison, the natives having the art of dressing the skin so that it is as pliable as silk, and, if wetted, can be dried without becoming hard and stiff as is usually the case with leather. Sometimes the whole of the hair was removed, leaving the skin as white as vellum, only perfectly pliable. Such skins were only used by the great warrior chiefs, who took a pride in covering them with rude

drawings illustrating the military achievements of the owner.

Again, the skins of the old bulls were reserved for the purpose of making the small circular shields which form part of the equipment of a warrior. The shield is only two feet in diameter, and yet an entire bull's hide is used in making it. The hoofs are also required. The mode of making it is briefly as follows.

A circular hole is made in the ground, rather larger than the intended shield, and in it a fire is lighted. The hide, which has previously been deprived of its hair, is spread on the ground, and a circle traced on it, the centre being the apex of the shoulder, and the circumference being the edge of the hide. The rest of the skin and the hoofs are meanwhile boiled down into glue.

The future shield is then laid over the hole, and glue poured on it, the hide being kept in its place by a number of pegs driven into the ground round its edge. The heat and glue together cause the hide to contract, and as it does so the pegs are relaxed. This process goes on until the hide has contracted to half its width and twice its thickness. It is then trimmed round the edge, fitted with handles, and is complete. It will resist any arrow or spear, and will even turn a rifle bullet if it be struck at an angle.

The flesh of the bison was the chief sustenance of the red men. That which was not eaten fresh was "jerked," i.e. cut into long, thin strips, hung over branches and dried in the sun. The word "jerked" is a corruption of "charqui."

Much of the jerked beef was made into "pemmican," a food which has the double advantage of keeping good for any length of time, and comprising much nutriment in little bulk. The manufacture is simple enough. The dried meat is pounded until the fibres are separated, and then the fat is melted, and poured into it while boiling. It is then packed in bags made of hides, and preserved for future use. Our Arctic voyagers are obliged to depend largely on pemmican for their stores, though they use ordinary beef instead of charqui.

Civilisation has produced its usual effect on the bison, and its most deadly weapon of destruction is the locomotive. When the Pacific Railway was first established, one of the many obstacles which it had to overcome lay in the bison herds. It is impossible to fence off such a railway, and in consequence the bisons took no notice of the rails, and frequently forced the driver to stop the train.

Another danger followed. At certain periods the bison herds take to migrating, passing from south to north, and in consequence crossing the rails. When a train passed through one of these migrating herds, the result was very remarkable. The bisons which had crossed the rails troubled themselves little about the train; but those on the south flung themselves madly against the cars. Some of the bulls actually charged the engine, and in spite of the "cow-catcher," several trains were thrown off the rails.

Then came an utterly unforeseen incident.

The signals did not work, and the whole system was thrown out of gear. The fact was that the bisons had found a new use for the telegraphic poles; they were excellent scratching posts, a luxury which the prairie does not afford, and the animals used them so vigorously that they soon broke the poles. Then the managers "protected" the poles by driving sharp spikes into them. They could not have made a greater mistake. They had not calculated on the toughness of a bison's hide. The animals were charmed with the spikes, and fought for the privilege of using them. By degrees, however, civilisation won



The Gnu.

the battle, and the bisons remained on the north of the line.

Only some fourteen or fifteen years ago, the numbers of the bisons were so great that even the incessant drain upon them by the red men, including the occasional raids when a herd of many thousands in number was decoyed to the brink of a precipice and then hurled into the valley beneath, made little impression on their countless multitudes.

But other agencies came into operation, and the land which had hitherto been the undisputed property of wild animals was needed for the cultivation of cereals, and so the bison found itself gradually edged out of its feeding

grounds. Then came the regularly organized hunting parties, who took advantage of the fact that if a hunter can only hide himself when he fires, the herd take no alarm, but remain in their places, waiting to be shot.

Each party consisted of but four men. There was the captain, who did all the shooting; there were two skimmers and one skin-dresser, who was also cook and camp-keeper. So skilled in the art of slaughtering did they become, that within a circle of two hundred yards' radius the captain of one of these gangs shot a hundred and twelve bisons in three-quarters of an hour.

Within the years 1872—1874 no less than



Springboks.

four and a half millions of bisons were killed, more than three millions having been killed for the sake of their hides alone. So reckless and wasteful was the destruction, that within a space of four acres no less than sixty-seven bodies were left to perish. At the present time it is believed that scarcely six hundred bisons are left in the whole of America.

The natural results followed. The red men, finding their staff of life taken away from them, could no longer make a living on their own lands, and therefore made forays into the domains of the white man, and consequently were still more diminished in number. Then the wolves and coyotés, which used to feed on the old, sick, or wounded bisons, began to attack the sheep and horned cattle, so that the conditions of life were entirely changed. The agents of the Smithsonian Institute, who were sent in search of specimens, were obliged to follow the animals into Montana, and from their account it is evident that in a very short time the bison will be as extinct as the great auk, the dodo, and the moa.

CHANGE we our scene to South Africa, and let us in imagination stand with Gordon Cumming on the waggon, and watch the Springboks (*Antidorcos euechorë*) marching on their migration. Active as may be the Springboks, they have no opportunity for displaying their activity when on the march. They are closely pressed together, and can only move at a slow walk.

On the first occasion when Gordon Cumming saw the migration, he beheld a solid column of the animals, at least half a mile in width, moving steadily onwards for more than two hours, during which time he was spell-bound by the astonishing sight.

Food is the main object of these migrations, inasmuch as the grass patches are few and far between, and the creatures which have to be fed are beyond the power of counting.

It would at first sight appear that nothing could be less likely to feed such a multitude as the mode which is adopted by these antelopes. Yet the system is equally simple and efficacious.

When the herd arrives at pasture, it naturally follows that only the leaders can feed, as the animals are so tightly packed together that they cannot put their heads to the ground. Now, the antelopes are ruminants, and therefore when they have eaten their fill, they need to lie down and chew the cud.

This, however, is impossible, as the leaders are incessantly forced forwards by the pressure of those behind them. They therefore, when they have eaten their fill, turn aside out of the column, and lie down while their comrades pass them, and when they have

finished the process of rumination, fall again into line at the rear. Thus, they all have their turn at feeding, the leaders always falling into the rear, and having to await their turn before they can make another meal.

The springbok seems to possess some instinctive power of discovering pasture, a trait which is turned to account by the Ba-Kalahari tribes.

Just before the rainy season, they burn the dried-up grass of a limited district. As soon as the rain falls, a crop of sweet, fresh grass springs up luxuriantly, and is sure to be discovered by the springboks, whose flesh and fur are nearly as valuable to the natives as those of the bison to the red men.

ANOTHER remarkable gregarious ruminant is a native of Southern Africa. This is the Gnu (*Connochetes gnu*), an animal so singular

in form and habits, that the earlier naturalists may well be pardoned for mistaking it for a horned horse, the thick mane and long tail adding to the resemblance. It also has a long beard and a tuft of hair on the nose. The generic name *Connochetes* is derived from the Greek, and signifies "beard-bearing."

The name of Gnu is given to it on account of its characteristic cry. The animal plants its feet firmly on the ground, and suddenly jerking up its head, gives a sharp yelp or bark, which pierces through all other sounds, and which, when once heard, cannot be mistaken. The word gnu, if spoken, or rather jerked out sharply, bears some resemblance to the cry.

It lives in herds, and being, like most antelopes, exceedingly swift of foot, might easily avoid all enemies. But it often falls a victim to its insatiable curiosity.

Any strange object serves to attract it, and, as is shown in the illustration, it cannot



Elephants.



Antelopes and Ostriches.

resist the temptation of inspecting the traveller's waggon, though experience might have taught it the dangerous character of the intruder.

If a herd of gnus be seen at a distance, the hunter can always decoy them within easy range. All he has to do is to lie on the ground, tie a piece of rag or handkerchief to a stick, and wave it about. The gnus seem fascinated by the strange object. They prance about, and wheel off, as if intending to fly out of sight. Then they wheel round, halt, and begin to approach the object of their curiosity. Occasionally they take a fancy to perform the strangest of antics, spinning round and round, prancing violently, and kicking up their heels, their white tails whirling round as if worked by a multiplying wheel. In consequence of these grotesque antics, the Boers call the gnu by the appropriate name of "wildebeest."

If the stick and handkerchief cannot be procured, the hunter can attract the gnu by simply lying on his back and kicking his legs in the air.

The flesh of the gnu is much valued by the natives, who also prepare from it a sort of "haggis," the blood, chopped liver, and

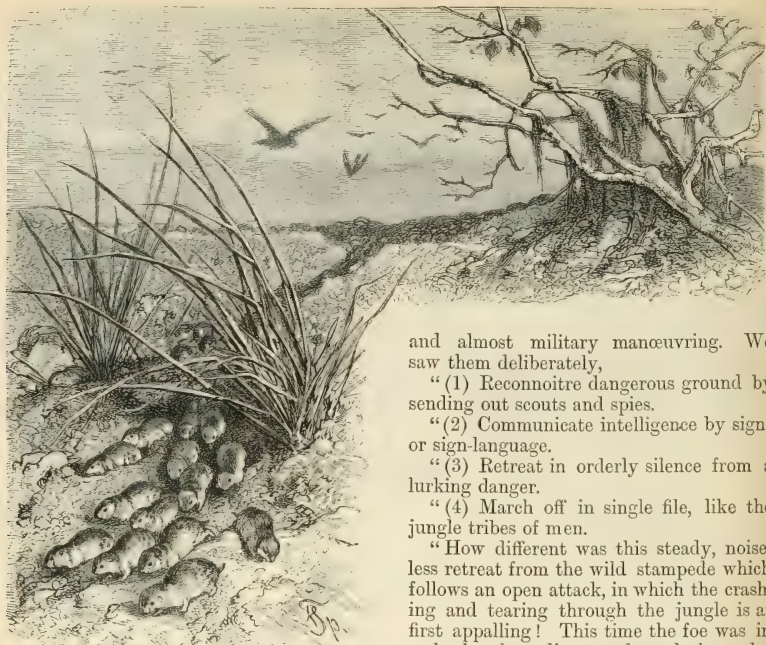
other portions of the interior being stuffed into the stomach and then boiled.

BOTH in Asia and Africa another gregarious animal is found. It is the largest of the terrestrial mammalia, and is familiar under the name of Elephant.

That the Asiatic and African animals are two distinct species is evident enough, the general form, the teeth, and the shape of the head being essentially different. The distinction between the two is very plainly shown by a longitudinal section of the skull, such as can be seen in the museum of the College of Surgeons. In their general habits, however, both species are so similar that we may treat them together.

They are essentially gregarious animals, a solitary elephant being never seen, unless it be a "rogue," *i.e.* one that has been turned out of the herd, and in consequence is at war with every living thing. Rogue elephants are the terror of travellers, for, as a rule, unless the traveller can kill the elephant, the elephant will kill the traveller.

The herds are not very large, and it is thought that all the elephants of a herd are



A Swarm of Lemmings.

related to each other. These herds are nearly as nomad as the monkeys, and the presence of a herd in a certain spot is almost a proof that they will not be there on the morrow.

Awkward as they may seem, they are wonderfully active animals, being able to ascend and descend precipitous spots which require the utmost exertions of an active man. Their speed too is astonishing; their long, silent strides carrying them for hours together over the country. They move by night, concealing themselves in the woods by day. It might seem difficult to conceal so huge an animal, but, in point of fact, an elephant among trees is almost invisible at three yards.

Not the least remarkable point about the elephant herds is their power of moving silently through the forest. Mr. W. T. Hornaday, chief taxidermist of the National Museum, U.S.A., has made some very interesting observations on these herds:—

"I was really surprised at their sagacity

and almost military manœuvring. We saw them deliberately,

"(1) Reconnoitre dangerous ground by sending out scouts and spies.

"(2) Communicate intelligence by signs or sign-language.

"(3) Retreat in orderly silence from a lurking danger.

"(4) March off in single file, like the jungle tribes of men.

"How different was this steady, noiseless retreat from the wild stampede which follows an open attack, in which the crashing and tearing through the jungle is at first appalling! This time the foe was in ambush when discovered, and the order signalled was, 'Retreat in silence and good order.'"

Now we will take an example of mixed gregariousness, such as, I believe, is only to be found in South Africa.

Certain antelopes, the gnu being one of them, giraffes, ostriches, and zebras are often found associating in one large herd. The Bontebok, or Pied Antelope (*Damalis pygarga*), as it is often called, is mostly to be found in these mixed herds. Its own herds are small, scarcely exceeding a dozen or so in number, but in one of these mixed assemblies a considerable number of these handsome antelopes can be found.

LASTLY, we come to the creatures which only herd together on certain occasions. Their best type is the Lemming (*Myodes lemmus*).

This very remarkable rodent, a fine specimen of which is now before me, inhabits Northern Europe, and, on some occasions, makes itself unpleasantly conspicuous.

At uncertain intervals, such as ten or

fifteen years, the lemmings suddenly swarm, literally in millions, and begin to march southwards, devouring everything eatable. They press straight onwards, allowing nothing but a perpendicular wall to stop them. Even fire has but little effect upon them, the leading lemmings being forced into it by those behind until the fire is quenched by their numbers, and the dead bodies of the slain serve as bridges over which their comrades pass.

Not only do they eat all the herbage, but the people say that cattle refuse to feed on spots on which the lemmings have trod. Sometimes they come to a river, and enter it with the same stolid indifference which characterizes all their proceedings. As long as the water is quite smooth, they can swim fairly, and will succeed in crossing. But the least ripple is said to be fatal to them.

Predacious beasts, such as wolves, foxes, wild cats, stoats, &c., accompany them, and feed luxuriously on them. So do predacious birds, such as eagles, hawks, and owls; and even the larger fish are their enemies, snapping them up as they are endeavouring to cross the rivers. Fear is utterly unknown to them, probably by reason of their want of

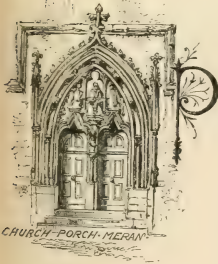
intellect, and although they will not go out of their way to attack any one, they entirely decline to make way for even man himself.

They move in two vast columns, one passing through Norway and the other through Sweden. The end of them is always the same; and supposing that they have escaped the beasts, birds, and fishes, and have surmounted the perils of fire and water, they are forced into the sea and perish there. Those which take the route through Norway are forced into the Skager-rack and Kattegat; while those which pass through Sweden lose their lives in the Gulf of Bothnia and the Baltic. Then the country is freed from them, and the inhabitants may be tolerably sure that at least ten years must elapse before the lemmings can increase sufficiently to make up for the terrible losses which their migration has cost them.

There is one little set-off against the damage which is done by the lemmings. They are very good to eat, and lemming cooked like quail and served on toast, is considered to be quite a dainty. They are very small to do so much damage, being scarcely six inches in length.

THE ROYAL DUKE-DOCTOR.

By MARGARET HOWITT.



Bayern," and of Ludovica, youngest daughter of King Maximilian Joseph, first King of Bavaria. He was born August 9, 1839, and married, at Dresden, in 1865, the pious Princess Sophia, daughter of the learned scholar, King John of Saxony. Left a widower in March, 1867, with an only child, a little girl, he married, seven years later, the Princess Mary Josepha, Duchess of Braganza, Infanta of Portugal, the third of Don Miguel's gifted daughters.

The prevention and cure of disease have from an early age possessed a peculiar fascination for his Royal Highness, who is pre-

eminently fitted by nature to pursue this branch of science. As soon therefore as he could free himself from his military duties, he regularly studied and worked in a hospital. He was at first silently and persistently opposed and obstructed by members of the medical staff, until finally his indomitable tenacity and skill compelled them to acknowledge him no dilettante but an adept in scientific and practical medicine and surgery.

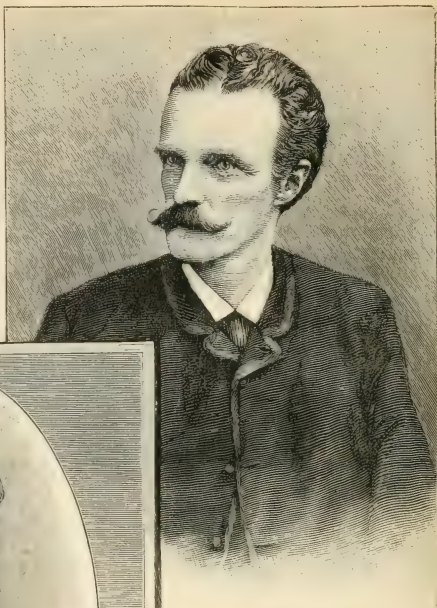
By degrees he devoted his energies to the service of the blind; and a glance at the condition of the afflicted race makes us recognise the importance of this noble purpose.

Only a minute proportion of the one million four hundred thousand totally blind people, who, it is estimated, inhabit the globe, can be benefited by the eighty-two schools or asylums which have sprung into existence since 1784. Most blind children belong to the lower class, and often owe their calamity to neglect at their birth or in infancy; and Abbé Gridel, at the International Congress

eminently fitted by nature to pursue this branch of science. As soon therefore as he could free himself from his military duties, he regularly studied and worked in a hospital. He was at first silently and persistently opposed and obstructed by members of the medical staff, until finally his indomitable tenacity and skill compelled them to acknowledge him no dilettante but an adept in scientific and practical medicine and surgery.

for the Blind, held at Paris in 1878, lamented that in consequence of the small attention paid to their education in their poor homes, and the few vacancies in the inadequate number of blind institutions, the majority are condemned to a sorrowful, idle existence.

There is, moreover, a large quota of partially blind intermingled with the seeing population; and far too many bread winners, such as engravers in metal, cameo-cutters and needle-



The Duke of Bavaria.



The Duchess of Bavaria.

men; yet infinitely more galling than either the darkness or the chasm is the fact that, whilst our very infirmity intensifies our capacity of joy or pain, it debars us from countless sources of pleasure and profit."

It is to the relief of such sufferers that Duke Charles Theodore offers his time, money, and skill. In this beneficent cause he is most efficiently seconded by his young and courageous wife. Married at the early age of

women, who, to earn present relief, ruin their precious eyesight and future independence. The daily hardships of the indigent poor are immense, the privations of those well-to-do far from insignificant. In the words of an elderly certificated teacher to the blind, who lost his sight in infancy:—"Grewsome is the darkness which hides from us everything that nature and art reveal to the soul by the eye; horrible the chasm which separates us from our fellow-

seventeen, she has qualified herself under her husband's direction for the treatment of disease; and, although an innate votary of cleanliness and freshness, accepts perpetual contact with dirt and poverty, and never shrinks from the most loathsome sights and smells; whilst he, animated with a love of incessant work and increasing knowledge, introduces into his hospital at Tegernsee the latest scientific discoveries of the healing art, which he learns each year in Munich or Vienna.

At Tegernsee, some thirty miles south-east of Munich, the palace stands on the eastern shore of the broad lake, environed by the village. It was until 1803 a famous Benedictine monastery, with a long line of abbots extending over a thousand years. After its sequestration it was made the summer residence of King Max Joseph. The church was left undisturbed in the centre of the western façade; the cells of the southern wing were transformed into suites of cheerful, even handsome apartments; the northern wing became a brewery. Duke Charles Theodore inherited the domain on the demise of his maternal uncle, Prince Charles of Bavaria, a magnate of the old school, fastidious and exclusive in his tastes, yet kind and considerate to his dependants. The new possessor and his wife—ever his true helpmate—immediately began a life of hard work and philanthropy that at first astonished the people, until they fully recognised the rare qualities of the royal master and mistress.

The Duke and Duchess spend a great part of each year on this estate, carefully watching over the training of their bright and happy children; often surrounded by other merry little folks and their parents, all closely attached relatives gathered together for the celebration of beautiful family festivals. But whilst enjoying an ideal domestic life, they never forget their sick, to whom they daily minister in their hospital. It is situated at a quarter of an hour's walk from the palace, and is served by Sisters of Charity. In the accompanying illustration the house for ordinary patients is to the right, the eye-infirmary to the left of the beholder.

Amongst the many interesting cures effected by the Duke at Tegernsee, may be mentioned those of children born blind. Of course in the education of the blind, the knowledge of external objects is chiefly conveyed by touch, giving a double significance to the words of Holy Writ:—"The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee." A tiny girl,

who had thus been trained, when she could see was noticed by the Duchess silently to contemplate then stroke a table and afterwards a chair. A boy, who had likewise received sight, was unable to tell her Royal Highness whether her watch was round or square, until he had felt it. At first it was difficult for the children to walk alone with their eyes open, especially in going downstairs; and she would gladly have retained them near her for some time, to study their unfolding faculties, had not the relatives naturally required the return of little ones who had not hitherto beheld their faces.

The Duke unfortunately suffers from a delicate chest, which compels him at times to seek a mild climate. In the spring of 1885 it was consequently decided that he should make a stay of some weeks at Meran.

The Villa Aders, situated on the slopes of Obermaier, was hired for the ducal family and suite. They had scarcely arrived, when his Royal Highness, although

troubled with a bronchial catarrh, finding the prescribed rest insupportable, arranged, with the ready co-operation of the local authorities, for two large adjoining rooms in the town-hospital to be placed at his disposal. He next announced his readiness to give advice and aid to any sufferers from diseases of the eye.

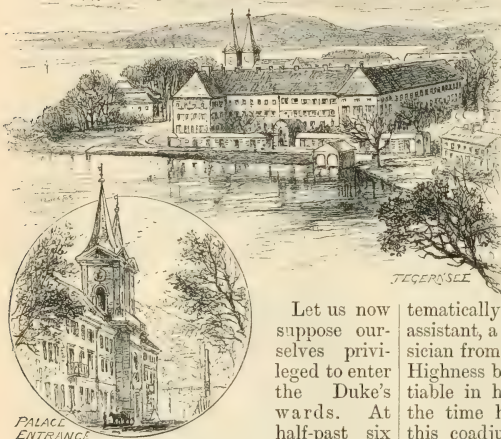
At first lethargy, diffidence, or self-caution held back many totally or partially blind, till the Duke's kindness and skill being tested, they began rapidly to stream to Meran from all corners of Tyrol; the applicants, according to regulation, resorting at stated hours to the Villa Aders to be inspected by the Duke, who, should their case require it, then admitted them to his infirmary at the hospital.

This public institution is a comparatively small ordinary three-storeyed building, separated by the river from the town. It possesses, however, one beautiful architectural



THE HOSPITAL, TEGERNSEE.

feature—a venerable church dating back to mediæval times, with a quaint old western portal shown in our initial picture.



PALACE
ENTRANCE

Let us now suppose ourselves privileged to enter the Duke's wards. At half-past six A.M., we find

the two spacious, usually cheerful southern rooms in that state of obscurity in which they must now be kept even at the brightest noon. In the first, the two opposite rows of beds contain recumbent, motionless male figures, with bandaged heads, in the hospital dressing-gowns, made of red and white striped ticking. The second and inner room has a similar arrangement of bandaged females in white bed-gowns. In both wards the blackboard affixed above each bed, announcing the case under treatment, almost universally has in white chalk the word *Staar* (cataract). From want of space several male and female patients are propped up with cushions in arm-chairs. All need a great deal of help, particularly the freshly operated upon; who are forbidden to stir hand or foot, or lift the head when taking food; or in the most important cases to move the jaw in mastication.

The Sister of Charity in charge is completing the arduous administration of coffee and bread to each, when the door opens, and a gentleman enters, carrying a case of instruments. The Duke, for it is he, quietly asks for a lighted candle, which the sister holds, and begins his round from bed to bed, unbandaging the eyes, carefully examining and dressing them. It is a noted fact that the

blind in his isolated condition feels the need of a friend and confidant much more than the seeing. Usually nothing is so unpleasant

to him as to be quite alone, for he then realises to the full the difficulty of his position; and he clings with body and soul to those who are genuinely kind to him. Thus these poor patients, separated from their kinsfolk and acquaintance and dependent on the Duke, whom in their simplicity they often term *Herr Doctor* or *Herr Augenarzt* (eye doctor), pour into his attentive ear the story of their maladies, their hopes and fears even on quite irrelevant but to them most weighty subjects.

Whilst thus employed systematically making his round, Dr. Tausch, his assistant, a good-humoured, clever young physician from Würzburg, appears; for his Royal Highness being a very early riser and insatiable in his vocation, often arrives before the time he has fixed. With the help of this coadjutor the work of examination and bandaging goes on even more rapidly, and the thirty or forty patients are all attended to by eight o'clock.

At this hour, applicants, whom the Prince has appointed to come to the hospital for operation, are ranged in the adjacent corridor. Some sit on a bench, some stand, male and female, from the octogenarian to the infant in arms, from the well-clad to the tattered malion. The slim, graceful figure of the Duchess now approaches with quick, elastic tread along the passage. She holds a little basket filled with cake and fruit for some small sufferer. Casting an inquiring glance at the miscellaneous waiting group, she enters the wards; and passing from bed to bed speaks cheering, appropriate words to each occupant.

The operations, which, from want of space, have unfortunately to be performed in the male ward, immediately begin. The Duchess recognises each case; and perceiving at a glance what instruments will be needed holds them in readiness; and at times her good nerve and steady hand help in the operation. Imperial and royal relatives, ladies-in-waiting, perhaps an eminent physician on his travels, or some local surgeon, may be present, intently watching this exceptionally endowed couple, as with complete scientific knowledge, they adroitly cure or

relieve the delicate organism under treatment.

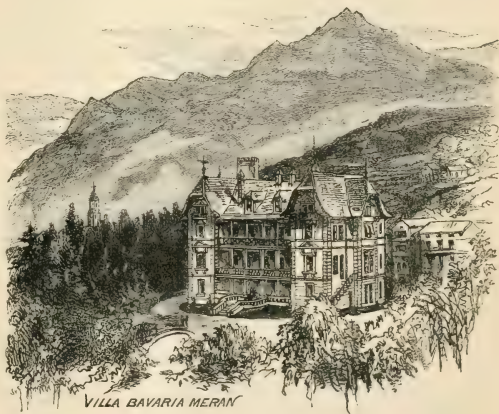
And the patients, what a strange and affecting assembly! a leading trait being immense power of endurance on the part of the hardy race of German Tyrolers, acute sensibility on that of the more nervous Italian. Many who come from solitary homesteads situated in remote valleys or on lofty mountains, and speak varied and almost unintelligible dialects are odd, grotesque, uncouth; yet possess an innate good breeding, whilst wholly ignorant of all customary observances to rank. Some, who have seen more of the world, affect a superior, even patronizing air to their comrades. Some are facetious, some not easily to be subdued. Not a few are truly heroic by nature, others are nerved to support agony under such unique and flattering conditions. The sensitive are often too much overcome for words: and when blessed with sight, find relief by repeatedly kissing the Duke's beneficent hand. Hundreds have never before been brought in contact with any high-born lady; and the Princess's gentle frankness and rapidity—for she has a facility of doing all she attempts quickly and well—enthral their hearts and minds. It is a homogeneous mass of human sufferers, presenting day by day, week by week, the same tragic and even comic forms and characteristics, which are relieved, however, of all dull uniformity to the Duke and Duchess by their own enthusiasm, sympathy with human nature, and delicate sense of humour.

Often seven or eight operations are to be performed, keeping their Royal Highnesses necessarily fully occupied until ten o'clock, when they return home to breakfast. Should, however, there be sufficient vacant beds for more patients or if the operations are long the Duke may be detained in the infirmary until twelve; his stay being often occasioned as much by kindness of heart as absolute necessity, and that in defiance of the strain and fatigue of mind and body, and of the fact of his being at Meran for the benefit of his health.

When the benign presence of the Duke and Duchess no longer lightens the tedium, the hours drag wearily on in the gloomy

infirmary. There are little *contretemps*: ignorant and undisciplined patients, scoffing at the absolute need of the enforced passivity, talk and crack jokes; even the willing and obedient, made irritable by the limited space and constrained position, fidget and move, or sneeze vigorously and clumsily, to the disarrangement of bandages. But good manners are speedily restored by the reminder: "What would the Duchess say?" Now and then a legitimate diversion occurs; food has to be slowly imbibed; a convalescent patient up, and in possession of at least one free eye, fetches water for the thirsty or conveys messages between distant chums; a girl detained in the hospital for the adjustment of an artificial eye, is heard rolling the long bandages on a little wooden machine fastened to the table.

Whilst these poor mortals are enduring to the best of their ability this chrysalis stage of darkness and torpor, other sufferers are groping their way, being led, carried, or if well-to-do, conveyed in bath-chairs, to the Villa Aders. Old and young, from far and near, with every possible derangement of eyesight—blind from their birth, or blind from small-pox, fever, inflammation, cata-ract, external injury, defect in the optic



nerve, imperfect organization, gradual decay—on they troop to be received by the Duke, at first each afternoon, later, thrice in the week; the highest number reached in any afternoon being ninety-one, the total two thousand.

The footmen welcome each newcomer

with a personal interest and deference that tranquillises the poor blind, whose susceptibilities are great; and after arranging them in the spacious entrance-hall, usher them by turn into the presence of the Duke and Duchess. Their Royal Highnesses, in the most easy and natural way, attend to each case, make out together what illiterate peasants, wholly ignorant of all laws of nature and health, mean in their strange *patois*—he tenderly lifting shaggy, unkempt hair off weather-beaten foreheads to obtain a clearer view of the defective eyesight; she ever on the alert, helping the poor people to explain themselves, and when need be, writing out a diagnosis or a prescription for the Duke to sign.

An example so fruitful in many forms of good was not lost on the population of Meran; native and foreign inhabitants had never before witnessed such inestimable favours conferred by any visitor or invalid; it was a novel feature, which awakened a deep, heartfelt response. As the time approached for their Royal Highnesses to leave, civic, religious, and medical deputations waited on them, formally to express the universal sentiments of veneration and gratitude. The parochial board of Obermais, consisting chiefly of the peasant class, surprised them by the presentation of a handsome album, beautifully bound in wood, carved with their monogram and ducal crown and with the arms of Tyrol and Meran. The dwellers in the villages, hamlets, and scattered homesteads of the three conjoining valleys, lighted beacons in their honour, on the evening of May 14, upon every visible height, slope, and peak. The Christian name of the benevolent Duke-doctor shone out in letters of light on an elevated mountain surface opposite the Villa Aders, fireworks blazed forth from the castles of the resident nobility. Unfortu-

nately a heavy downfall of rain speedily put out the pyrotechnic display, causing the beacons to smoulder red and lurid, aloft and afar, through rain and mist; but it could not quench the lasting gratitude of the public or the response it awoke in the modest hearts of the Duke and Duchess. They invited the various deputations successively to dine with them at mid-day, and by their genuine enjoyment and indulgent consideration, which set the humblest, most awkward guest at his ease, gave lively entertainments that were limited merely in time—for the host could not neglect his afternoon patients.

They lingered on, attending to last cases, till the evening of Whit Tuesday, May 26, when, accompanied by the Duchess's devoted lady-in-waiting, the Countess Marogna, they quietly drove off to Botzen. The next morning, joined by their children and suite, they proceeded by train to Tegernsee to look after a new set of patients in their own well-appointed hospital, and in admirably organized surroundings pursue their high, concentrated aims.

The month of March, 1886, brought them once more back to Meran, where another season was spent in a similar round of arduous and munificent labours. During the ten weeks then passed in the Villa Bavaria, some twelve hundred patients resorted to the Duke, and were received by him four thousand times; whilst two hundred were operated upon, and these chiefly in the hospital.

And now, in May, 1887, men, women, and children, with bandaged eyes or in spectacles, again form a prominent feature of the locality; for the royal oculist and his wife—this year assisted by a grandson of the poet, Rückert—have, since the middle of March, been indefatigably pursuing their work of mercy in Meran.

GIVEN BACK.

"What's money, after all?"—*Dombey and Son.*

A RICH man, waking from a selfish dream,
Sat murmuring the words of little Paul,—
As arrows in his conscience did they seem,—
"What's money, after all?"

He closed his book, a book that tells of one
Whose sweetness, like a rose-bud, in it lies;
He read it when a boy just for its fun,
But skipped its lessons wise.

"Money? Is it an oracle of clay
In my soul's temple, which I unaware
Seek, craving of my riches it would say,
How little I can spare?"

"Money—and I have slept for all these years,
Waking to find my idolized old friend
Dead to the world's great needs, its groans and tears,—
Our icy bond shall end.

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," he said.

"Now I have made a grave for thee, my gold,
Breathe on it, God!" And God gave back his dead
In blessing manifold.

Forth from those ashes came a living power,
As of an angel moving o'er the land,
Weaving fair deeds with all that golden dower
By God's directing hand.

H. E. WARING.

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

NED BLANE stood stock still in the dark and said nothing.

"How dare you insult me by your charity?" Mary asked him. She panted with haste and excitement and her limbs were trembling.

Ned, with his hands in his jacket pockets, his shoulders rounded, and his head drooping a little, made no movement and answered never a word. In the act of walking away from her he had paused at her call of command, and his back was still half turned towards her. Mary, who had not yet begun to cool from the impulse of indignant attack which had inspired her to rush after him, took a further step or two and stood before him.

"How dare you insult me by your charity?" she asked again, clenching the crumpled ten-pound note in her hand.

Still he said nothing. His figure, dimly outlined in the dark as it was, had a look of dogged impassivity about it which was discouraging.

"This came from you," she said, holding out the crumpled bank note. "You must take it back again."

The manner of this speech was essentially feminine. Between the first sentence and the second there was a world of difference in expression. "This came from you," was spoken in a tone of outrage, but then the reflection assailed the girl's mind in spite of herself that perhaps after all there was another way of looking at the matter. The gift was kindly meant, and the very falsehood under cover of which it had come to her argued a delicacy on the part of the giver which deserved a better return than she was making for it. And then followed the reflection that ten-pound note number one was dissipated and done with and that she had no means of returning it. And so it happened that the next sentence was suppliant and beseeching: "You must take it back again." She held out the note almost

timidly, and her eyes searched in vain for any sign of change or relenting in the dogged figure before her.

His immobility was exasperating, but it was not easy to see what ought to be done in face of it. She was more than half inclined for a moment to drop the note and go, but that would hardly have been courteous. It was difficult to be courteous to a man so obstinate. Possibly he might be amenable to reason. The reason of the position was certainly wholly on her side and he could not be so stupid as to be blind to it. She began to reason with him.

"Surely, Mr. Blane, you must see how wrong you are in sending this to me."

Mr. Blane was apparently decided to see nothing. Any movement in the obdurate figure, any shuffle of the foot, for a sign of yielding or uneasiness, any silent negative to urge her to an argument, would have been welcome.

"I can't accept this," she went on desperately. "It was cruel to trap me into taking the other. What would you think of anybody, Mr. Blane, who laid such a trap to humiliate you and catch your self-respect? How dare you pretend that this came from my husband? What right have you to send me money? What ground did I ever give you for treating me so?"

To all this the detected benefactor answered nothing.

"Take it!" she said imperiously, for by this time her own speech had warmed her anew into anger. He made no response; and when she had waited for a full half minute, with the note extended in her hand, she moved away. "I shall send this to you by post," she said frigidly, "and I will ask you not to write to me or speak to me again."

She walked from him indignantly, and when she had gone but a step or two turned her head to look at him. He kept his posture—head drooping, shoulders rounded, the obstinate hands rammed into the side pockets. But somehow it did not look as if obstinacy alone were expressed in the posture of the

figure. Now that she was but a little distance away from it, it began to seem solitary, bitterly solitary. A sense of pity touched her. The thought of her own loneliness and unhappiness brought tears to her eyes. She could scarcely leave him in that ungrateful and ungracious way, impracticable and obstinate as he was. She turned and spoke again, and the tears sounded in her voice.

"You must not think I don't feel that you meant to be kind. I know you meant to act delicately and like a friend. But you must see how impossible it is. Will you take this, Mr. Blane? I would much rather you took it from me. Pray take it."

His continued silence drove her away in a new anger, and she did not turn again until she reached the gate. Then she could dimly see his figure in the roadway. A break in the hedge beyond where he stood allowed the drooping head to be seen in more defined outline against the sky. She entered the house and left him there, and all night long the fancy of the silent and solitary figure standing there oppressed her. She was often angered by it, and as often pitiful over it; but the gust of anger was strong and long, and the pity was a mere lull in the wind.

Once or twice in the course of the night she got out of bed to look down the road through the bars in the Venetian blind, and her fancy played tricks with her and showed her the mournful sullen posture unchanged. Improbable as it was, she more than half believed he was still standing there in the lonely night, and she hated him for it and was sorry for it by turns, until she fell asleep, and for awhile forgot his troubles and her own.

Ned heard the retiring footsteps, the retreating rustle of the dress, the clank of the gate latch, the fatal sound of the closing door. He stood still for a long time. It was not worth while to move. There was nothing to do, nothing to hope for, nowhere to go. Nothing mattered very much. Nothing seemed able very much to hurt him.

By-and-by he heard laughing voices coming down the lane. They were vulgar and discordant, and the laughter was out of tune with everything. He walked on, taking little if any note of where his footsteps led him, and at last, in something very like a waking dream, walked past his own house. The waking dream had a heart of ice and lead; but if he had had a mind to describe himself just then he would not have said that he was unhappy. He laughed once at a conceit which touched him as he sauntered

along. It was not a very mirthful conceit either. He had thought that he felt very much like being dead and aware of it. He chuckled unreasonably at this, and then subsided into his old quiet.

He did not look up at the house as he went by, and so missed the sight of Hepzibah, who stood mournfully pressing the tip of her nose against a pane in the window of the dark front room, staring out upon the street. She saw him, however, and was struck by a something heartless in his gait and the attitude of his figure. He was strolling slowly in the direction of the King's Arms, and Hepzibah knew what her own fears were. She paused in the narrow hall to snatch a wrap of some sort from a hook and then slipped after him into the street. He was going so slowly that she had no difficulty in overtaking him, but when she had come within a yard or two her heart failed her and she found no courage to speak to him. But he in a little while becoming vaguely conscious that a hurrying step behind him had suddenly accommodated itself to his own, turned round and recognised her.

"Been out for a walk, Mister Edward?" she asked in as cheerful and casual a tone as she could secure.

"Yes," he answered her indifferently, and walked on again.

"Master Ned," she said with an effort, hardly knowing how she found heart of grace to speak at all. "It'd do you a world o' good if you'd tell a body what it is as is on your mind instead o' carryin' on all by thyself i' thisnin."

He went dogged again, and she, catching sight of his face in the lamplight, saw the futility of her own words, and yet having begun to speak could not repress them.

"I wonder at you, Master Ned, you as used to be so bright and brave, to throw yourself away i' this fashion. What can't be cured must be endured, my darlin'. Do be a man, and wake up a bit."

"Good-night, Hepzibah," he answered, without so much as looking at her. The stony voice and manner quelled her, and she dropped behind and suffered him to walk away without further molestation. Seeing that he did not turn she dared to follow him, and having seen him enter the open door of the King's Arms, she stood for awhile in the street as strickenly and sadly as he himself had done a little while before, and then walked home crying.

Blane sat down in a corner of the bar-room, after having distributed a cold nod

here and there, and obscured himself behind a newspaper which he did not read. His arrival cast a chill upon the company for a minute or so, but the broken conversation was resumed, though not without some meaning glances in his direction. The old landlady served him unwillingly, and was evidently desirous that her unwillingness should be seen. He took this with a stony unconcern, as he accepted everything. He was going to the bad and he knew it. He walked forward with his eyes open, and he would not so much as try to turn back. In fine he was doggedly bent on going to the devil with all possible expedition, a condition of mind which is only possible for men of originally good quality. He made no excuses, offered to himself no palliations. The fiend had clapped him by the shoulder, and he, looking him in the face and recognising his ugliness, had elected to go with him. "Come; let us be life companions. Let us march miserably to the gulf together."

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. WILL HACKETT was not the man to suffer very severely from the qualms of conscience. There had been a time when regrets for past misconduct had been a habit with him, and when remorse, if not repentance, would lay a hand upon him. But having made in his lifetime a prodigious number of good resolves, and never having held to any of them, he had come to a sage distrustfulness of himself which unhappily was productive of none of the ordinary good results of wisdom. So now, when conscience stirred within him, he had a formula or two by way of sedative for her, and these he administered with an almost complete success. "The thing's done and can't be undone," was one of them; and "It's no use crying over spilt milk," was another. He had left his wife basely, and in his heart he knew just as well as anybody could have told him, that he had acted like a cur. Of course, that of itself was a disagreeable thing to know, and equally of course it was easy to be sure that no harm would befall her, and to promise that in due time he would go back to her with his pocket full of dollars—he was bound to the land of dollars—and more than make up for everything. And, side by side with this excellent intent—which he knew admirably well he never intended to carry out—was the natural sentiment of ill-usage, and a sort of forgiving resentment. Good wives make good husbands, and if Mary had known how to keep

him, there was the making in him of he knew not what of amiability and good-fellowship and camaraderie in marriage. He felt that he could never have descended to the level of the average male milksop of married life; that surely would have been too absurd to have been expected from so high-spirited, so popular, and so manly a personage as himself. But yet if his wife had seen fit to laugh at his little peccadilloes and to make no fuss about them, he and she might have been reasonably happy together.

Of all the strange problems presented to the student of human-nature—and they are many—there is none more marvellous than that offered by the liar who chooses himself for a listener. That I should have some hope of imposing a false motive upon a neighbour and of inducing him to believe it the true one is comprehensible. But that I should lie to myself about the things I know—and not merely lie, but be believed in lying—is surely amazing. Men do this thing day by day, and it is so common, that to some it has ceased to be even remarkable. Mr. Hackett did it hourly, and so draped in self-deceit the figure of himself he saw that at last it moved before him clothed in righteousness. When the robe slipped aside—as it did, as we have seen, pretty often—he hitched it on again and decided not to remember the passing glimpse of the rags which lay below that pure, imposing robe.

So, on the whole, he went away towards the land of dollars with a light heart, and when he had got over his bout of sea-sickness he found life on board ship sufficiently pleasing. He was beginning, to the discerning eye, to look a little dissipated, but he was young and was blessed with a good constitution, and the sobriety of a day or two would make him look almost as handsome and as fresh as ever. He had taste and tact enough to subdue his bar-room swagger in the presence of ladies, and it softened into a sort of manly self-confidence which some women aboard the vessel found not unpleasing. He was a pretty general favourite, and when one night there was music in the saloon and he allowed himself to be flattered and coaxed into singing, he made quite a flutter amongst the passengers. This was not in the least diminished by the fact that Master Will's purchaser got him apart and forbade a repetition of the programme.

"I don't mind it for once," said the Impresario, "but I won't have it again."

"You won't have it?" asked Hackett. The tone the Impresario took was new to him.

He had been used to give orders and not to take them. His eyes flashed and his face darkened as he put the question. His tone was haughty and disdainful enough, but his employer kept cool.

"No," said he, "I won't have it. You can keep your contract or break it, just as you please. But if you break it on your side I cancel it on mine. You have signed to sing when I ask you not more than four ballads a day, and not to sing when I don't ask you. I've got it in black and white, my boy!"

"Do you mean to tell me," Hackett demanded angrily, "that I'm not going to sing to please my friends?"

"Call this crowd your friends?" asked the manager. "Look here," he added in a suave and reasonable tone, "I want to make a bit of a splash with you in New York, and I don't want to have a lot of people going about there who'll say you're not half so good as I say you are. Cheapen yourself here, and you may do a good bit of damage. And in short, my dear boy, as I've said already, I won't have it."

This was perhaps the first moment in life at which Mr. Hackett had ever felt the controlling effect of the bit. It was natural that he should dislike it, and should even jib a little, but the manager sat serene in the saddle, and Will did not so much as try to throw him. He vowed inwardly that he would attempt that feat so soon as ever he should find a new rider, but for the present there was nothing for it but to answer to the curb and go the way his rider meant him to go. For without the rider he saw no chance of oats and stabling, and though his courage was mighty high and his belief in the joys of freedom strong, he had no stomach for the bare herbage of the desert.

It is not altogether uncommon for a man to want all the advantages without any of the disadvantages of freedom. Will hated his manager from that hour, and burned and yearned to disobey him. But he dared not do it, and so began to live in a bitter, constant sense of servitude. In spite of himself he played into his employer's hands, for when, as was certain to happen, he found himself coaxed to sing again, he had to take refuge in the statement that he had found himself utterly out of voice and did not dare to sing until he had thoroughly rested. The manager, who had heard the song, laughed over it. "He would never have thought it possible," he said, "that so perfect an artist could have sung so badly." The little society

of the moving hotel grew naturally somewhat piqued to hear more, and all kinds of small traps were laid for the new tenor to fall into. The new tenor, with the fear of his Impresario before his eyes, walked warily and fell into none of them. Pretty girls were set to wheedle him, amateur musicians beguiled him to the piano; one imperious young widow of many personal attractions, alternately ordered him to sing and sulked under his refusals; gentlemen astutely stood him drinks and led him on to speak of things musical; there were bets laid and taken as to whether he couldn't be got to sing again. All this, of course, brought compensation to his wounded spirit, but none the less he hated the manager and the new feeling of restraint and the mastery of another.

His first appearance in New York was fairly successful. He took something like first place in the second rank of singers known to the American public of that day, and his name came to be a safe draw wherever he was announced to sing. He created no furore, as he had hoped and expected to do. The preliminary paragraphs puffed him egregiously, but said no word he was not prepared cordially to endorse out of his own opinion of himself. It is quite likely that if he had well and wisely trained he might have been a really great vocalist, but work was never in Will's line. He was one of nature's born singers, and as one of nature's born singers he was quite content to rest, though he missed the unstinted praise and unforced enthusiasm which honest work might have brought him.

But if the manager could see and did see that the chief tenor of his concert troupe sang only at his bidding, there were things much more important to the tenor's prosperity and his own to which he could not attend. He could not insure that Will should be early to bed and early to rise, or that he should go to bed sober and rise with his throat unparched. He could not insure even that this impracticable tenor should not dine heavily an hour before a concert, and sometimes take too much wine at dinner, and sing rather badly and wildly after it.

"You're making a dreadful ass of yourself," he would say at times, for familiarity with many men had taught him candour, "and you'll regret it a lot more than ever I shall. I daresay you'll last my time out, even as you're going. I'm beastly disappointed in you of course, and it's no use pretending that I'm not. But I'm speaking

for your own good now, though I'm not likely to do you much. You'll be about as pretty to listen to as a raven in a year or two. Now if you'd only live straight and work a bit you've got a life-long future. Go as you're going and I'll give you three years to ruin yourself in."

To this harangue, or one pretty much resembling it, Will listened often, generally in sullen scorn, though sometimes, if it came early in the morning and his head was aching, not without brief inward reproaches. Meantime he lived in clover, of the growth he cared for, and his salary being paid weekly he generally had plenty of money in his pocket. He became very gorgeous in raiment, and had rather more of the music-hall than the concert platform air about him.

Being here, on his desired Tom Tiddler's ground, and picking up gold and silver, he of course forgot to send any of his gains to his wife. Old Howarth was well-to-do, and could take capital care of her. There was no doubt about that, and he never permitted himself to doubt that the care was taken. At any rate he refrained from making inquiries, and so escaped any burden which might have been laid upon his conscience. Meantime the money came in gaily, and for a man who had as little of forecast as he had it seemed inevitable that it should continue to come in always.

As time went on he and his manager came over and over again to open quarrel, and each grew heartily weary of the other. Hackett's constant cry was that the man who had found him out and opened the way to fortune for him was fattening on his work. The manager's retort was that the work was always indifferently done and often ill-done. Each grew anxious to escape from the contract, and after many days the manager found his chance. The popular tenor had dined unwisely as his habit was, but on this occasion he was prohibited from appearing on the platform, and an apology was presented to the public in his behalf. Next morning a formal letter reached Hackett to the effect that the contract was dissolved, and that if he felt himself aggrieved he might seek a legal remedy. He felt himself aggrieved and he sought his legal remedy. The case went against him. The public found the details amusing, and Hackett found himself out of employment in a strange country, and nearly penniless. He shuffled along somehow, the sartorial glories growing dimmer, and engagements growing rarer and more poorly paid, as he showed himself less and less trust-

worthy in his work. Things were growing desperate, and looked so even when seen through an atmosphere of brandy-and-water.

The glorious voice began to go. It even cracked in public on that noble high A of which he had been so proud, and which had indeed been wont to ring out like a clarion. He turned into a restaurant after that night's concert, and sat alone in a sort of sick-hearted stupor. He had been hissed for the first time in his life, and he resolved that it should be the last. It was time to end it all, time to ring down the curtain on the poor tragi-comedy his life had been all along. The deserted wife came back to him in memory. He recalled her as she had been when he had first known her, and a faint remorse touched him. She had been right after all, and had had a reason for her reproaches. But it was of no use to think of that now. And yet he confessed that if he had his life to live over again he would have arranged things otherwise. Despair told him, honestly, it was not a nice record. Well, let it go. It's gone. The stale proverbs came back again. No use crying over spilt milk. What is done can't be undone.

Whilst he sat in this mood, he waited for the drink he had ordered, and sat absently tapping with the tip of a knife upon a newspaper which lay on the table before him. The journal was creased and crumpled, and had evidently been left there by some recent guest. Hackett's eye fell upon it, and he looked at it with no interest until he awoke to the fact that it was a newspaper from the old country, and he began to glance at its columns here and there. A Birmingham newspaper! Who would have expected to find a Birmingham newspaper here? Some Englishman had left it behind him, probably a man from the Midlands, perhaps even an old friend or acquaintance. The thought touched him oddly, and he went on glancing here and there without noticing greatly what he read. And meantime the knife went on tapping, tapping mechanically at the same spot of the journal.

The fancy came into his mind suddenly, what if there were something there where he was tapping which might interest him, which might be of good or bad augury to him! He thought of this for a minute or two, fancifully and vaguely, and then glanced at the spot. The tip of the knife blade fell upon the name of John Howarth. The name of John Howarth was in the register of deaths, and the name that followed it was the name of Fanny his wife.

PILGRIM RESTING-PLACES IN SCOTLAND.

A Holiday Sketch.

By WALTER SCOTT DALGLEISH, M.A.

MEN may speak as they please about the charms of nature, about the glories of sunset and the tenderness of moonlight, about the beauty of the pathless woods and the grandeur of the wild sea-shore, yet it is human interest, after all, that gives to inanimate nature its most potent attraction. It does not seem to matter greatly whether the personality is historical or legendary, real or fictitious. The chief desideratum is that there shall be presented to the mind in association with natural scenery human beings whose fate or whose fortunes enlist our interest and lay

an arrest on our sympathies. That is merely another way of saying that we find our greatest interest in ourselves, and in the reflections of ourselves. The philosopher who said—

“On earth there's nothing great but man;
In man there's nothing great but mind,”

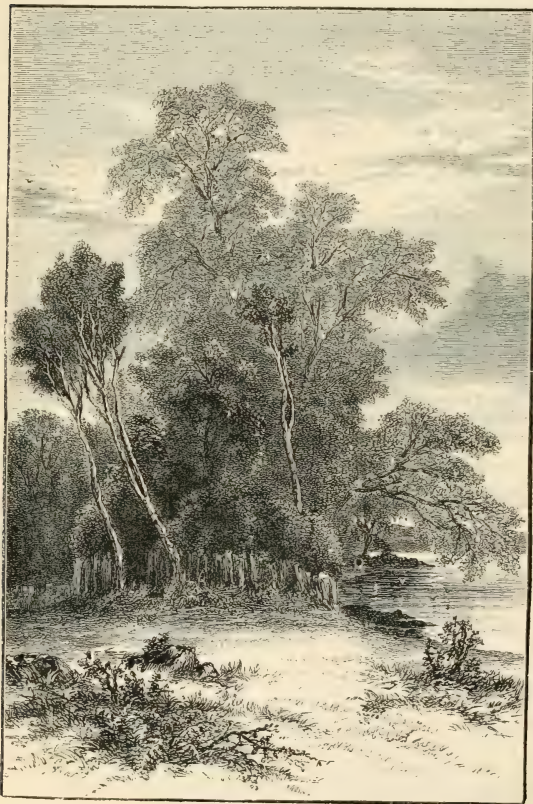
was a commonplace philosopher, after all. He merely put in philosophic language the very ordinary truth that men are most powerfully attracted by what they are most familiar with.

Hence it arises that the pleasure which we derive from natural scenery is chiefly due to

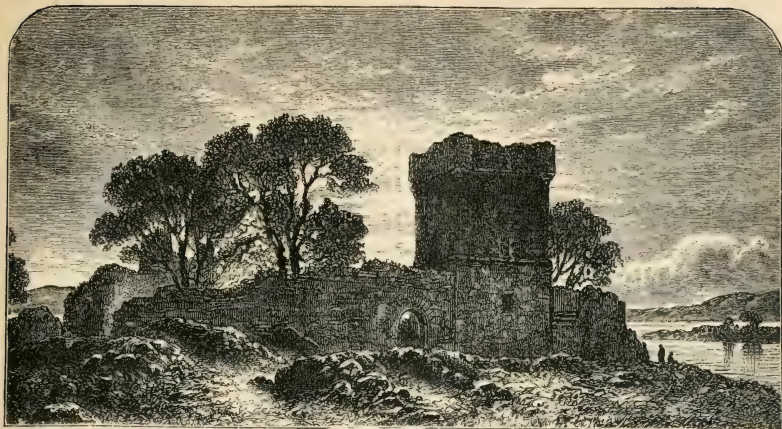
human association. The Trossachs and Loch Katrine were at least as beautiful before Scott “discovered” them as they are now; yet very few persons thought it worth their while to visit them. But no sooner did the magician people them with the characters, and clothe them with the incidents, of “The Lady of the Lake,” than they sprang at once into wide and enduring popularity.

In like manner, what would the lakes have been without Wordsworth, Alloway Kirk and Lincluden without Burns, or the Vale of Avoca without Moore, or Holyrood without Queen Mary and Rizzio, or the Outer Hebrides without Prince Charlie and Flora Macdonald—or, indeed, a score of other spots in Scotland that might be mentioned, without Sir Walter Scott?

All these cases seem to show that the most attractive pilgrim resting-places are spots which awaken human interest, either historical or fictitious, and to demonstrate the superiority of mind to inanimate matter, even at its best.



Inchmahome, Lake of Menteith.



Loch Leven Castle.

For example, the island of Inchmahome, in the picturesque Lake of Menteith, about four miles from Aberfoyle—the Aberfoyle of Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Rob Roy—owes its attractiveness wholly to its historical associations. It was thrice visited by King Robert the Bruce, in the anxious and troubled times that preceded Bannockburn; and there his son, King David II., was wedded to his second wife, Margaret Logie, about whom little is known. An Augustinian priory had been built on the island about the middle of the thirteenth century, the remains of which may still be seen, and it was under its roof that King Robert found a safe retreat in his times of adversity.

The interest of the island, however, centres in its association with the childhood of Mary Queen of Scots. When the French party and the English party were struggling for the possession of her person, in order to further their schemes, she was transferred from Stirling Castle to Inchmahome for greater safety, by Mary of Guise and Cardinal Beaton. She was then only five years of age—an age at which girls are concerned with their dolls and their other toys, and not at all with match-making or with affairs of State. She had with her as companions four little girls, nearly of her own age—each of them also a Mary. They are known to history and romance as “the Queen’s Maries”—Mary Beaton, Mary Seton, Mary Hamilton, and Mary Fleming. The tragic fate of one of them in after years is recorded in the plaintive words of a well-known ballad, which runs :

“Yestreen there were four Maries,
This night they’ll be but three,
There’s Mary Beaton and Mary Seton,
And Mary Fleming—and me.”

But there was no thought of tragedy for any of them, more than for the child queen herself, as they spent their happy days under the shade of Spanish chestnuts and sycamore and walnut-trees on this isle of rest. The most touching relic of these innocent days is the child queen’s garden—an oval space measuring no more than eighteen feet by twelve, with a double row of boxwood round it to indicate the walk. At three several points the boxwood edging has grown up into trees, some twenty feet high, and in the centre of the plot there is an old thorn, quaint and wind-battered, which may have been a sapling planted by the hands of the little queen herself. Evidently the custom of setting apart a little plot for the children, to be laid out for them and tended by them, is no mere modern idea. Here the child queen, surrounded by her child maids of honour, held her miniature court, and played, mayhap, at life and death and treason, all unconscious of the terrible realities that the future held for more than one of them, but especially for the central figure of the group.

The scene changes to another island, in another Scottish lake, with which the sternest of these realities is painfully associated. Between the innocent child of five years on Inchmahome, and the care-worn and by no means guiltless woman of four-and-twenty in Loch Leven Castle, what a contrast ! What a story of trouble and intrigue

and tragedy the intervening nineteen years have to tell! The story includes that of two kingdoms won and lost; of three marriages, all unfortunate; of murders and battles and surrenders; of state-craft and court-craft and priest-craft; and through all of a beautiful, capricious, and most unhappy woman struggling with fate and with the stars in their courses.

It was after her surrender to the Confederated Lords at Carberry Hill, and after her final parting with Bothwell—thenceforth to devote himself to the piracies and outrages that befitted him—that Queen Mary became an inmate of Loch Leven Castle. There she signed the abdication of her crown, at the instance of Lords Ruthven and Lindsay and Sir Robert Melville. The story about Lord Ruthven leaving the mark of his mailed hand on her tender arm is most probably a piece of sympathetic fiction. No such pressure was needed in order to induce Mary to take the only course open to her.

Three weeks passed, and then Loch Leven Castle was the scene of another famous interview—that between Queen Mary and her half-brother, the Regent Murray. The conference lasted till one hour after midnight. There was much plain speaking on Murray's side, and much protesting and weeping on that of Mary. Next morning, Mary embraced and kissed her brother, and begged him to accept the Regency, for the sake of her son and of Scotland. That was on the 16th of August, 1567; and the brother and sister did not meet again till they encountered each other on the field of Langside.

During the next six months Mary remained quietly at Loch Leven, longing to be free. On the 25th of April, 1568, an attempt to effect her release was made by George Douglas, a younger brother of Sir Robert, the keeper of the Castle; but it ended in failure, and in the banishment of Douglas from the Castle. Another plot, concocted by little Douglas, a youth of sixteen, and presumably a kinsman of the keeper's family, was successful. According to the accepted story, the keys of the Castle were placed every night at supper in front of the keeper. Little Douglas dropped a napkin over them while waiting at table, and in lifting the napkin he lifted the keys also. He then let the Queen and her waiting-maid out of the room in which they were secured. Emerging from the Castle-gate, they locked it behind them, and made for the shore, where they embarked in a skiff and rowed toward the land, carefully dropping the keys into the lake. They

landed near "Mary's Knowe," on the southern shore of the lake, where they found friends, who had been warned by a signal, awaiting them—George Douglas, the Queen's servant, Beaton, Lord Seytoun, and Hamilton of Orbieston, with a band of faithful followers. They rode off to Queen's Ferry, crossed over to Niddrie Castle, and thence passed to Hamilton, where she was in the midst of friends. The traditional story has been confirmed in the present century by the finding of the keys, which were presented to the Earl of Morton. These events found their fitting sequel in the defeat of Mary at Langside, and in her precipitate flight to Terregles, to Dundrennan, and thence to England, where she encountered the not too tender mercies of her cousin Elizabeth.

In later times, Loch Leven has acquired a new fame as one of the most attractive angling resorts in Scotland. Not only Scotsmen, but also Englishmen flock to its waters every summer in pursuit of its world-famed trout, which are captured by rod and fly at the rate of something like ten thousand pounds' weight a year. But there are few of the brothers of the angle who do not turn aside from their sport to regard with reverence the ruins on Castle Island; or the scarcely less cherished remains of the Abbey on St. Serf's Island, which is associated with the life and work of Andrew Wyntoun, its famous Abbot, whose *Orygynale Chronykil of Scotland*, written there in the early part of the fifteenth century, is one of the best extant examples of a metrical history in the old Scots tongue.

The pilgrim who wanders over Scotland in search of historic resting-places finds welcome footprints leading him to Tantallon and the Bass. Tantallon Castle, now a picturesque ruin on the coast of Haddingtonshire, three miles from North Berwick, was one of the coast castles common both on the east and on the west of Scotland, of which Dunottar and Turnberry are typical examples. It stands on a steep rock, which is surrounded on three sides by the sea, so that access can be obtained to it only from the land side, where it was guarded by ditches of great depth and by massive towers. Its strength, in olden times, was proverbial. The proverb is expressed tersely in the old saying:

"Ding down Tantallon,
Maik a brig to the Bass;"

the meaning of which was that it would be as easy to overthrow the castle as it would be to bridge the Forth from the mainland to the Bass Rock.

Thus it was interpreted by Scott, when he described it in *Marmion*, as,

“Tantallon vast,
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war.”

With his usual accuracy and attention to detail, Scott thus pictured its commanding situation:—

“On a projecting rock it rose
And round three sides the ocean flows;
The fourth did battled walls enclose
And treble mound and fosse;
By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
Through studded gates an entrance long,
To the main court they cross.”

Then follows the description of the castle as it was in the Douglas days:—

“It was a wide and stately
square;
Around were lodgings fit
and fair,
And towers of glorious
form,
Which on the coast projected
far,
And broke its lines quadrangular;
Here was square keep,
there turret high,
A pinnacle that sought
the sky,
Whence oft the warder
would descry
The gathering ocean-
storm.”

Wild, indeed, as in days of yore, are the storms that beat on the foundations of the sea-girt fortress: and not less comforting must have been the sense of security with which the warder regarded the crested waves as they beat impotently on the immovable rock.

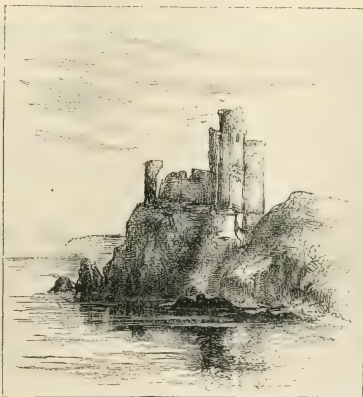
Tantallon was also the scene of the famous interview between Earl Douglas and Lord Marmion, in which the parting guest gave his host the lie. The picture introduces some of the most striking features of the castle as a place of strength in the olden time.

“On the earl’s cheek the flush of rage
O’ercame the ashen hue of age:
Pierce he broke forth, “And dar’st thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall?
And hop’st thou hence unscathed to go?
No, by St. Bride of Bothwell, no!
Up drawbridge, grooms—what, warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall.”
Lord Marmion turned—well was his need,
And dashed the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung;
The ponderous grate behind him rung:
To pass there was such scanty room
The bars, descending, razed his plume.”

At a later period in Scottish history—during the minority of Queen Mary—Mary of Guise, the Queen Regent, tried to induce the Earl of Angus of that day to put Tantallon into her keeping. It was part of a scheme to entrust the defence of the country to a standing army, instead of relying on the barons and their retainers—a scheme which was naturally very unpopular with the nobles. When the Regent made her request to Angus, he was feeding a hawk which he held on his wrist. Answering the Regent, while speaking to the bird, he said, “The devil is in the greedy gled, will she never be full?” Not choosing to accept this very broad rebuff, the Queen Regent continued to press her demand. Whereupon the Earl, turning and facing her

Majesty, replied,
“The castle, mad-
am, is yours at com-
mand; but by St. Bride of Douglas, I must be its captain, and I will keep it for you as well as any one you will put into it.”

The Bass Rock is generally associated with Tantallon in the popular mind; but the association is due to geographical proximity, rather than to natural character or to historical resemblance. There is, indeed, much more of contrast than of likeness between



Tantallon Castle.

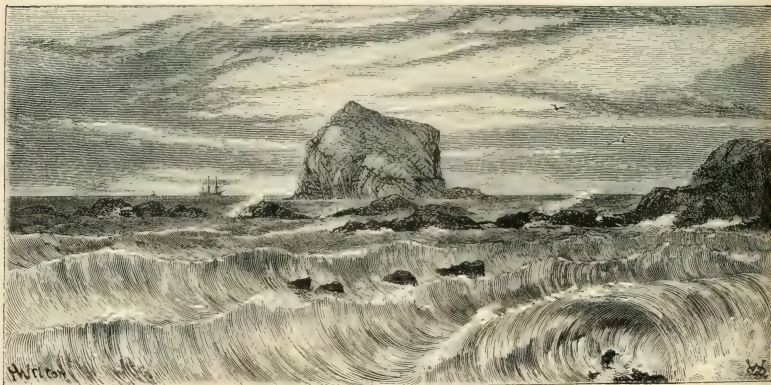
the subjects. The one was an artificial place of strength on land, the other was a natural place of strength at sea; the one was a feudal stronghold connected with the civil history of Scotland, the other is famous chiefly as a state prison connected with ecclesiastical troubles in Covenanting times.

The Bass is a stupendous mass of basalt in the Firth of Forth, a mile and a quarter from the coast of Haddingtonshire, and rising to a height of 300 feet or more above the level of the sea. Hugh Miller described it as a pillar of lava which had been moulded in a circular crater, and which had survived the softer and more pliable rocks that formed its case. Its surface slopes from north to south, and is partly covered with pasture which yields sustenance to a few sheep. The

cliffs on the north, the east, and the west are perpendicular and inaccessible; the only landing place is on the south or south-east, and that is difficult of access in stormy weather. The rock is curiously perforated by a cavernous passage, worn by the sea, 500 feet long and about 30 feet high, which can be traversed with safety in calm weather.

The Rock, however, is chiefly interesting as the prison-house of some of the most famous of the Covenanters in the seventeenth century. As many as thirty or forty of these ecclesiastical patriots were the inmates of its cells at one time, and they included such famous men as Peden, Blackadder, and Traill—men whose only crime was that they preferred the dictates of their own consciences to the order of the king.

Another heroic incident has added to the fame of the Bass. At the Revolution of 1688, it was held by the Stewart party; but it was very soon given up to the Royalists, and was used by them as a State prison. One day in June, 1691, the whole of the garrison, which numbered fifty, were engaged in landing coal; four young Jacobite prisoners shut the gates of the fort against them and defied them. They received reinforcements from their friends abroad till the little garrison numbered sixteen. The French Government supplied them with victuals from time to time, and two war frigates were sent to their aid. By these means they were enabled to hold out for nearly three years, and when they were at last forced to capitulate, they did so on honourable terms. The



The Bass as at present.

barracks and fortifications were demolished in the beginning of last century, but their remains still exist. The principal denizens of the Bass now, besides the few sheep that graze on its scanty pasture, are the thousands of solan geese, or gannets, that build and multiply on its cliffs and rocks. When they are disturbed by a gunshot the sky is darkened with their wings, and the air is filled with their hoarse cries. The Bass in the Firth of Forth on the east coast of Scotland has its counterpart in the much grander Ailsa Craig in the Firth of Clyde on the west. It is curious that these two island rocks should be the only homes in Scotland of the solan goose.

One of the most charming pilgrim-rests in Scotland is Habbie's Howe—the scene of

Allan Ramsay's delightful pastoral, "The Gentle Shepherd;" of course I mean the Newhall Habbie's Howe, near the village of Carlops, about four miles south-west of Penicuik. It is necessary to be thus particular, because there is another claimant for the honour of being the scene of the pastoral, and it also calls itself Habbie's Howe. It is a sequestered dell on the eastern shoulder of the Pentland Hills, traversed by the Glencorse Burn, and not far from the battlefield of Rullion Green, on which the Covenanters encountered disaster at the hands of General Dalziel in 1666.

This is, in its way, a beautiful spot; but, apart from the burn and the lin, there is nothing in it to suggest the scenery of the poem. It is bare and bald, and almost des-

titute of trees; there is no "flowery broom" and there are no "verdant braes," nor is there anything to indicate the presence in this neighbourhood of a pastoral community such as is depicted in "The Gentle Shepherd." As a matter of fact, the Glencorse site has now been given up. It used to be a favourite resort of the Edinburgh citizens twenty-five years ago; it is still frequented, but not as the Habbie's Howe of Allan Ramsay.

By common consent the Carlops, or Newhall Habbie's Howe, is now regarded as the genuine article—the true scene of the loves

and the quarrels of Patie and Peggy, of Roger and Jenny, and of the humours of Bauldy and Madge. It is, in fact, a lovely dell, clothed in the richest verdure, and reminding one of such Highland scenes as the Bracklin Falls, near Calander, and the Moness Valley, near Aberfeldy. One cannot help marvelling

at finding so exquisite a scene within so short a distance of Edinburgh; it answers exactly to the description of the poet:—

"A flowery howm between twa verdant braes,
Where lasses use to wash and spread their claihs;
A trotting burnie wimpling through the ground,
Its channel pebbles shining, smooth and round."

No less appropriate is the description of the little waterfall, in the words of Jenny:—

"Gae farer up the burn to Habbie's Howe,
Where a' that's sweet in spring and summer grow;
Between twa birks, out o'er a little lin,
The water fa's and makes a singan din;
A pool breast-deep, beneath, as clear as glass,
Kisses with easy whirls the bord'ring grass."

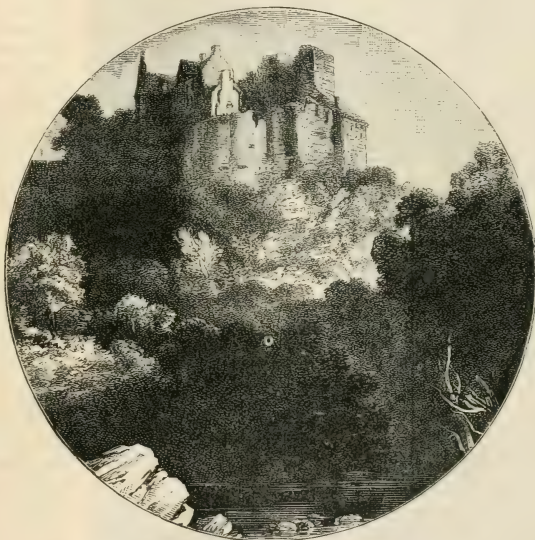
The theory which makes the Newhall dell the Habbie's Howe of "The Gentle Shep-

herd" is confirmed by the fact, mentioned by Tytler, the antiquary, that Allan Ramsay, like the other literary men of Edinburgh in his day, was a frequent visitor at Newhall, then the residence of Mr. Forbes. Tytler met him there, and remembered to have heard him recite several passages of "The Gentle Shepherd," within reach of the scenes described.

The burn which flows through the glen is the North Esk, here clear and lively, and worthy of being a classic stream. It owes its classical character, however, not to Habbie's Howe alone. A few miles lower down

we find, on the banks of the same river, Roslin (or Rosslyn) Castle and Chapel, and Hawthornden, the abode of the poet

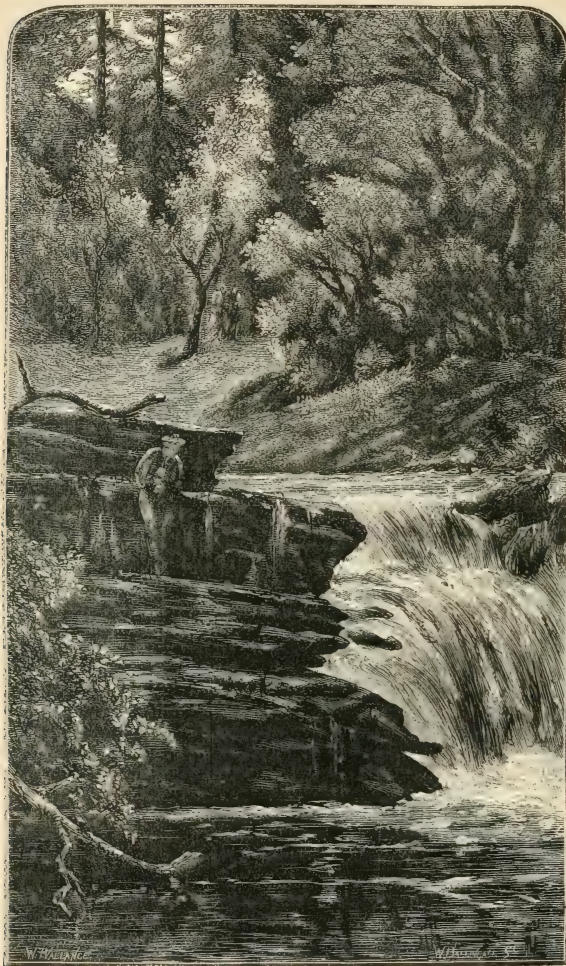
Drummond. The pilgrim who pauses at Roslin will be well rewarded. The chapel is one of the most exquisite and most finely concentrated specimens of ecclesiastical architecture in Scotland.



Roslin Castle.

A visit to it would be delightful, if one were left to his own sweet will; but the pleasure of the visitor is greatly marred by the officiousness of a professional guide, who runs his story off the reel in a way that would be amusing if it were not exasperating in its obtrusive illiterateness. The striking point in Roslin Chapel is the richness of the architectural detail, not only in the famous 'prentice pillar, but also in the friezes and sculptures of the level arches.

The Chapel is a fragment, but not a ruin; it has been judiciously restored, and is still used as a place of worship; it is also used



Habbie's Howe.

as a place of burial. Ten barons of the St. Clair family, to whom the Chapel belongs, are buried in a vault beneath it, the existence of which is audibly demonstrated by the cicerone, who strikes his heel firmly on the floor, and is delighted with the hollow sound which he evokes.

Roslin Castle is built on a curious rock, all but isolated, two or three hundred yards from the Chapel. The rock overhangs the

North Esk, and access is obtained to it by a stone bridge which spans a deep chasm on its northern side. The castle is built on the face of a shelving rock, so that the upper story, part of which is still habitable, is reached from the top of the rock, while the lower stories, which are for the most part ruinous, occupy descending terraces. There are three tiers of chambers in this part of the building, all of them having arched or vaulted stone roofs. These chambers are built into the face of the rock, which has evidently been excavated in many places to suit the builder's design, while in other cases the rock is allowed to protrude into the masonry. These chambers seem to have been used as sleeping rooms, some of them possibly as dungeons, and one of them certainly as the kitchen of the establishment.

The oldest part of the Castle—a peel tower to the south-east of the entrance—dates from the fourteenth century. It was built by a St. Clair, who formed one of the noble band that

set out with the good Sir James Douglas for Palestine with the heart of the Bruce, and who fell with his leader while fighting with the Moors in Spain. The Castle has been several times destroyed and several times rebuilt. The last recorded event in its history belongs to the troublous times of the Revolution of 1688, when it was roughly handled by the mob. Thereafter it figures in the annals of Scotland only as a picturesque ruin.

In that character, however, the fame of the Castle is assured beyond all question. It is certainly one of the most striking relics of Scottish feudalism. The view from the gardens, now famous for strawberries, is in the highest degree picturesque and impressive.

Hawthornden stands on the summit of a pine-clad rocky eminence on the right bank of the Esk, a mile lower down the glen. The walk from the one to the other leads the

pilgrim through delightfully romantic scenery. The house itself is well worth examination. It is a venerable and picturesque-looking pile of hoary masonry, in part ivy-clad, and relieved with gables and an antique turret. The place owes its charm, however, mainly to its literary associations, as the home of "the Scottish Petrarch," and as the temporary abode of Ben Jonson in 1618, when he walked all the way from London to Edinburgh in order to visit his congenial friend. The only relic of that famous visit which survives is a great sycamore in the grounds, which is called "Ben Jonson's Tree;" but the whole scene would be a poem, even if it were not redolent of poetry and poets.

Just as Tantallon is suggestive of Scott, and Habbie's Howe of Allan Ramsay, and Hawthornden of Drummond and Ben Jonson, so do the Falls of Moness and the "Birks of Aberfeldy" remind the pilgrim of Robert Burns. The last-named scene is one of varied and surpassing beauty, although it is questionable whether Burns was warranted in selecting the "birks" as its distinguishing feature. According to Dorothy Wordsworth, who visited the glen in 1803—sixteen years after Burns—there were no birch-trees visible at that time, so that those which now exist must be of later growth.

The birks of Aberfeldy are celebrated in an older melody, and Burns is supposed to have transplanted their fame, either in sheer caprice, or for the sake of a euphonious refrain.

In other respects Burns's description is strikingly appropriate:—

"The braes ascend like lofty wa's,
The foaming stream deep-roaring fa's,
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws,
The birks of Aberfeldy.

The hoary cliffs are crowned wi' flowers,
White o'er the lin the burnie
pours,
And, rising, weets wi' misty
showers,
The birks of Aberfeldy."



The Birks of Aberfeldy.

The glen is watered by the Moness burn, which flows from the Urral Hills through the village of Aberfeldy, to the Tay. About a mile above the village, the stream flows over a ledge of rock into a deep chasm, thus forming the upper Fall of Moness, which, when the burn is in flood, is a really fine waterfall, as seen from the high ground on the right bank of the stream. The fall is crossed by a rustic bridge, from which a powerful idea is obtained of the force of the cascade in its descent.

Half-way down the glen there is a lower fall, which has beauties of its own. It is rather a

succession of cataracts than a single cascade, and the point from which it is seen to greatest advantage is a ledge of rock almost on the level of the stream. From that point the best view is obtained of "the braes" ascending "like lofty wa's," and of "the hoary cliffs crowned wi' flowers," to which Burns refers. The walks through the dell, on both sides of the stream, are charming, as they wind about, in and out, now revealing striking vistas of sylvan beauty, now affording pleasant glimpses of the brawling burn as it threads its course through heathery and flowery mazes. The sentimental pilgrim could not desire a more exquisite scene in which to close his pilgrimage.

RELICS.

A SPRAY of oak-leaves and some withered flowers,
Gathered by hands that loved to cling to mine ;
Poor relics of the joys that once were ours,
The days of shade and shine !

I touch the leaves, and hear your voice again,
Telling the old sweet story o'er and o'er,
Till I forget the doubt—the change—the pain—
The sorrow strange and sore.

The past revives, I dream our early dream
Of Alpine blossoms on a fragrant sod,
Of far, white glories, where the snow-peaks gleam,
And lift our souls to God.

Of some lone chalet by a deep blue lake,
Where life is full of simple, calm delights,
And we might watch the rosy morning break
Across the solemn heights.



The visions fade ;—the hopes that gave them rise
Have perished, and the love has had its day ;
My path lies lonely beneath English skies,
And yours is far away.

Yet I press onward, though the way be dim,
And thorns spring up where roses used to blow ;
Through dawn and darkness I will follow Him
Who called me long ago.

He bade me leave the things I love the best ;
I held them back from His entreating hand ;
He offered peace ; I chose my own unrest,
And would not understand.

And still His patience never knew decay,
And still He waited for the certain end ;
There came a storm that swept my joys away,
And then I knew my Friend.


I knew Him by the crown of cruel thorn
That sinful hands had woven for His head,
And by His promise—"Blest are they that mourn ;
They shall be comforted."



And finding One in whom my soul can trust,
I turn my face from dreams that proved untrue,
Leaving old relics crumbling in the dust ;
For Christ makes all things new.

Therefore your voice has lost the charm of old,
You cannot bind me with a broken spell ;
The song is ended, and the tale is told,
And thus I say—farewell.

SARAH DOUDNEY.



CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR JULY.

By MARCUS DODS, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read 1 Samuel iii.

THE CHARM OF CHILDREN.

THERE are many things in children which charm us. 1. First, their inability to conceal their thoughts, the artless frankness of their love, their general simplicity. They have not yet an evil conscience, and they are unaware of anything within them which may not be freely uttered; they are unaware of it, because as yet it is not there. "They are naked and are not ashamed." They assume no disguise, because they are unconscious of their need of any. The child's past has no repentance in it. He is as yet clean from actual sin. His future is not gloomy through a sense of past failure and present weakness. What he desires he asks for; what he thinks he says; what he feels he utters. Mistakes have not yet taught him caution; sin has not yet taught him self-watchfulness; the approbation and disapprobation of others are only slowly teaching him self-consciousness. It is this unconscious, innocent frankness which refreshes us in children. It blows like a fresh breeze from their presence across our spirits, and sweeps away the close atmosphere of social restraints and guilty remembrances and evil thoughts. This simplicity is above and beyond us.

2. Another characteristic charm of childhood is its ready belief of everything it is told. The child believes in the world, hears of its wonders with a reverential awe, which, if it amuses, may also instruct us. Look at the earnestness of a child listening to a tale, and who stands for a moment when it is done, gazing into your face while his soul is all absorbed, and then asks you some grave question in explanation, and say what you would give for some measure of that ready belief in things unseen, in that infinite unknown which lies before him, and out of which every kind of marvel may come! As we grow older we clothe ourselves in scepticism, and think thus to guard ourselves against deception, till, as the climax of wisdom and security, we believe nothing, and are like the heavy-mailed knights of old, stifled in our own armour. We count it weak to be astonished, childish to be seen lost in reverence and wonder, and gradually train our spirit to believe in nothing but the most commonplace physical

things which by their very nature are destined to change and decay. And the end is that we cannot, if we would, believe in the most tremendous realities, and must still play and act and be artificial in our very efforts to be in earnest. Ah! what different men should we be could we regain the open mind of our early years and set ourselves before God with the unsatiated, expectant heart of the child, and could we again listen to God with the earnestness of one to whom all is yet real and nothing a mere tale! Surely we do well to pray God that in this respect our youth may be renewed, and that He would revive within us the feeling that we have but begun to live, to know, to feel, and that there lies before us an endless and infinitely stimulating experience. Well may we pray for power to be in earnest, to treat what is revealed to us as real, to wonder in simplicity and to worship. May God dip us in the waters of His regenerating Spirit that our flesh may become fresh and soft as a child's again! For "if any man is wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise;" and if any man is grey and furrowed with the experience of this world, cold and incredulous and without hope, let him become a child, that he may enter and mature in life eternal.

3. The charm of childhood arises partly from its readiness to receive instruction, support, gifts. Adults receive a gift in one way; children in quite another way. The child is fond of acquisition, of taking hold of things, and making them its own. It does not conceal its delight and real estimate of the favour done it. It is its nature to accept all that is offered, and even to ask and claim in the most exorbitant manner. It cannot comprehend that it is not to be promptly and amply satisfied, and it complains of every least discomfort as an injury done it, and not to be tolerated. The whole life of a child is reception. He takes gifts naturally, and without distressing himself as to his right to them. It never enters his head that he should be treated as he deserves. He is to be fed, because he is hungry; he is to be made happy, because his nature craves it, not at all because he has made good his claim to be so treated. And in this the child's instinct is an example to our reflection. He believes with Paul that the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but

the parents for the children; whereas we will ever be trying to provide for God, and cannot ever learn to let Him provide for us and give us all. For God sells nothing, only gives, and he who will not take the kingdom of God as a little child cannot take it at all. There are two kinds of children who make their parents anxious. There is a child who does not know the value of what is given him, and leaves it unused or hurls it into the fire. And there is a child who knows the gift's value, but thinks he cannot accept so much from his father, and accordingly goes to help him with his work, and after he has spoiled much good material, fancies he has earned his father's gift, and is indebted to no one. But the true child is humble and dependent.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Matt. xviii. 1-14.

CHILDREN THE TYPE OF CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS.

When our Lord used the child as the type of His followers, His disciples were discussing the question, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? This, in the abstract, is a profitable question to discuss. Wherever men of any earnestness meet, it is sure, in one form or another, to turn up. "What constitutes human perfection?" "Is it something a man has by nature, or by the gift of God, or by education and effort?" "On what principle does promotion in the kingdom of God proceed?" "What is it we must do if we would win eternal glory and perfect attainment ere these few years of life are beat out?" Such questions arise in all thoughtful minds; but when they are discussed with a personal reference, and in view of present competing claims, there inevitably arise jealousies, alienations, vanity, and hatred. The acrimony and heat which the disciples exhibited disclosed to our Lord the temper that would again and again be manifested in His Church, as men strove to carry into it their worldly ambitions, and make it minister to their vanity.

And therefore, that His rebuke might be audible to all generations, He puts it in a dramatic form. He calls a little child and sets him where every eye can see him, and while they thus gaze at the little fellow, standing with abashed face and drooping eyes, or playing unconsciously with the beard of Jesus as He holds him in His arms, He says, "Except ye be converted and become as this little child, ye cannot so much as enter the kingdom of heaven." They saw the child wholly unconscious he was

being held up as a model, and by this very unconsciousness he became their model. They had all been ready to prove their claim. "We can speak, and without Peter's broad accent," said James and John. "I can write and manage the business affairs of the new kingdom," said Matthew. "I have foreign correspondents and can extend the influence of Jesus in remote countries," said Philip. As for Judas, he being purse-bearer, there was no question that he was indispensable. Every one urged, with apparent justice, his special utility in the new kingdom. Each one thought with satisfaction that he could do something to help on the cause, could contribute money, could win followers, could exhibit the merits of Jesus, could handle the sword. "Here," says Jesus, "is the one excellence on which my kingdom is founded, and by which alone it can be extended, the excellence of not knowing you have any excellence at all." One pities the poor disciples so suddenly and completely dropped from all their vain notions.

For not only must they clearly have seen that precisely as they had counted on high place must their place be low, but as they gazed at the child, all unconscious of any merit and void of all ambition, they must have felt the very helplessness which Nicodemus gave expression to in the words, "How can a man be born when he is old; can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" They look at the babe held up to them as their model, and what do they see in him? Not great attainment which by much striving they might hope to win; not a marvellous purity which stern self-control might possibly achieve; not a consecration of life to God which they might perchance attain to through the example and grace of their Master; not ability to deal with high matters or to be of great service—none of these things, but an absolute unconsciousness of any ability, of any merit, of any claim to reward or high place. What they saw was the apparently unattainable, true humility; humility which did not know itself to be humble, and was thereby humble.

It is the broken heart, the feeling of insufficiency, of having rendered evil for good, that brings a man within the kingdom of God. He has no claims to urge, no promises to make, no pretensions, nothing at all to show. He knows himself to be altogether dependent on God, and as a little child he accepts the infinite, forgiving love and grace God bestows upon him.

Measured then by this little boy do we seem small or great in the kingdom of God? Measured by the standards we set for one another, we may sometimes be satisfied with our attainment. It is well to look steadily at this standard set before us by the Lord Himself. The child has no idea that its opinion or its person is of any importance. It is the greatest because it does not seek to be the greatest, and has no thought of its relative position. The child never dreams it has to earn its father's love, but takes for granted that it has it, and proceeds upon that understanding. The child is at once audacious in its demands, and utterly unconscious of any worth in itself; audacious, because he never connects his expectations with his deserts, nor once conceives that he is to have only what he works for or deserves. "When, therefore, our Lord sets this child before us, it is as if He said, "Away with all self-consciousness and pretension! If you fancy yourselves great, you make yourselves little. To claim purity is to produce a stain. Do not be thinking of what you have, but of what you need. Self-complacency, self-confidence, measuring yourselves with other men, these are feelings of this world, not of my kingdom."

To be simple-minded, to be natural, to be humble, this is our calling. To make ourselves of no reputation, to hold ourselves cheap, to take everything as a gift, nothing as pay—this is the essence of Christianity. To enter Christ's kingdom, meekness, gentleness, humility, are necessary. We must not strive nor cry nor let our voices be heard in the streets. We must be emptied of self, and be brought to seek what redounds not to our praise or gain, but to the good of men. We must love mercy and walk humbly with our God. We must go apart with Him who set the little child in the midst, and we must keep saying to Him, "Teach me also, O Lord, and lead me in thy way."

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read John i. 1-9; iii. 17-21; ix. 1-7.

THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT AND THE CHILDREN OF DARKNESS. I.—THEIR ORIGIN.

Having occasion to speak of the Day of the Lord, its suddenness, its finality, and the brightness of its glory, St. Paul removes any alarm or anxiety which his announcement might create by reminding his readers that this great day cannot be sudden to those who are prepared for it, and cannot be anything but happiness to those who already are living in its light. Christians have an

affinity with the day of Christ, living now on those very principles which it is to assert and enforce. They are the children of the light, and cannot fear the day.

Light is the element of life. Both for life itself, and for effectively using life, we need light. Even the blind could not live were there no light. Not without reason have men so commonly worshipped the sun, the centre of our planetary system, which upholds us and floods us with its light and warmth, and with life itself. The unconscious plants turn towards the sun, and with every ray of sunshine our own being drinks in a draught of life. The sun is the great physical symbol of God, upholding us in life, steadfast and reliable in his ways, imparting freely out of himself all we need for life. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." "The Lord God is a Sun."

When it is said that God is light much is meant. At the very least this is meant, that there is in God no ignorance and no untruth; no acting as if things were other than they are; no veiling from himself of one thing till another is accomplished; no neglect of the reality; no confusion of good and evil; no acceptance of the one as if it were the other, but only and always complete recognition and application of the highest principles of action. In God there is a perfect simplicity, the absolute truth, everything known for what it is; no doubleness, and no darkness. And this light that is in God becomes life to us when we acknowledge God and stand out before Him, delighting that His truth pass into us, that we be made true as He is true, and learn to live in the truth, not for ourselves, our own pleasure and profit, but guided by the truth to do the best for all.

The light that is in God comes to us through Christ. God is light, and Christ is the manifestation of God, the effulgence of His light. By Him we know that God is, and are brought into actual spiritual connection with God. To know God and ourselves; to know God's requirements and purpose and nature, and our own capabilities and relation to God—these constitute the light we need for life and for living by; and this light Christ gives. It was in a dim, uncertain twilight, with feebly shining lanterns, the wisest and best of men sought to make out the nature of the living God and His purposes regarding man. But in Christ God has made clear noonday all around us, and in this light the simplest sees what angels desired to look into, and has no doubt about what God means we should

do, and what He means to do. The more one considers the matter, the more amazed is he to see the certainty of moral perception and the blaze of light on our connection with God which that single and brief human life has left as its result. The humblest Christian has now ideas about God, and about his own relation to God and the future, which the wisest of men without Christ did not attain.

The "children of light," then, are they who draw their life from the light that is in Christ. As the "children of this world" are those who wholly belong to this world and find their life in it; as the "son of perdition" is he who is identified with perdition; so the children of light are those who belong to the light and live in it as their element. They are produced by the light, and would not have been what now they are had they not known Christ and God in Him. Christ contains the truth for them; the truth which penetrates to their inmost soul, which illuminates the darkest problems of life and pierces with its ray the remotest future. They have in Christ seen the truth about their relation to God, and this determines all else that is of prime importance; and they now habitually stand out in the open day of God's revealed presence, and ceaselessly desire that He be more fully revealed and known, that their soul may be flooded with the light that is in Him, and that so they too may know things as they are and live in the truth.

Christians may also be called the children of light because living in the element of light they themselves become "light in the Lord." Little light have they in themselves, they know. Dark, opaque, earthly clay are they, but illumined by the unseen Sun they shine as moons and witness to the continued existence of Christ. It is because we are ourselves so opaque that we are incontrovertible witnesses to Christ's illumining power. If there be any light in us, anything to guide and enliven men, it is reflected light. And in every true Christian there is some light, often hid, it may be, under a bushel, carried now in an earthen vessel, but when the rude stroke of sudden trial or the hard hand of death breaks the outer shell of the life, as the pitchers of Gideon's men were broken, the light suddenly breaks forth, and they are manifested as children of the day.

The "children of darkness," on the other hand, are they who have never turned towards the light that is in Christ and appropriated it. The light that is in His coming they have not comprehended nor loved. They make nothing of all that Christ came to re-

veal. They believe in the world as they see and know it, not illumined by the light of God's presence and holiness. They do not wish to think that they are living under the pure, true eye of the holy God. Such a God as Christ reveals, a God in earnest, satisfying all requirements, living in the truth, the Father of lights, and in whom is no variable-ness, they do not wish to see and own. They wish rather to be left alone with the world, with its pleasures and gaieties, its excitement and easy-going, unrepining ways. "They love the darkness rather than the light."

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read John xii. 20-36; 1 Thess. v. 1-11.

II.—THEIR CONDUCT.

The conduct of the children of light is necessarily very different from that of the children of darkness. Of the latter Paul says, "They sleep and are drunken." At the best those who are not living with Christ, and therefore in the light, are asleep. They are not dead, but neither are they all alive. They are unconscious of the most important realities around them, and live only in the unreal world of dreams. They have been lulled to sleep in the lap of a Delilah, who shears off the locks of their strength. Their most important interests are possibly being settled by others around them, and they know it not, but sleep on heedlessly; as Sisera's face remained placid in slumber even when Jael was stooping over him with the tent-pin and hammer; or as the robbers who have come upon a sleeping traveller stand round and consult how they may make away with him, and are already portioning his goods among them while he lies unconscious and dreaming his pleasant dreams. And if any of the children of darkness start in their sleep, if a strange dream seems almost to compel awakening, if the sounds of the real life that is astir around them breaks through their heavy sense and they begin to move restlessly, some emissary of darkness is ever by to give the cradle another rock, and they fall over with a satisfied sigh, dead asleep as before. God is close to them and He is not in all their thoughts; the glory of the Lord is risen upon them and they see it not; the voice of Christ is calling to them and they hear it not; His hand is laid on them, now in gentle remonstrance, and again to stir them to wakefulness, but at the most they only mutter, "A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep."

Sometimes, as Paul hints, this sleep is the sleep of intoxication. Insensibility to the brilliant and great realities of the spiritual world and its ever-advancing history is the result of partaking immoderately of the sparkling cup of the gaieties of life and the glittering imbecilities of fashion, or of the drugged and stupefying bowl of sensual pleasures. The man who is intoxicated with those stimulants of life which are meant to be used in moderation or not at all, is dead asleep to the pure and tender joys of the spirit. And, on the other hand, all thought of the spiritual world is sometimes dismissed and darkness regarding it is cultivated, that the flesh and the world may be uninterruptedly served, for they that are drunken are drunken in the night.

If, then, we are in any direction shutting out the light, and refusing to allow it to shine on some part of our conduct; if there are facts in this world's past and truths about God or ourselves we dare not take full account of, lest our slumber should be broken by these rays of light, we cannot but confess ourselves children of darkness. If we are not the fuller of life and joy the more truth we know; if we do not welcome the presence of God and of Christ as the very sunshine of our moral nature, in which at last we feel ourselves truly to grow and flourish; if we shrink from admitting a fuller and clearer consciousness of God, are we not asleep, dangerously, culpably asleep? Are we not culpably asleep if we give no thought to those mighty spiritual forces which must decide our eternal destiny, and which are already gathered, as it were, around our bed, and may be taking away our last resources and chances, our cruse of water from beside our pillow, and the spear on which we trust from its place? The sleeper is not conscious of the rapid approach of the sun, but the sun does not wait upon his word or expectation: so, while we sleep on, the day is steadily approaching. We do not with our slumber infect the swift ministers of God's will, nor does our unconsciousness render unreal what we ignore. The truth reigns, and is rapidly drawing on to rule and determine all our affairs. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand, and now it is high time to awake out of sleep. Cast off therefore the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light." To all God is ceaselessly crying, "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

The conduct which becomes the children of light is depicted in the appropriate terms,

"Let us not sleep as the rest, but let us watch and be sober." The children of the day, whose life is in the light, necessarily renounce the works of darkness. Even the drunken and sleepy do not drink and sleep in the forenoon. Every man has some natural shame if found asleep in the day-time, no matter what good excuse he has for it; however exhausted or unwell he may be. And when a man begins to exceed not only at night but before the day's work is well begun, he is looked upon as a doomed man. When Peter's converts were charged with being excited with wine, he thought it enough to remind their accusers that it was but nine o'clock in the morning. Nature itself, then, teaches those who are of the day to watch and be sober.

We are to watch, to be wakeful, not sleepy. We are to be broad awake, fully alive to facts, keen in our scrutiny of what is passing around us, on the outlook for truth that has a bearing on our life, and alert to use it. We are to use the daylight we have. We are to bring ourselves more and more into the light of Christ's life. We are to use what He has taught us; not to admire the light only, not to analyse and experiment upon it, not to theorise about it, but to use it, to walk by it, to admit it as our true life now.

Thus wakeful, we shall also be sober. Having another ambition than that which this world satisfies, we are not intoxicated with its applause, its fashion, its distinctions, its glitter and its grandeur. We are sober. Christ has made a show of the world's principalities and powers in His cross; and judging things by the light that streams from the cross, we are emancipated from their thralldom and fascination, and are taught to live a sober, steadied, disillusioned life.

FIFTH SUNDAY.

Read 1 Thess. iv. 13; v. 11.

III.—THEIR END.

The different attitudes men assume towards the first coming of the Lord, necessitate a difference of attitude towards His second coming. Two days of the Lord are spoken of in Scripture, the first and second coming of Christ. These two days have so much in common that it is sometimes difficult to determine whether it is to the first or to the second some prophetic utterance applies. There is a day of the Lord approaching. The first coming involves the second. It is incomplete without it. All the issues of the first await the second for their full

expression. He came the first time to encourage and help us ; He comes again, and "His reward is with Him." He came the first time to bear our sins ; He comes at last without sin unto salvation. He came the first time and founded his kingdom without observation, His voice was not heard in the streets, He did not strive or cry, gently as the dawn did His truth steal into the hearts of those who were of the truth ; when He comes the second time, every eye shall see Him, and His rule will be universally and manifestly established. It is towards this consummation of an actual reign of Christ over men that all things are now being guided. That His spirit may everywhere rule, and that all human affairs may be governed by Christ, is the end and purport of man's history.

Needless then to say that whensoever this grand result is achieved, and Christ comes to reign universally, that day cannot come as a thief to those who are the children of the day. It is this they labour and long for ; it is this that revives them in dull and despondent hours ; this that appeals to them as a real and worthy aim even when in low and worldly and indifferent moods. They that have received the light of Christ's first coming, look for and long for the breaking of that second day of the Lord. Christian gratitude would be balked of its opportunity and free expression had Christ, to whom we owe all, vanished into eternity, and were we never to see Him face to face ; Christian effort would be spiritless and without an object, were we not sure that the end we work for, Christ's reign over men, will one day be achieved. Every feature of Christian experience throws us forward on the second coming of Christ. He who looks back to the first coming, waits and works for the second. He who rests on the one, necessarily hopes in the other. The children of light who live in Christ's presence and in His spirit, look for the day when that presence shall be manifested, and that spirit triumphant. "Ye are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

But that day will overtake as a thief and bring sudden destruction upon those who are in the night and of it, who do not live in the light of Christ, but hide themselves from His presence. The awakening of those who pay no heed to the teaching of Christ, and make no use of the light He brings, will be terrible indeed. They will awake to find that they can have no part in human affairs, as these are all now to proceed upon principles

which they have not acquired. How a man starts from sleep and throws aside what covers him, who wakes to find that the sun has long risen, who hears the sounds of almost mid-day in the streets, and who knows that his hour and his opportunity are quite past ! How he also starts who, requiring darkness for a deed of darkness, and going on the understanding that for some time he shall have that darkness, has light suddenly flashed upon him and all exposed ! But how gradually and gently does day seem to dawn to those who have been watching by the bed of the dying, or who themselves, ill at ease, have been unable to sleep, but sit up and lie down, toss from side to side, and through all the hours of night watch anxiously for the first streak of dawn, and for the first twittering of the half-awakened birds ! How joyfully does morning break to those who are bent on some undertaking and cannot rest, but, weary of the night, lie longing for light that they may begin their work !

Such, says Paul, is the difference between the children of light and the children of darkness, when overtaken by the day of the Lord. They who have private schemes of their own to work out, schemes which for their success require that a curtain be drawn around them, schemes which could not be successful were Christ present and regulating all things, and flashing the light of His principles and spirit upon the habits and ways of men : they who have desires to fulfil which for their fulfilment require that the knowledge which Christ has brought us be kept in abeyance—such persons are evidently counting upon the continuance of darkness, and as the day is certainly coming, it must come upon them as a thief. Whatever we could not do in His presence is a deed of darkness ; whatever we find ourselves unable to do when we allow the light He has brought to stream into the soul ; whatever we feel ourselves forbidden to do when we strive to walk in the light of His example ; whatever we can do more easily if we do not think at all of Christ, or of what we have learned of His being in the world—this is a deed of darkness. And if the bulk of our life is of this kind, if we could really get on better without those high principles and holy ideas, and that close connection with God which Christ introduces us to, if all our desires and purposes could be as well or much better fulfilled in a world that shut out Christ, then plainly we are of the darkness, that is the element which we live in and for the time thrive in.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

By WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXII.—CRUMBS OF COMFORT.

THE tidings of the terrible accident on the Mer de Glace (conveyed in a letter to Gibson from one of the Americans whose acquaintance the Corfes had made on the steamer), caused, as was natural, a great sensation at Geneva.

Mr. Corfe, he said, being completely unmannered by the shock, had requested him (Rufus T. Choce) to write in his stead. He gave a full account of what had befallen, and stated that in the course of a day or two, when Mr. Corfe could command himself sufficiently to converse and travel, he should return to Geneva. In the meantime he would take it as a great favour if Mr. Gibson, out of consideration for the feelings of Mrs. Corfe's relatives, would say in the paper no more about the sad event than was absolutely necessary.

Means were also taken to prevent much being said in Swiss and French papers, and though the accident was briefly described in the *Faits Divers* of most of them, Corfe had written his name in the visitors' book of the hotel in such a fashion that it looked like "Lorph," and being in some instances transformed into "Lerph," in others "Dorph," he was set down as a German; so that few of his friends (except in Geneva) and none of Esther's heard for a long time of his loss and her fate.

When the bereaved man appeared at Geneva a week after the accident, he became an object of general sympathy, and even people whose capacity in that way was of the slightest had a morbid curiosity to see the survivor of the catastrophe, and hear an account of it from his own lips. Leyland, Mayo, and Gibson, together with their wives, and many others, paid him visits of condolence. The editor spoke in a manly, straightforward way of his respect for the deceased and his sorrow for her death, assured Corfe that they all felt for him in his great misfortune, and that he personally should only be too glad to do for him whatever lay in his power. Mrs. Gibson, who called with Mrs. Mayo, could not well have been more effusive if the late Mrs. Corfe had been her nearest relative or her closest friend.

"When Mr. Gibson told me," she said, half-weeping, "I was so much overcome that

I nearly fainted away. He had to fetch the smelling-salts and give me a *petit verre de cognac*. Such a nice lady; so young, too, and to die such a dreadful death! She was quite an acquisition to our little society here; always so bright and cheerful. We all feel for you; indeed we do, Mr. Corfe. And you had not even the melancholy satisfaction of giving her Christian burial! No funeral, no coffin, no anything! How you must feel it! How you must have felt when you saw her slip down that horrible hole!"

"I cannot tell you how I felt, Mrs. Gibson," returned Corfe in a broken voice, "but I know that if the guide had not held me I should have jumped down after her."

"I can well believe it; you must have been quite frantic. But that would have been sacrificing yourself without doing your poor wife any good, and you will meet again in another world, you know." ("I wonder if Gibson would jump down a hole after me!" she thought). "Here is a little tract I have brought for you. If you will just glance at it I feel sure you will get comfort. That is its name: it is called *Crumbs of Comfort for the Afflicted*."

"Thank you, Mrs. Gibson; you are really too kind," returned Corfe, with a grimace that Mrs. Gibson did not see.

"And I am sure you will be very lonely when you are here of an evening, all alone, thinking of her that is gone. Be sure to step up to our pension whenever you feel disposed. It will be a change for you, and we shall always be glad to see you. And don't fret any more than you can help, Mr. Corfe. There is no necessity, if you can only think so, for she is happier than we are, poor lady, removed as she has been in a mysterious way from this vale of tears. Keep up your strength with good food, though you may have to force yourself. When you are in trouble there's nothing like good living; and I ought to know, for I have had a deal of it. You will be sure to come up now, won't you, whenever you feel disposed?"

Corfe assured her that he would; and after Mrs. Mayo had given him a similar invitation on behalf of herself and her husband, the ladies, with a renewed expression of their sympathy, took their departure.

"Confound her tract, the old humbug!" exclaimed Corfe, as soon as he was alone, at

the same time throwing the unfortunate pamphlet into the fire without even glancing at the title. "Comfort, indeed! It is plain to see where she gets her comfort. I wonder how much she costs Gibson in Bordeaux and Madeira?"

Among other callers were Balmaine and Delane. Any dislike or distrust which Alfred might previously have entertained for Corfe was, for the moment at least, completely forgotten in the terrible misfortune which had overtaken him, and warmly as he spoke, he was not able to express all that he felt.

Corfe seemed touched, and expressed his sense of his visitor's kindness in fitting terms. He looked pale and worn, too; the emotions and anxieties of the last few days, together with unwonted indulgence in spirituous liquors, had told upon him, and the suit of solemn black which he wore heightened the effect. But he was far from feeling as bad as he looked. The fear of Esther's reappearance—illusory as he knew it to be—was gradually ceasing to trouble him, and the attention he was receiving pleased him exceedingly. He had become famous; he was the most important person in the English colony; gratified vanity made him oblivious to all sense of remorse and regret. He had only two worries. He sometimes saw in his dreams the terror-stricken face of poor Esther as she went down into the moulin; and more than once he had wakened with her death-shriek ringing in his ears. This was certainly very unpleasant, and he was not sure that he did not talk in his sleep, but he looked upon it as a passing weakness which time would cure. The other trouble was Madame Marcquart. Madame Corfe's death had been a terrible shock for the poor woman. In her grief she even accused Corfe of carelessness in letting his wife fall into the moulin.

Why did he take *cette pauvre dame* into so dangerous a place? she asked. Had she not warned him? If he had well loved her he could not have committed such a folly.

A sharp answer from Corfe put a stop to these upbraidings, yet he could neither ignore the reproaches she looked nor dry the tears she was shedding nearly all day long. But it was at any rate possible to escape the infliction by going away, and he told his friends that, feeling himself quite unable to bear the loneliness and associations of his old lodgings, he was about to take temporary quarters at the Hôtel Pension Duerot. Everybody applauded his design; they said that the change

would do him good and prevent him from brooding too much over his loss. But when he gave Madame Marcquart notice he could see by the look she gave him that the sharp old Suisse had doubted the sincerity of his sorrow, and did not regret his departure.

"I loved your wife much, Monsieur," she said in a trembling voice, "so young, so beautiful and so good. She was too good for you, Monsieur Corfe. That was indeed a terrible accident. I have thought much about it, and I cannot understand—Do you think," she continued abruptly after a momentary pause, looking him full in the face, "do you think that if the guide had not turned his back the poor lady would have fallen down the moulin all the same?"

The question was an utter surprise for Corfe and threw him quite off his guard. Do what he might he could not help changing colour.

"What do you mean?" he asked fiercely. "Of course she would have fallen all the same."

And then the subject dropped, for Madame Marcquart seemed to have nothing more to say and Corfe had no wish to continue the conversation. He feared that his landlady was beginning to suspect that Esther's death was not altogether the pure mishap which it seemed. The fear gave him great concern; he asked himself anxiously whether the same thought could have occurred to anybody else. After long cogitation, he decided in the negative.

"Nobody can have seen it," he thought, "I was so close to her, my arm round her waist—it was not my fault that she slipped. All over in two seconds. No! Besides, if anybody had seen it they could not possibly have suspected anything. And nobody did see it. I looked all round and Valentine had his back turned and was going the other way. He did not suspect anything. And yet that old woman evidently does suspect something. She liked Esther so much and is of a jealous disposition, that's it. If Esther had died here in her bed Madame Marcquart would have accused the doctor of killing her because he had not cured her. Yes, she is a woman of that sort. But she can prove nothing and dare not say anything. And nobody else is likely to have any sort of suspicion—nobody else—that's a safe conclusion, I think—and a considerable comfort."

Despite his comforting conclusion he did not feel altogether reassured. He saw for the first time how easy it would be for suspicion to grow. It would never do to let it

be seen that he had any interest in getting Esther out of the way. He must let Vera Hardy alone until a decent time for mourning had elapsed. This was a disappointment and something more. It imperilled his scheme, for delays are proverbially dangerous. But of the two dangers between which he had to choose this seemed to be the less. Too great haste, moreover, might create an unfavourable impression on Vera, it being just conceivable (though he sincerely hoped not) that she had heard of the incident on the *Mer de Glace*.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—THREE MISSES AND A HIT.

WINTER was mostly a quiet time in the office of the *Helvetic News*. Fewer people called and fewer incidents befel than in summer. The visitors' list was shorter, advertisements were scarcer, and the big safe down-stairs, though it looked as imposing as ever, was even emptier than usual. It was a time when Leyland generally betook himself to Mentone or Nice, and Mayo spent most of his afternoons playing whist or billiards at the *Hôtel de la Croix*, occasions on which he was generally accompanied by Gibson, who had issued a standing order that whenever he did not turn up at the office by four o'clock Balmaine was to do the leader. This arrangement enabled him to avoid the disagreeable necessity of leaving in the middle of a game, and it was not often that he reached the office before half-past five or six, or did more than look over a few proofs.

Nothing could be more friendly than the editor's relations with the manager, and he little suspected that Mayo took means every morning to ascertain by whom the principal leading article had been written, and made a record thereof in a little book which he kept expressly for the purpose.

Gibson had even ceased to reserve for himself the writing of strictly political articles. Alfred could write them quite as well as himself (Mayo and Delane thought better), and as his Swiss experience was fast undermining his Tory principles, he had now no difficulty in adopting the liberal tone which the paper professed. His political ideas had been rather a bundle of prejudices inherited from his father than reasonable convictions well thought out—prejudices which, as he could not help seeing, were in flagrant contradiction with many of the facts around him.

It was not, however, all at once that Balmaine outgrew the political garments of his

youth; they dropped from him one by one, and he became a Liberal almost without knowing it. The change did not surprise Gibson. When Alfred produced his first Liberal leader he simply thought the young fellow was learning sense.

"It is very good," he said, "but if anything rather too strong. Draw it a little milder next time. Most of our American readers are Rads, I know; but, on the other hand, we have a good many Tories among the English. We must not tread on their toes too much, you know."

Alfred smiled. He had not yet learnt that the supreme duty of an editor is to please his readers.

When Mayo read the article and knew who had written it he smiled too.

"Leyland is quite right," he thought. "These fellows are always ready to write whatever they are told. It is only a few months since that Balmaine was running a Tory paper, and now he pitches into the Tory party just to save Gibson the trouble. I do believe Gibson gets lazier every day. He leaves everything to those lads. *Tant mieux*; it suits our book to a T. So much the better, too, that Balmaine is not more strait-laced than other folks. An editor with a conscience is a nuisance."

As for the Hardy mystery, Christmas came and went without bringing more light. The riddle remained as insoluble as ever. To Warton's periodical requests for news, Balmaine could give only the stereotyped reply, that he had none, for whenever he wrote to Bevis, he received always the same answer—that Martino had not yet returned from Algeria. So he had to possess his soul in patience, and this he found all the easier as both his mind and his time were well occupied with other matters. In addition to his work in the office of the *Helvetic News*, he was doing occasional articles for an English daily paper. But he had arrived at this result only after making several abortive attempts in various quarters.

But time revived his courage, and a good subject turning up not long afterwards, he resolved to make another attempt. The article was written and dispatched, and for the next fortnight Balmaine read diligently every day the journal to which he had sent it, in the not very confident expectation of seeing his letter. Then he abandoned hope, and in his disgust looked at the paper no more than sufficed him to gather, for his editorial guidance, the gist of its leaders and the purport of its telegrams.

Another fortnight elapsed, and he had almost forgotten the article and got over his disappointment, when one day as he was hard at work with his pen, and Delane with his scissors, the sub-editor uttered an exclamation.

"Hello!" he said, "who has done this? 'The Swiss Communal System: from a Swiss Correspondent.' It cannot be—yes, it must be you, Balmaine. And it does not read badly either."

Balmaine looked up with an air of eager surprise.

"Let me look at it!" he exclaimed.

Yes, it was indeed his article; and that was not all. The editor of the *Day* had written a leader about it, and called him "our intelligent correspondent."

Alfred did not say very much, yet he was deeply gratified, and it was not long before he let the *Day* have something else, which appeared in due course, and after a while he became its acknowledged correspondent at Geneva. The result was an addition to his income, considerable while it lasted; but during the parliamentary session it was only from time to time that the editor was able to find room for his contributions.

Others besides Delane noticed Balmaine's letters in the *Day*. When Gibson knew by whom they were written he paid his assistant a handsome compliment on his industry, and delivered a little homily on the value of that useful quality for the benefit of Delane and Milnthorpe.

One day Corfe dropped into the office in his usual free-and-easy manner, but dressed in deep mourning, and looking more thoughtful and sedate than he had been wont to do when Alfred first came to Geneva.

"Who is doing these letters for the *Day*?" he asked after they had exchanged greetings.

"Do you know, Delane?"

"Ask Balmaine here; I dare say he can tell you."

"Ah, that is it, is it? I thought I detected your style in that sentence about the self-seeking of the few, and the patriotism of the many. Very well put, I am sure. I congratulate you, Balmaine; you are an awfully lucky fellow."

Alfred thanked him; but there was a something in Corfe's voice which made him suspect that his compliments were rather ironical than sincere.

Corfe, after lighting a cigar, read the article, but the perusal did not brighten his face much.

"Not bad," he observed, throwing down

the paper. "What with the handsome screw you get from the *Helvetie* and your outside earnings, you fellows must be making big piles. How much have you at Harman's, Balmaine?"

"Very little, I am sorry to say."

"And I have nothing," laughed Delane; "I make [it a rule never to trust bankers with my money. I keep it in my pocket, and then I have no anxiety."

"You have no fear of losing it, you mean."

"Precisely, *mon ami*."

"Well," returned Corfe complacently, "I have a trifle at Harman's, something like—let me see—yes, something like eight thousand francs, and I fancy it is a good deal safer where it is than it would be in my breeches pocket."

"Very likely, for if you had that much about you you would be worth robbing, would he not, Balmaine?" said the Irishman with a laugh. "But you see I am never worth robbing; for if I get a hundred-franc note, and neither my landlady nor my tailor happens to want it, it burns a hole in my pocket double quick. If I were so awfully rich as to be worth eight thousand francs, I should probably have more confidence in my banker than my breeches. I like possession, though."

"So do I, and I can reduce my balance at Harman's to possession any day. I am going to draw some of it now for a trip to the other end of the lake."

"Are you going to be away long?"

"Oh, no; five or six days perhaps. I get so terribly low-spirited sometimes (sighing deeply), a change will perhaps do me good, and I shall try and look up a few advertisements for Mayo. Here's my copy, Balmaine" (throwing some manuscript on the table), "perhaps you or Delane will be good enough to read the proof for me."

"Certainly; and I trust you will have a pleasant trip, and come back in better spirits."

"Thanks awfully; ta-ta," and Corfe, rising from the table on which he had been sitting, walked slowly from the room. Since Esther's death he had tried to acquire a habit of slow walking. He thought it looked more seemly and subdued than his former rather swaggering gait.

"Corfe appears to like going to the other end of the lake," observed Balmaine carelessly, as he turned over the pages of the manuscript before him.

"Well, it's very nice up there—for a day

or two; but awfully dull, I should think, for a long stay."

"I don't know, Delane. I fancy that what with fishing, boating, wild-fowl shooting, and mountaineering, I could pass a month or two very pleasantly in the region of the Waadtland Alps."

"You might perhaps; but I don't go in for that sort of thing. I like being where there is a crowd; solitude bores me. So it does Corfe, and that makes me wonder sometimes why he is so fond of Montreux and Clarens. However, there is no accounting for tastes. I see you are looking at his copy. Do you think it has been as good as usual lately?"

"Far from it, and I have hinted as much to Gibson. But the chief is too good-natured. He says we must bear with Corfe on account of his bereavement, and so everything he sends goes in."

"Do you approve of that?"

"No. I am sorry for Corfe; the loss of his wife was a great misfortune for him. But, after all, that is no reason why the paper should suffer. And he seems to be getting over his grief pretty fast."

"So if you were editor——"

"I should go through his copy with a wet pen."

"He would be awfully riled. He thinks his articles just perfection."

"I should do it all the same, Delane. An editor who passes people's copy for fear of riling them is not worth his salt."

CHAPTER XXXIV.—CORFE ON THE QUEST.

WHEN Corfe started on his journey next morning a "black *bise*" was blowing—a fierce north-east wind with a cloudy sky. The sun was invisible; the mountains lowered swart and grim, and the snows on their summits seemed smudgy and grey. Clouds of dust swept along the white roads, the wind howled and shrieked up the narrower streets, doors and windows with a northern exposure were firmly fastened, and people who had occasion to cross the bridges and open places went with bent heads and turned-up collars, facing the gale as if they were fighting a foe. The lake was covered with *moutons blancs*—white sheep—which chased each other from side to side, dashed against quays and retaining-walls, splashed into roadways and froze where they fell. The trees lining the shore looked as if they grew icicles, and Geneva gardens were being rapidly converted into skating rinks.

Corfe was the only first-class passenger. Besides himself there were no more than

half-a-dozen—all second-class people. He rather liked this. The captain, who hesitated whether he should start, complimented him on his courage in venturing out in such weather. He had deck, cabin, and waiter all to himself, got a capital *second déjeuner*, talked largely to the master and the men of his experiences at sea, and could almost fancy that he was sailing in his own yacht. It was amusing, too, to watch the efforts of the steamer, in some instances ineffectual, to make fast to the landing-places of the little lake-side stations, and he enjoyed greatly the annoyance—generally expressed in volleys of *sacres*—of the second-class passengers who were landed at one place when they wanted to get out at another.

Corfe's purpose on the present occasion was not precisely to propose to Mademoiselle Leonino. He wanted to break the ice, make her acquaintance, and, if possible, find out why this English heiress was being brought up as a Swiss peasant. More, it would be imprudent to attempt. It was only three months since the catastrophe at the Séraes du Géant, and he had an uneasy consciousness that he had not always played the part of a sorrowing widower with complete success. He liked billiards, and he liked baccarat, and at the Pension Ducrot and the Café Bellerive he had played very often—more than once all night. This, he was aware, did not look altogether *comme il faut*, and if it were to be known that he was looking after another wife there would be unpleasant remarks—perhaps dangerous suspicions. He had not forgotten the parting observation of Madame Marequart. In certain contingencies other people might take the same view of the matter. Not that he really cared for what people said (so, at least, he tried to think); proof was absolutely wanting, and mere talk could not hurt him. But talk might ruin his chances with Vera Leonino. He knew Swiss customs too well to suppose that he could marry her by a *coup de main*. He would have to negotiate with her adoptive parents, her *bonne*, or whoever her guardian might be. On them, much more than on the girl, would depend his chance of success. If he could bring them to consent, she would not be likely to object. But before consenting they would be sure to make inquiries, and if they should hear that he was suspected of——

"That would ruin everything," he muttered. "I must keep myself in good odour and make no formal proposal for a couple of months or more. Confound it! But never

mind ; I have that money in the bank and a thousand francs in my pocket ; I shall contrive to exist."

And then he went to the weather side of the funnel, planted his back against a warm place, lighted another cigar, and watched the billows as they threw themselves against the rocky shore and tossed the boats that were not hauled in as if they would break them into a thousand pieces. Every two or three minutes the steamer shipped a sea, and the second-class passengers were having a bad time of it. They were both wet and sick.

"Poor devils !" he said. And the contrast between their misery and his comfort gave him an exquisite sense of enjoyment.

"It gets worse," he observed to the captain, looking to windward.

And it did. The Mont Blanc range was quite invisible ; the Chablaisan Alps were half hidden under leaden clouds, which seemed hardly less storm-tossed than the lake itself, the snow was being whirled in mimic avalanches down the mountains, and the leafless trees that clothed their sides bent groaning to the blast. The water was white with foam, and save a large lateen-sailed boat, which seemed in imminent danger of foundering, not a craft could be seen.

"If I had not left Geneva I wouldn't have done," said the captain, scanning the horizon. "As likely as not this will be a six or nine days' *bise*, and until we get to the other end of the lake I shall not be able to land another passenger."

"I think the best thing I can do," returned Corfe, throwing the stump of his cigar into the lake, "is to go below and have a snooze until we get there."

When he came again on deck an hour later they were passing Vevey and nearly in sight of Chillon. Behind them the *bise* was still blowing, the lake still in commotion ; but southward there reigned perfect peace. The lake stretched before them, calm and blue ; a few billowy clouds fleeting past the face of the sun hardly obscured his brightness ; and as they drifted away, and the ship got under the lee of the Waadtland Alps, it was as if she had sailed in a few minutes from howling winter into smiling spring. Many of the trees were in leaf, gardens were gay with flowers, and the pastures between the pine woods bright with verdure. This wondrous change of climate was due to the chain of mountains that shelters the upper end of the lake from the north and east winds.

Corfe made for the Rousseau. He had written to apprise Fastnacht of his coming,

and was received by that gentleman cordially, yet with less effusiveness than on previous occasions. His manners were rather too free and easy for a guest who paid nothing. Corfe saw this at once, and by putting on an unusual graciousness of demeanour, and hinting that he was about to write an article for a London newspaper, in which he would say something pleasant about the Hôtel Rousseau, he soon regained the footing of a welcome guest.

It was only, however, after dinner, as they were sitting together in the manager's private room, that Corfe had an opportunity of fishing for information about the heiress. He led the talk to M. Senarclens, which was not very difficult, the historian being one of the lions of the neighbourhood and a standing advertisement of its attractions.

"I suppose he is always working at his history ?" asked Corfe.

"Always. From seven in the morning to eight in the evening—except when he eats, and takes a short walk in the afternoon. He often passes the Rousseau, sometimes drops in to look at the English papers."

"What volume is he on now ?"

"I think it is the seventh, and he has eight more to do. They say it will occupy him still eight years."

"Very extreme in his opinions, isn't he ?"

"Rather. A regular Red. Wants to abolish governments altogether, and give everything to everybody."

"Does he act up to his theories in private life ?"

"I am not so sure about that. Perhaps he is waiting for the social revolution. But he is really very good—gives a great deal more than he spends, I should think, and has what you call the courage of his convictions."

"And, I have no doubt, gets shamefully imposed upon. By the way, did you hear anything further about that peasant family he took such a fancy for ?"

"A peasant family ?"

"Yes ; don't you remember ? One of them was here at the *fête*—a rather nice-looking girl ; my friend Balmaine danced with her. I forget her name just now. Wasn't it Paganini, or something like that ?"

"You mean Mademoiselle Leonino. But that is not the name of the family she lives with. They are called Courbet, and live, I think, somewhere about La Boissière, not far from the Hôtel de la Forêt. You know the Hôtel de la Forêt, of course ?"

"I have heard of it. It is only open in summer, I think?"

"Not generally. But this year it is; and I think Henri, that is the proprietor, has even some guests. Courbet is considered a good peasant—pretty well to do, you know—but I dare say stupid and avaricious, like most of his class. I don't suppose M. Senarcens cares anything about him. But he takes a warm interest in Mademoiselle Leonino—there is something in her history——"

"Ah, I think you told me. Her father died and left her in charge of her *bonnes*, old Courbet's daughter."

"Precisely. And I fancy that M. Senarcens, notwithstanding his Socialistic notions, does not think that a peasant's house is exactly the place for such a girl, and Madame Senarcens often asks her down to Bellerive. I saw her there only a few days ago."

"She is very fortunate in having such a friend," returned Corfe with a yawn. "I say, Fastnacht, I think I'll have a cup of *café noir*. That *bise* has made me confoundedly sleepy, and it is too soon to go to bed yet."

"Certainly, M. Corfe." And the manager summoned a waiter and gave the order, whereupon they glided into another subject of conversation.

At breakfast next morning Corfe announced that he was going to walk over the Dent du Jaman to Vevey, where he might probably pass the night. But when he was well out of sight of the Hôtel Rousseau he set his face towards the Hôtel de la Forêt, and after a two hours' tramp—sometimes following the road, which zigzagged ever upwards, sometimes taking short cuts between vineyards, through woods, and across pastures—he reached his destination, a long, low, picturesque wooden building, with a verandah and a terrace, commanding a magnificent prospect of the lake and the Alps. All around was white, and for the last half-hour Corfe had been walking over snow. His first proceeding was to get a good luncheon, his next to stroll round the hotel and ask a labourer, who was stacking firewood, the way to La Boissière. The man told him. Turn to the right after crossing the bridge higher up, then bear to the left about two kilometres off. Not much of a place; only two or three chalets; no auberge. Did a family called Courbet live there? Yes; old Père Courbet—everybody knew old Père Courbet. His was the highest chalet and the biggest. And then the man, who was very sparing of his words, went on stacking his firewood.

In half an hour Corfe was at La Boissière,

three wooden farm-houses, a quarter of a mile apart from each other. It was easy to recognise Père Courbet's chalet on the crest of the hill, backed by pine woods, and flanked by a grange and several minor buildings. A breezy place enough, and in summer doubtless very pleasant, but just now of somewhat bleak and wintry aspect.

Corfe walked to and fro and hung about the place a long time. He might have found a pretext for going into the house by making an inquiry about the way, or asking for a cup of milk; but that would not have suited his purpose. He wanted to get speech of Vera, and it was hardly possible that he should find her alone indoors. His only chance was to catch her outside. But in this he did not succeed, and late in the afternoon he hied back to the Hôtel de la Forêt in a very bad temper, and spent the evening in a dimly-lighted and insufficiently warmed smoking-room, over an ancient copy of *Galignani* and a *Gazette de Lausanne*, which latter, though a good paper as far as it went, did not go very far, being only about the size of a lady's pocket-handkerchief, and could be read, advertisements and all, in about five minutes.

The next day Corfe had better luck. After prowling about La Boissière an hour or more, he took a turn in the direction of the lake, then retraced his steps, and at a bend in the road where a mountain stream was crossed by a rude bridge of pine logs, he caught sight of a figure coming towards him, which made his heart give a sudden bound and himself for an instant stand stock still, like a pointer setting game.

Yes, there could be no doubt of it. It was she—the heroine of the ball and the unconscious heiress of fifty million francs. It made more of a mouthful in francs than in pounds sterling.

"And mighty well she looks," was Corfe's mental commentary. "Not a bit like a common peasant."

It was quite true; for, albeit far from rich, Vera's dress was tasteful and becoming. A turban-shaped hat, probably of her own making, trimmed with rabbit skin, a muff of the same material, a thick cloth jacket with bright steel buttons and white fur about the neck, and a stuff gown of silver grey. The gown, well tucked up to keep it out of the snow, displays several inches of a striped red petticoat, shapely ankles, and a pair of well-formed feet, shod with stout mountain boots. The girl moves with a springy step; her dark eyes are bright with gladness, for she

delights in the open air, and the warm blood has transfused with crimson the rich olive of her cheeks.

As Corfe hears her he doffs his hat and makes a low bow. "I beg pardon, Mademoiselle," he says: "would you have the kindness to direct me to the Gorge des Châtaigniers?"

"Certainly, Monsieur," answers Vera drawing one hand from her muff. "You go up there until you come to a fountain, then you turn to the left until you come to a chalet, and then you will see a footpath that leads to the gorge."

"A thousand thanks," returns Corfe as the girl essays to resume her walk. "I beg pardon again; but I think I have had the pleasure of meeting Mademoiselle before."

"I think you are mistaken, Monsieur. I do not remember you," says Vera coldly; and again she makes an effort to go on, for she has been bred in the belief that it is not *comme il faut* for a *jeune fille* to engage in solitary conversation with any man, above all a stranger.

But Corfe stands in the way.

"I remember you," he replies in his most gracious manner. "Nobody who has once seen Mademoiselle Leonino could possibly forget her. It was at the fête at the Hôtel Rousseau. You danced with an Englishman, M. Balmaine."

"But you are not M. Balmaine," she exclaims sharply, surprised into an answer she did not intend to make.

"No; but he is my friend. I was with him. Your name is Italian, Mademoiselle Leonino. Are you of Italian origin? I once met a gentleman of that name at—where was it? Yes, at Lucca. Could he be a relation of yours?"

"Oh, perhaps it was——" and then remembering how extremely improper it is to continue talking with a strange gentleman *tête-à-tête*, she tries again to pass her questioner.

"I beg pardon a thousand times, Mademoiselle, but do, please, permit me one word more," urges Corfe, still barring the way. "You were saying——"

At this moment a dog bounds from the wood into the road, followed by a young fellow got up *à la chasseur* and with a fowling piece under his arm.

"Good day, Monsieur Jules," exclaimed Vera, again moving forward. This time Corfe did not attempt to bar the way.

"Good day, Mademoiselle Leonino," answered the chasseur in a surprised voice and

with a look that said as plainly as possible: "Who is that man there?"

"This gentleman wants to know the way to the Gorge des Châtaigniers. Perhaps you will be good enough to show him. *Au revoir*, Monsieur Jules," and without so much as looking at Corfe she drew herself up and struck sharply down the mountain.

"Perfectly," said M. Jules. "*Allons, Monsieur*. I will put you in the way. Does Monsieur know Mademoiselle Leonino?"

"Not precisely. I met her at the fête a little while ago—that is all. Does she live hereabouts?"

"Yes, at La Boissière, the large chalet up yonder."

"With her parents?"

"Not at all. Madame Gabrielle, that is Monsieur Courbet's daughter, is her *tutrice*. Her parents are dead, and Madame Gabrielle used to be her *bonne*."

"I see. Mademoiselle Leonino is pretty. Is she *fiancée*?"

"*Pas du tout*. She will have a nice *dot* though. There are many who would be glad to marry Mademoiselle Vera, very many. But Père Courbet declares there is nobody good enough for her, and that Mademoiselle desires not to marry herself. An old *gronard* and very avaricious. He has her money, and some people say that he does not want to fork out the *dot*."

"Is there a Madame Courbet?"

"No; she is dead since a long time. Madame Gabrielle manages the household of her father. But here we are at the fountain. Behold! you have only to go about three kilometres until you reach Monsieur Guyot's chalet, and you will see the gorge down below. If you follow the footpath through the wood it will take you to Chillon. *Au revoir, Monsieur*. I go a-hunting higher up the mountain."

"*Au revoir, Monsieur*. A thousand thanks for your complaisance," answered Corfe, setting off in the direction indicated.

But when he was sure that the chasseur was out of sight he turned round and walked briskly towards La Boissière.

"Madame Gabrielle is nearly sure to be alone at this hour," he said to himself. "I must interview her. It is an opportunity not to be lost."

CHAPTER XXXV.—FOUND OUT.

THE chalet of La Boissière was a somewhat ancient structure, dating from the last century, and built, as the pious text in German characters over the doorway betokened, when

the lords of Berne ruled in Canton Vaud. The woodwork was stained and darkened by age and exposure; a long gallery, ornamented with trellis-work and quaint carvings, ran along the front of the edifice, and the roof was so high and pointed that the snow slipped off as fast as it fell.

Corfe knocked boldly, and either hearing somebody say "Entrez!" or fancying he did, opened the door and entered accordingly. He found himself in a large room with a high wooden ceiling, a bare oaken floor, and a big white stove. Ranged round the paneled walls were several settles and chairs, and a heavy table with carved legs occupied the centre of the apartment.

It was evidently the principal living room of the house, and Corfe could not help remarking the scrupulous cleanliness of everything. Not a speck of dust was to be seen.

Near the stove sat a woman knitting—a tall comely woman of some forty years old, for though her face bore traces of anxiety and care, her cheeks were ruddy and her dark hair was thick and glossy, and unstreaked with grey. A frank open face withal, indicative of a kind heart and a genial temper.

"I beg a thousand pardons," said Corfe, in his most insinuating voice. "But do I speak to Madame Gabrielle Courbet?" (I had better plunge *in medias res* at once he thought.)

"At your service, Monsieur," answered Gabrielle, looking all the surprise she felt.

"Ah! I wanted to ask you, if you will kindly permit me. . . . You are the *tutrice* of Mademoiselle Vera Leonino, I believe?"

"I have that honour," returned Gabrielle, staring harder at her interlocutor than ever. "Her father on his death-bed gave Vera into my charge."

"I knew him."

"It is possible," said Gabrielle, changing colour. "He was not always with us, and knew many people whom we never saw."

"It was at Lucca I saw M. Leonino. Where did he die?"

"At Locarno."

"How?"

"He died of wounds received in an affair with the Austrians," answered Gabrielle, turning pale, "and before he died he asked me to be a mother to Vera and bring her up in my own home . . . and he gave me money. It was not much—just enough, with care, to bring her up as a demoiselle. And I have been very careful, Monsieur, and only the

interest of the money has been spent, and Vera is to me as a daughter—she is the apple of my eye—she is dearer to me than my own, and she loves me, Monsieur, ask her. Oh, Monsieur, you will not take away from me *ma fille chérie*. You cannot be so cruel! I have—have——"

Here words failed her, and sinking into her chair the *bonne* burst into tears.

"I, my good woman! I have no power to take Vera away from you—at any rate, not now. What I do not understand is why Mr. Hardy—that was his real name, you know——"

Gabrielle looked assent.

"I do not understand, I say, why he chose to have his daughter brought up in a Swiss chalet when he might have sent her to his father in England. However, that is no affair of mine—at any rate not now. Many thanks for your information. *Au plaisir de vous revoir*, Madame Gabrielle."

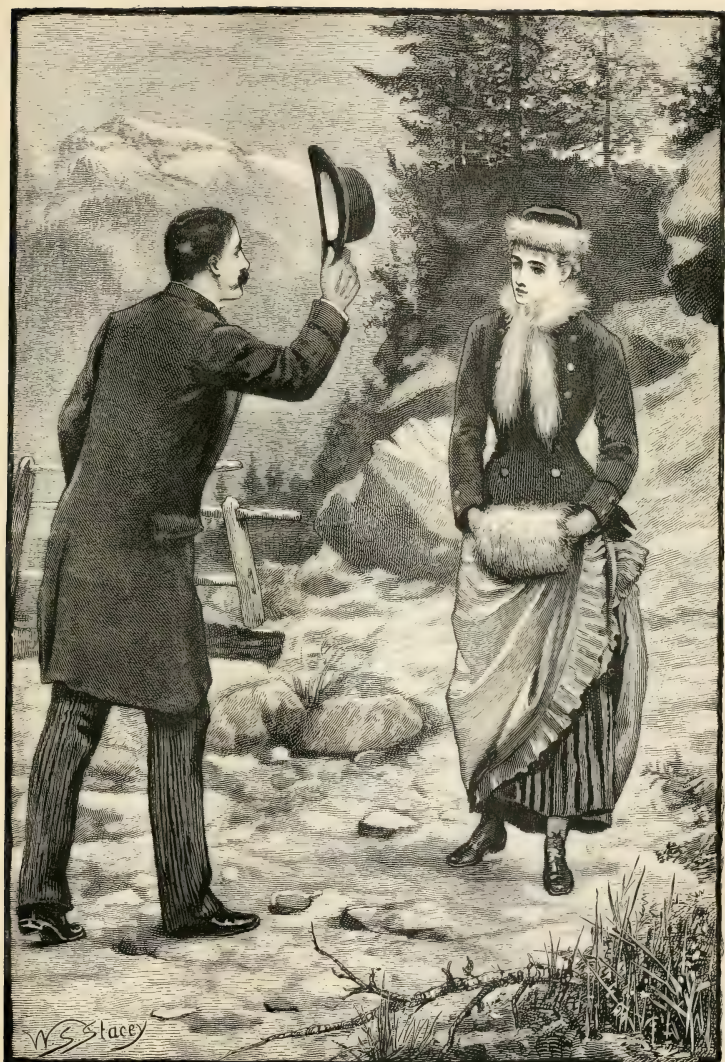
And Corfe bowed himself out of the chalet with as much politeness as if it had been a château and the *bonne* its châtelaine.

"That will do for to-day, I think," he muttered, as he walked swiftly down the hill. "I will go back to Geneva to-morrow, and do myself the pleasure of seeing Madame Gabrielle another day. It's all quite clear. She has been playing the thief—stolen both the girl and her money—that is what she has done. *Tant mieux*, gives me a splendid pull over her. Now I am sure of Vera and her millions and no mistake. Hurrah!"

And in his excitement, Corfe threw his stick high up in the air, but caught it so clumsily that he got a smart knock on the nose, which set him swearing horribly.

"If it swells," he thought, "I shall look so ridiculous." It did swell, and was so much "barked" besides, that he had to repair damages with sticking plaister, and invent a story about a walk in the forest and a falling branch.

"My sin has found me out," groaned Gabrielle, when she was left alone. "That man knows everything. I could see it in his manner, read it in his eye. He will come again; he will take my darling, *ma fille chérie*, away from me. And when she knows—when she knows that all this time I have deceived her, kept her in this poor house when she might have been in a palace—what will she say—oh, *mon dieu*, what will she say! She will despise me, she will leave me, she will say 'Gabrielle, I hate you!' Oh no, no, no, that would be more than I could bear. I would rather die. And my father, when



"As Corfe nears her he doffs his hat and makes a low bow."

they ask him for the money what will he say, what will he do? Oh, *mon dieu ! mon dieu !* that which I have feared all these years has come to pass. My sin has found me out. Yet I did it for the best—I did it for the best.”

The poor woman in her agony wrung her hands, her face was bedewed with bitter tears, and she rocked herself wildly to and fro. This went on for a whole hour, and might have gone on longer if the striking of a clock had not recalled her to herself, and warned her that it was time to prepare for the midday-meal. She ran to her own room, and when she came back in a more composed frame of mind, and with a face which, though pale, showed few traces of emotion, a stout kitchen wench was spreading a coarse cloth at one end of the big table. A few minutes later the girl brought in a soup tureen, and almost at the same instant entered Père Courbet, a tall old man, all bone and sinew, and with a long lean face, tanned by continual exposure to wind and sun to the colour and consistency of leather. Whiskers he had none, and his short white hair, which had been cut close to his head, stood up like bristles. A stern, silent man now, whatever he may have been in his youth. Without a word he placed himself at the head of the table, and a few minutes later they were joined by Jean, the *garçon*, a man nearly as old as his *patron*, and the only farm servant kept through the winter.

The repast was of Spartan simplicity. Soup *à la bataille*, a piece of cold boiled bacon and roasted potatoes, goat-milk cheese, and *pain de ménage à discrétion*. The loaf was a huge circular thing, as big and as hard as a wheelbarrow trundle. But the frugality in eating did not extend to drinking. Père Courbet drank a whole litre of *vin blanc*, Jean half a litre, but of inferior quality, and the coffee that succeeded the cheese was considerably diluted with cognac.

The wine and the cognac, and the sense of satisfaction produced by a plentiful meal, loosened the old peasant's tongue somewhat.

“Where is Mademoiselle to-day?” he asked.

“At M. Senarcels’.”

“She will bring back books, or pictures, or something of that sort, I suppose.”

“Very likely. She generally does.”

“I do not believe in so many books. Mademoiselle reads too much. She would do better to milk the kine and help in the vineyards like other girls. Her fortune is not so great that she may not have to work

for her living one of these days. If she marries a peasant she will have to work.”

“I do not think——” and then Gabrielle stopped short.

“Perhaps you think a peasant is not good enough for her,” said the old man scornfully. “Not that I want her to marry just now at all. But a girl does far better to marry an honest peasant with a bit of land and a house he can call his own, than a *viveur* from the town, who is clad in purple and fine linen one day and in rags the next. And Mademoiselle would make a very poor peasant's wife I am thinking.”

“You do Vera wrong, father. She has not an idle bone in her body. Didn't she help in the vineyard last vintage, and work in the hayfield last harvest, and doesn't she help me in the house? She is the best fine-darner in the commune, and when she can spare time she is always at her painting——”

“Painting!” interrupted the old man in a tone of contempt, “what good will painting do her? Send her to the wash-tub rather.”

“No, indeed,” returned Gabrielle indignantly, “I shall do nothing of the sort. I will not let her do coarse work. There is no reason why she should. Does she not pay us a pension?”

“Yes, twenty-five francs a week,” returned Père Courbet bitterly.

“And quite enough too. It's more than she eats. The lodging costs you nothing.”

“It might easily have been more. If it had been thirty or forty francs a week, how much less I should have to pay! Ten francs a week for ten years—that would be more than five thousand francs—the price of a nice bit of land. Besides, she does not pay twenty-five francs; she pays nothing. It all comes out of the interest I pay her on the loan—five per cent. It is a great deal too much.”

“You were glad enough to pay it once, father. You forget that Vera's money saved you from ruin. What would you have done without it?”

“As for that, I cannot do without it now. I could not raise the money without selling some of my land—do you hear, Gabrielle?—without selling some of my land. There must be no question of Mademoiselle marrying unless (with an incredulous laugh) you can persuade somebody to take her without dower. Monsieur Jules will not—of that you may be sure. And look here, Gabrielle, I must have thirty francs a week for pension,

or the interest must be reduced to four per cent.—whichever you like. I give you notice from this day.”

Whereupon Père Courbet refilled and relighted his pipe, and stalked out of the house.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—AT LA BOISSIÈRE.

“I SUPPOSE M. Lacroix has been at him again,” thought Gabrielle, as she returned to her knitting; “he is very wishful for his son Jules to marry Vera, and they are well off, and Jules is by no means an undesirable *parti*. But would Vera marry a peasant? I doubt it. She has her own ideas; she knows that in England girls make their own choice, and that M. Senarclens means to let his daughters make their own choice. Still, if she marries anybody, I should like it to be Jules, for then I should always have her near me, and that strange Monsieur could not take her away. Who is he, I wonder, and how can he have found out? He knew poor M. Leonino at Lucca, he said. It is true we were once at Lucca, but I do not remember the face, and if he had ever come to see Monsieur I should remember it—I never forget a face. Since I came here with Vera I have not seen one face I knew in Italy.”

And then Gabrielle went over in her mind for the hundredth time all the events connected with the demise of Philip Hardy—the arrival of the wounded man at Locarno, his last instructions, his death and funeral, and her departure, as all thought, for London. But the letter she had received from her mother weighed heavily on her mind. It told that her people were in sore trouble. The father’s soul was in the land. He worked harder than any labourer, and did more work than any two men in the commune. His only thought was to increase his patrimony. He bought every bit of meadow land and vineyard he could lay his hands on, mortgaging one purchase to pay for another. In his eagerness he committed a grave imprudence—raised a loan on the personal security of himself and a neighbour, the understanding being that they should divide the proceeds; but his fellow borrower contrived to get hold of the entire amount, and before Courbet could make him disgorge the man failed. Then the family at La Boissière saw ruin staring them in the face. All their property being mortgaged, it was impossible to meet the claims upon them without making a forced sale of the whole of their land, leaving the house where Courbet’s father and

grandfather had lived and he himself was born, and starting the world afresh.

These were the tidings that Gabrielle received the day after her late master’s funeral. They nearly broke her heart, and her grief was all the keener that she felt so utterly powerless to help her parents in their need. What could her poor savings do towards providing the thirty or forty thousand francs—an enormous sum in peasant estimation—required by her father to save him from ruin?

“Forty thousand francs!” she repeated to herself, as the diligence lumbered up the Val de Tremola, “forty thousand francs! why, I have nearly as much in my possession. Why should I not lend it to them?”

It was the first time the idea had occurred to her, and she strove to put it away; but it returned again and again, and the more she thought of it the more feasible and less objectionable did it seem. Against any ordinary temptation the *bonne* would have been proof, but this she was powerless to withstand—it took her on her weakest side—and before the diligence reached Goeschenen she had decided on her course of action. Instead of going to London she would go to La Boissière. It would be easy to account for her appearance there by saying that M. Leonino had left Vera in her charge, and given her a sum of money, the interest of which would be sufficient to defray the cost of the child’s maintenance and education, and that she was to be brought up in Switzerland—living and education being so much less expensive in that country than in England. Then she would propose to lend her father the money entrusted to her by her master.

In this Gabrielle persuaded herself there would be nothing very wrong. She did not mean to take the child’s money; she would account for every centime, charging nothing for her own services, and when Vera reached womanhood restore the girl her fortune intact. Vera had never seen her grandfather, and had no desire to see him. Now that her father was gone there was nobody in the world she cared for but her *bonne*, and life on the mountains of Canton Vaud was infinitely preferable to life in the fogs of London, for Gabrielle of course believed that the English capital was shrouded in perpetual gloom. She did not think that she ran much risk of being traced or followed. M. Hardy *père* knew not that his son was dead; Martino and the others at Locarno thought she was gone to London; and up there in the mountains it was to the last

degree improbable that she would meet anybody who had known either the child or her father.

Altogether Gabrielle felt quite safe, and when she told her story at La Boissière, and produced the thirty-two thousand francs she had brought with her, there was an outburst of joy that obliterated from her mind the last traces of hesitancy or compunction. An act which caused so much satisfaction, and saved an honest family from ruin, could not be wrong.

"You have saved my life and your father's honour," exclaimed Madame Courbet, as she clasped her daughter in her arms. "If we had been sold up it would have killed me."

Père Courbet was not an emotional man; but when he saw the money counted out on the table he wept tears of gladness.

"God bless thee! my child," he said fervently, "I can keep the land and the old place now—all but the strip of pasture below the pine wood, and if I had not promised it to Lacroix I would keep that too, although he does pay me a good price for it, and I bought it cheap."

Neither Courbet nor his wife would hear of anything being paid for Vera's board. She was their good angel, they said; she had brought them luck, and as for her keep, why, that would amount to nothing at all. The child was welcome to the best they could give. So Gabrielle was able to save nearly the whole of the interest paid by her father towards the expense of Vera's education, and after they had been at La Boissière a twelvemonth she sent the girl to an excellent school at Vevey. But nearly every Sunday and fête day the *bonne* walked down the mountain to visit her ward, and Vera spent her holidays at La Boissière.

For several years all went well, but Madame Courbet's death, an event which occurred when Vera was about fourteen, wrought a great change at La Boissière. She never forgot how much they owed to Gabrielle, nor the consideration due to Vera; she always made much of the child, and her influence kept in check the natural greed of her husband's disposition. But when she was gone and as the years went by, the old man forgot the benefit and remembered only the burden and the obligation. The thirty odd thousand francs he owed Vera, and the consciousness that they would some day have to be repaid, weighed heavily on his mind, and if the interest had been composed of drops of his own blood he could not have begrudged it more. He insisted on Vera paying for her

board and lodging, demanded a more rigid economy in the household, grumbled at every little expense, and often made both his daughter and Vera weep bitter tears. It was then that Gabrielle began to have doubts as to the wisdom of the course she had adopted; to ask herself if she had done right in disobeying her master's instructions, and if she had not done Vera a great wrong in bringing her to La Boissière instead of taking her to London. The superior education she had given the girl made it all the worse. The *châlet*, with its sordid economies and her father's uncertain temper, was no place for a girl like Vera. And what was to become of her? The only alternative was to marry her. But to whom? Jules Lacroix was a *bon garçon* and Gabrielle liked him; but she did not like the idea of marrying her child, of whose acquirements and accomplishments she was so proud, to a peasant, even if the child would consent, which was very doubtful. But if that stranger should come again and try to take Vera away, she might make the attempt. Anything would be better than to lose her.

But as Gabrielle got over her first surprise, the danger from that quarter seemed less formidable than at the first blush it had appeared. The gentleman did not say that he was a kinsman of Vera. He had only known M. Leonino at Lucca. What right then had he to interfere? Who knew what had passed between her master and herself, or could say that in coming to Switzerland she had not obeyed his orders? The sole evidence against her was the letter to his father (an old man who was surely dead by this time), and that she had hidden in her box up-stairs and could easily destroy.

On the whole, Gabrielle, albeit still conscience-stricken and uneasy, felt more reassured, and when Vera returned, late in the afternoon, she was able to greet her with a cheerful smile.

"I don't like your going out alone," she said, as the girl stooped to kiss her. "It does not seem *comme il faut*. A demoiselle like you should not go so far without escort. But you would not like old Jean or Georgette (the kitchen wench) even if they could be spared, and I cannot always go with you."

"No, indeed," answered Vera with a merry laugh. "Fancy old Jean hobbling behind me in his big *sabots*! and as for Georgette, it is I who would have to take care of her. She is afraid of her own shadow. Don't you remember sending her to meet me one evening last winter when I was rather late, how I hid

behind a tree and called out, Boo—oo! and how poor Georgette ran home so fast that I could not overtake her?"

"Yes, I remember very well, *la pauvre Georgette*," said Gabrielle, laughing in return.

"Well, I don't think there is much danger; our mountains are quite safe, and everybody in these parts knows you."

"Quite so. It is not as if we were in a large town. But do you know, *chère Gabrielle*, that I met with an adventure to-day? A gentleman accosted me."

"*Ma foi*, you don't say so! Who was he?"

"That I cannot tell you. I never saw him before. He began by asking me the way to the Gorge des Châtaigniers; but I have thought since that it was only an excuse to get speech of me. Then, when I had shown him the way, he said he had seen me before,—at the fête of the Hôtel Rousseau."

"It was not the Englishman with whom you danced? How does he call himself? Monsieur Balmaine?"

"Not at all," answered Vera, rather more impetuously than she need have done. "Do you think I should not recognise a monsieur with whom I danced three times? No, this gentleman is not at all like M. Balmaine. I am not even sure that he is English; his accent, which was very slight, seemed rather Italian. He asked me if I was not Italian, and said he once knew somebody called Leonino at Lucca. I was going to ask for further particulars thinking it might be my father he had met, when I remembered that I was *en tête-à-tête* with a strange gentleman, and at the same moment M. Jules appeared with his dog, and I went my way."

"You did quite right, *ma chère*. What was he like, this gentleman?"

"Rather tall and square-shouldered. A very good profile, straight nose and wide nostrils; mouth so covered with a heavy moustache that I could not see its expression, very square jaws and shaven cheeks. But I did not like his eyes, they are too small, and his under eyelids being swollen, they seem even smaller than they really are, which gives him a bad look. At least it seemed so to me, though I dare say there are people who might consider him a fine-looking man."

"You are a close observer, *ma petite*."

"That is because I paint. Lucie Senarcles and I are doing portraits at present, and that makes me study faces, you know."

"What makes you think this gentleman asked the way to the Gorge des Châtaigniers only as a pretext?" asked the *bonne*, with as

much indifference as she could assume, for the meeting of Vera with the stranger appeared of evil omen and disturbed her much.

"Because when I pointed out the way he did not seem to pay attention, and though he was profusely polite, his manner or his voice—I really cannot tell which—did not impress me as that of a sincere man. I wonder whether he really did know my poor father, Gabrielle?"

"I am afraid that was only another pretext, Vera."

"I should think so too if he had not mentioned Lucca; how could he know we were ever at Lucca?"

"That is impossible to say. He may have heard from somebody, or it may have been just a happy guess."

"It's very strange though. I wonder who he could be?"

The *bonne* was wondering equally, but wanting the subject to drop she made no reply.

"Gabrielle!" said Vera, after a long pause passed in deep thought.

"Yes, Mademoiselle."

"You did not know my mother?"

"No, I became your *bonne* only after she died, when you were about four years old."

"Poor mother!" said Vera, with a look of abstraction. "I only just remember her. Still I can see her face and hear her soft voice as she said *carissima mia*. But my father, I remember him so well, Gabrielle, so well, and all that happened in those terrible days at Locarno, and how I nestled in his arms, and how he loved me. And I loved him, Gabrielle. I love him still. Oh! it was cruel to lose so kind a father. How I hate those Austrians! I could——" Here the girl made a gesture as if she were striking down an imaginary foe—"I could kill them. You are quite sure, Gabrielle, that my father had no kinsfolk in England?"

"Only your grandfather, and he died, you know."

"It seems very strange. M. Senarcles was saying to-day that he thinks we should find I have relatives in England if proper inquiry were made. I should like to go to England, Gabrielle. It is my country, yet I have never seen it."

"No; Italy is your country, *ma chère*."

"Not at all" (with great decision). "My father was English, and M. Senarcles says the nationality of the child is that of the father. I should like to know something about my mother's family, if it were possible."

"I am more ignorant about your mother's family than your father's," said Gabrielle, as if she were growing rather tired of the subject. "I know only that she died when you were very young, and that her name was Leonino."

"I think I shall abandon that name, Gabrielle, and call myself for the future Vera Hardy."

"But why?" exclaimed the *bonne*, with inward tremor though outward calm. "Your father called himself by that name; why should not you?"

"He had good reasons, no doubt; but it seems to me that a daughter should bear her father's name."

"But think, Vera, how inconvenient it would be. You have been so long known as Leonino. Who put the idea into your head, *ma chère*?"

"It is my own idea, though I did hear Lucie one day remark that it was strange I should be called by my mother's name. That set me thinking, and now it seems strange to me. Why did my father take my mother's name?"

"To deceive the Austrians, I suppose."

"Exactly. Well, I don't want to deceive the Austrians. I would rather defy them. Vera Leonino Hardy is my name, Gabrielle, and after my next birthday I shall ask everybody so to call me. I am an English girl, and I hate always to be taken for an Italian."

As Vera spoke a heavy footstep was heard in the yard, and a moment afterwards Père Courbet entered the house.

"Have you two nothing better to do than chatter?" he asked, with a snarl.

Then the two knew that he had been drinking. Not that the old man ever got drunk, but when he had been taking more wine or cognac than usual—and he usually took a good deal—his temper worsened, and he sometimes became very abusive.

Vera, fearing a scene, withdrew to her own room without answering a word. She was beginning utterly to detest M. Courbet, and notwithstanding her affection for her *bonne*, had sometimes serious thoughts of seeking fresh quarters. The contrast between the refined home of her friends at Territet and her own, already sufficiently painful, was rendered by the old peasant's rudeness and ill-temper almost intolerable. But out of consideration for Gabrielle she had hitherto kept these thoughts to herself; and the *bonne*, albeit she doubtless guessed them, saw no way of making a change that would not separate her from Vera.

The girl's questions and remarks about her father and her name greatly distressed Gabrielle. Vera had never talked in the same strain before, and the *bonne* almost regretted that she had always been so frank in giving her information, and had let her know, among other things, that her father's name was Hardy. In her present temper this knowledge might lead to awkward complications.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—A CATASTROPHE.

ABOUT the same time that Corfe hit himself on the nose with his own stick, the sub-editors of the *Helvetic News*, by a not very singular coincidence, chanced to be all at their posts. Milnthorpe was hard at work with scissors and paste, Delane making up a column of "Continental Notes," and Balmaine looking over his last leader, and trying to think of a subject for his next.

"The paper has still a good show of advertisements," he observed carelessly, "though it is the dead season."

"Of course it has," returned Delane, with a laugh; "why shouldn't it?"

"I suppose you mean they are not all genuine."

"I should think not, indeed. Why Coxwell told me so only yesterday."

"Hush!" put in Milnthorpe, who was better at listening than talking; "isn't that Gibson's step on the stairs?"

"Nonsense!" answered Delane; "he never comes at this time."

But Delane was mistaken, for the next moment the editor-in-chief entered the room.

"Good morning, gentlemen," he said to his three subordinates, who at his approach had resumed their work.

They all turned round and looked at him, for he spoke with a half gasp, half stammer, in marked contrast with his usual hearty greeting. One glance was enough to show that something had gone wrong. The editor's face was pale and twitched, and though the day was cold, heavy beads of perspiration stood on his brow.

"Have you heard?—do you know?" he gasped.

"We have heard nothing particular this morning; what is it, Mr. Gibson?" asked Balmaine anxiously.

"Harman's have burst, and—and—I have nearly £400 in their hands."

The three subs stared first at him and then at each other. They could hardly believe they heard aright; and the same thought

struck them all—that either the chief had been drinking or gone off his head.

"I came round by the bank to cash a cheque," he went on, with a little more self-possession, "and got there just as they closed the doors. Something wrong in New York; the houses there and in London suspended payment yesterday, and the house here was of course obliged to follow suit. There will be a terrible row; a crowd before the door already. I ran on here at once. It is an awful blow for me, but that is not the worst. I fear it will stop the paper. Everybody knows that Harman was its chief support; and now, instead of getting more money, Leyland and Mayo will have to pay up."

"Have you seen Mayo?" asked Balmaine.

"No; somebody was with him. He has heard though. I am going again now, for I must see him. I shall return presently, and tell you what is going to be done."

"Well, this is a go!" exclaimed Delane, when they were left alone. "I don't know how it will be with you fellows, but I am in a nice hole; I am that."

"I thought you kept all your money in your breeches-pocket," said Balmaine.

"So I do, and here it is; all that I have" (displaying a couple of napoleons and some silver), "and all that I shall get if the paper stops—not enough to carry me to England. I was paid up on Saturday. How is it with you, Balmaine?"

"Bad enough if the paper stops. I have eight hundred francs at Harman's and fifty in my pocket. But will the paper stop?"

"I doubt it. Anyhow, Leyland and Mayo will meet the occasion if anybody can. They have immense energy and few scruples, I will say that for them."

"If the paper should stop will you let me be your banker?" put in Milnthorpe quietly.

The others thought he was joking; their taciturn colleague being the last man in the world whom they would have suspected of being a capitalist.

"I have been saving, for an object," continued Milnthorpe; "but I have neither kept my savings in my breeches-pocket nor deposited them at Harman's. Pockets have holes sometimes, and I have heard that pretty nearly every American banker fails sooner or later, and generally sooner than later. No. I put my money in the Banque Populaire, an excellent institution which gives better interest than the other banks, and is quite as safe. I have no present occasion for money, and if you will permit me shall be

very glad to accommodate you with a few hundred francs."

Delane and Balmaine exchanged significant looks. How they had mistaken this man! They had thought him poor, miserly, and unsympathetic, and now he was proving to be that *rara avis*, a generous capitalist and a true friend in need.

"You are a good fellow, Milnthorpe," said the Irishman, "and I thank you with all my heart. If the paper does burst up I will certainly take advantage of your kindness. You shall lend me as much as will pay my travelling expenses to London; when I get there I shall be all right."

"And you, Balmaine?" asked Milnthorpe.

"You are really too kind," said Alfred, "and, like Delane, I thank you with all my heart. If I should have occasion I will not fail to ask you for a temporary loan. But if the worst comes to the worst—which is contrary both to my hopes and my expectations—I think I shall have as much coming from the *Day* as will keep me here a little while, and, if necessary, carry me to England."

"Well, whenever you want a little money you have only to mention it, you know," returned Milnthorpe, who seemed disappointed that neither of his friends would oblige him by accepting an immediate loan.

Half an hour later Gibson returned with the news that the paper was going on.

"Mayo was terribly upset at first," he said, "as might be expected; but he very soon rallied, and has no idea whatever of stopping. It is true they owe the bank a thumping sum, which they can no more pay than they can fly; but as Mayo says, liquidators are never hard on their debtors; and as it will take a long while to wind up so big a business as Harman's, they will have plenty of time to turn round in. But until Leyland comes—and he has been telegraphed for—nothing final will be decided."

"Except to carry on the paper," put in Delane.

"Of course. Except to carry on the paper—'that goes without saying.' Mayo is fully determined on that point. He says that rather than stop it he would rob a church."

"I believe him," said Delane dryly.

"And Mayo seems to think," went on the editor, "that it won't be such a bad affair, after all. Here, at least, Harman's have made no losses; and the estate ought to yield a very fair dividend—probably seventy or eighty per cent."

"Seventy or eighty per cent.," observed

Milnthorpe quietly, "means something like fifteen shillings in the pound, and fifteen shillings in the pound is an almost unheard-of dividend. An estate that pays that much must be virtually solvent, for the wreckers—lawyers, accountants, and the rest—are not often satisfied with a fourth. If Harman owed me anything and I was offered fifty per cent. I should take it, and be thankful."

"No, no, Mr. Milnthorpe," returned Gibson with a touch of scorn in his voice. "You mean well, I dare say, and seem to know a good deal about these things; but I must have more than fifty per cent., my dear sir. If I don't I shall lose £200 of hard-earned money. I am going to see Harman, and I shall insist on having, at least, seventy-five per cent. Even that would involve a sacrifice of £100."

"As if by insisting one could get blood out of a stone!" said Milnthorpe, with a quiet laugh, as Gibson left the room. "Why doesn't he insist on a hundred per cent. while he is about it?"

"You do not think very highly of his chance of getting seventy-five per cent. then?" asked Delane.

"I don't. I shall be surprised if Harman's estate pays ten per cent."

"In that case I may look on my unfortunate thirty pounds as practically lost," said Balmaine with a sigh. "But about the paper; do you think it can go on?"

"That depends on whether Mayo and Leyland can raise enough money from week to week to pay current expenses—wages and suchlike—until they are able to arrange some new combination, obtain a loan, take in a partner, or find a buyer with more money than brains."

"You seem to know a good deal about these things, as Gibson just now observed. Have you been in business yourself, Milnthorpe?"

"Unfortunately, I have."

"Why unfortunately?"

"For a good many reasons. Perhaps I may tell you one of these days. Meanwhile let me give you a bit of advice. It often happens just after a failure that some fellow with more hope than experience offers to buy up claims. If anybody makes you an offer take it, whatever it be."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—CORFE IN A CORNER.

LATER in the day Gibson came back greatly lifted up, and with an unmistakable "didn't-I-tell-you-so" look on his face.

"I have had a long talk with Harman,"

he said rather largely; "and it is quite as I expected. He is very much cut up, poor fellow, very much; but full of confidence. Showed me a telegram from New York; the third since last night. The house is quite solvent, and the suspension arises solely from a temporary lock-up of funds. So soon as they can realise their securities they will pay everybody in full and resume business."

"And when does Mr. Harman expect that will be?" asked Balmaine, with a side glance at Milnthorpe.

"Well, I did put the question to him, but he could not exactly say. You cannot always put a date to these things, you know; but if you asked my private opinion I should say, in about three months. At any rate, it won't be long; and I feel quite sure now of getting every shilling of my £400. Little thinks so, and he ought to know."

"Harman's particular friend, you mean?"

"Yes, Rickarby A. Little, from New York, said to be a double millionaire—in dollars. I'll tell you what he said, and he has the courage of his opinion. 'I am a large creditor of Harman Brothers,' he said, 'both here and in New York, but I feel just as sure of getting my money as if it were in your Bank of England. And I am quite prepared to buy any of the firm's debts at fifty per cent.—cash down and no questions asked.'"

"Considering Mr. Rickarby A. Little feels so cock sure of getting paid in full, that seems rather a low figure, doesn't it?" asked Milnthorpe.

"Just what I observed," returned the editor; "and he answered me with that directness which is so admirable a feature of the American character. 'I do not pretend to do business for nothing,' he said. 'If I buy up claims on this estate I mean to make a profit, and if people don't like to deal they need not—that is all.'"

"Did you accept his offer?" inquired Balmaine.

"Certainly not," replied Gibson warmly.

"Mr. Little is a very smart man, I dare say; but an old bird is not to be caught with chaff. No, Balmaine, I would not take ninety per cent. for my claim; and if you take any less for yours you will be very foolish."

"Perhaps," said Alfred; "but I am not quite so sanguine about the result as you are. I want money, too, and if so small a claim as mine is not beneath his notice, I would let Mr. Rickarby have it on his own terms."

"I'll tell you what," returned Gibson briskly, seeing, as he thought, a chance of turning an honest penny, "I'll buy it from

you myself. At the same time, I tell you frankly I think you are doing wrong."

"I dare say I am. All the same, as Mr. Little would say, I am ready to deal. A bird in the hand—you know."

"As you like. How much is it?"

"The exact amount," said Alfred, referring to his memorandum-book, "is 918 francs."

"Then I must give you 459 francs. All right. I will bring you the money in the morning. I am going below to tell Mayo what I have heard. I shall be back presently."

"You managed that very well, Balmaine," said Milnthorpe with an approving smile.

"You think I have done right, then?" returned Alfred dubiously, as if he were not quite sure about it.

"I have not a doubt of it; and as for Mr. Little, I am not at all sure that, if he were put to the test, he would buy claims at fifty per cent. or any other discount."

"Why should he say so, then?"

"Bounce, my dear fellow, bounce. An American is a born bouncer, just as an Italian is a born liar. Talking tall comes natural to him, just as skinning flints comes natural to a Scotchman and overreaching to a Jew. I am only surprised that anybody born in such a big country as America should own to the name of Little."

"You are in a cynical mood, Milnthorpe. Have you been in America?"

"I have—to my sorrow! But of that another time. Jud will be here in five minutes for copy, and I have not done a stroke of work the last two hours, or more." And as he spoke Milnthorpe seized his scissors, and cut viciously into the *American Eagle*.

On the following afternoon Corfe appeared at the office. He had heard the news, of course. Nobody could be half an hour in Geneva without hearing it—highly embellished. He was wild with rage, and in his excitement quite forgot that he had to pose as a disconsolate widower.

"It's a regular swindle!" he said furiously, "and when I get hold of Harman he will pass the *mauvais quart d'heure de Rabelais*. I can promise him that. Why, to hear him and that head bottle-washer of his talk—confound them both for a pair of arrant knaves—and see the army of clerks they kept, and the bundles of bank-notes that were always knocking about the place, you would have

thought the firm as rich as Rothschilds! I did, and a darned fool I was. Seven thousand francs clean gone! I'd like to roast Robert Harman before a slow fire, or draw him a tooth every day until he pays up. These tales about tremendous losses in New York, a lock-up of funds, and all that, are all nonsense. It's downright, deliberate robbery—a plot to swindle their creditors. Does anybody know if there is any likelihood of there being any sort of dividend?"

"I suppose so," said Balmaine coolly, for Corfe's hectoring manner pleased him as little as the violence of his language. "Gibson thinks it possible the house may pay in full and resume business. Milnthorpe thinks they will pay next to nothing. For my part, I don't believe that anybody, not even Robert Harman, knows anything about it."

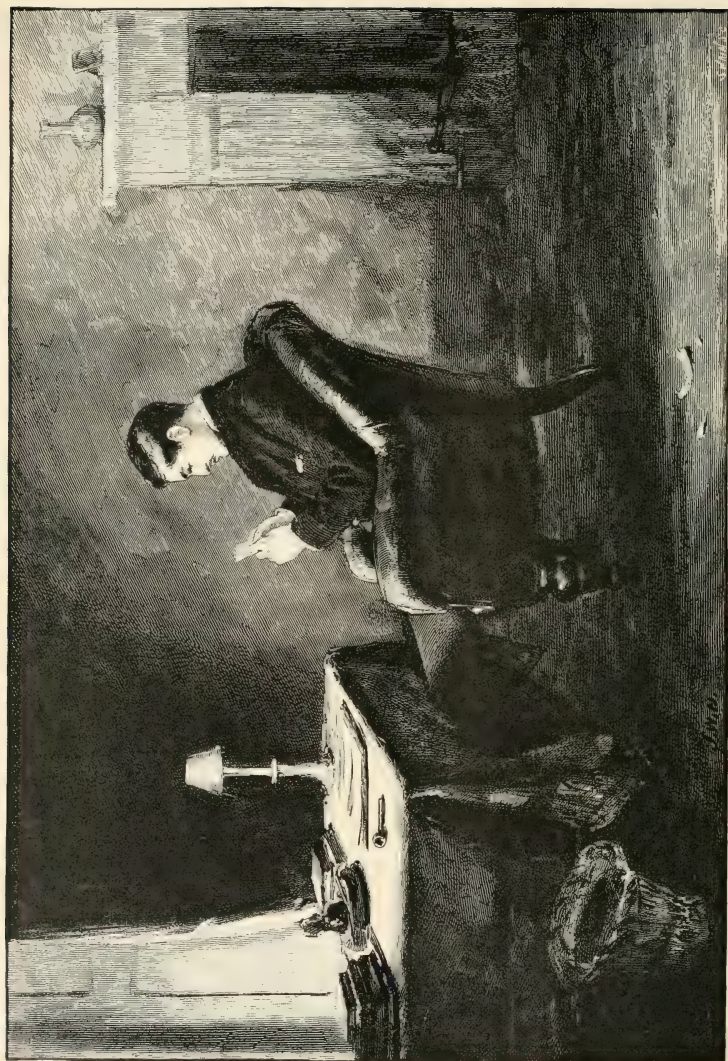
"That is likely enough. But I am of Milnthorpe's opinion. I don't think there will be a centime for anybody!"

"You had better see Little," suggested Delane, who wanted to get rid of him. And then he mentioned the American's offer to Gibson.

"I'll see him at once," said Corfe. "I think he is at the Belle Vue. Fifty per cent.! Yes, I'll take fifty per cent. I only hope Mr. Little has not changed his mind."

But Mr. Little had changed his mind. At any rate, he would not bite, though Corfe tried him very hard. He did not deny having offered Gibson fifty per cent., but since the day before he had bought several claims on Harman's estate. His firm in New York had also operated largely, and for the moment he did not feel disposed to go farther. All the same, he had not the least doubt the estate would turn out well, and if Mr. Corfe would only have patience he was sure to get all his money.

"I wish I was," muttered Corfe, as he turned on his heel without so much as saying good-morning. "He knows a sight better. If he thought so he would buy; and he won't give even a thousand francs. Well, there is only one thing for it; I must force the running with the little Leonino. It is a risk, but the risk must be run; but if I have only half-luck, I do not see how I can fail this time. The *bonne* is evidently guilty, I can make her do whatever I want, while as for the girl, she is just at the age when any sort of nonsense will go down, and if I know anything it is how to make love. I ought to do, I have had plenty of practice."



"Don't forget the 16th.—B. H."

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—AN AMICABLE MEETING.

FROM the day of his succession to the Beckton estate, Gilbert Segrave had discharged the various duties entailed upon him thereby with a thoroughness which had amply occupied his time, and had prevented him from feeling bored; but although the life of a country gentleman was not altogether distasteful to him, it was hardly that for which he considered himself to be best adapted by nature, and when at length he granted himself a holiday, and went up to London to see his friends, his sensations were very much those of a schoolboy who has reached the end of an unusually long term.

To many people who repair to London every season, the society of that city simply means the meeting of their country friends in London houses; but Gilbert, who had taken a good deal of trouble in past time to form a large acquaintance, could look forward to rather more variety than that. He could look forward, too, to the increase of popularity which necessarily attaches to an increase of income; and as he was one of the rapidly diminishing minority of young men who like going to parties, his holiday promised to be an agreeable one.

Nevertheless, it was to a country acquaintance, or at least to a lady whose acquaintance he had made in the country, that one of his first visits was paid. He was very desirous of seeing Miss Huntley, not only for her own sake, but because he wanted to know why she had forestalled him in the purchase of land to which he conceived that he had a prior claim; therefore when he called at her brother's house in Park Lane, he was glad to hear that she was at home and would receive him. He was shown into the boudoir, of which mention has already been made, and on his entrance she looked up from the davenport at which she was seated, saying:

"How do you do? You are more civil than your brother, who has never been near me all this time."

"You have been in communication with him to some purpose, though," remarked Gilbert, as he took possession of the chair to which she pointed.

"Indirectly, I have. My lawyers have been in communication with his lawyers."

"And your bankers have had something to say to his bankers."

"Naturally; and the result of that is that my extensive property now adjoins your property. I hope you are pleased."

"Would you be greatly affronted," asked Gilbert, "if I were to answer that I am not?"

"Not the least in the world; I love the unvarnished truth. Added to which, I knew quite well beforehand that you wouldn't be pleased. You wanted the Manor House yourself, didn't you?"

She had risen and had placed herself in a chair facing her visitor, at whom she was looking with an ironical smile which he hardly knew how to interpret.

"I wanted it, and want it, very much," he replied. "What I don't understand is, why you should want it—always supposing that you do."

"Well, it looks as if I did, doesn't it?"

"Yes; but appearances are often deceptive. I wonder whether you would mind telling me what was your object in doing this eccentric thing."

"You may set the apparent eccentricity down to commercial instinct," answered Beatrice calmly. "That sort of thing is hereditary, and I belong to the Buswell genus, you know. By the way, I flatter myself that I have rather taken the wind out of Mr. Buswell's sails this time."

"And out of mine too, for that matter. Do you really mean to pull the house down and go in for building leases, then?"

"I can't say what I may do eventually. Just at present my idea is to set up my household gods at Kingscliff. I like the place, and I like some of the people—Kitty Greenwood, for instance, and Mr. Monckton and Captain Mitchell, not to mention others who seem disinclined to give me a welcome. How did you leave them all?"

"Much as usual, I think," answered Gilbert; "and if they are all as overjoyed at the prospect of your settling among us as the humble individual whom you wouldn't mention, you won't have much reason to complain of them."

"Many thanks; but I understood you to say that you were anything but overjoyed."

"All I meant to say was that I wish you had fixed your choice upon any other dwelling than the Manor House. It is a tumble-

down old place ; it hasn't been lived in for years ; you will have to spend a fortune in making it habitable, and——"

"And above all, you or Mr. Buswell, or both of you, had designs upon it. Why didn't you tell me this sooner?"

"You appear to have been aware of it. Besides, you didn't give us much time," observed Gilbert, laughing.

"I am so impetuous. My only excuse is that if I had let Joseph and Clementina know what I was meditating, they would have made my life a burden to me. I find it absolutely necessary to confront them with accomplished facts. What about the political outlook? Is your seat safe?"

"By no means so safe as it was, I am afraid. For one thing, I am told that I am to have a dangerous opponent in the person of one Giles, Q.C., who is gifted with a glib tongue; and then you have put a most formidable spoke in my wheel by preventing the extension of the borough. Buswell informs me that he takes this as evidence that I haven't the interest of the place at heart, and he half threatens to withdraw his support."

"I am quite inconsolable! What can I do to atone for my selfishness?"

"Nothing, that I know of; but Buswell may relent, or I may be returned in spite of him; and if I am not—why, the loss of a seat in Parliament is not too high a price to pay for the pleasure of having you as a next-door neighbour."

"How pretty! And you really look almost as if you meant it."

"I do mean it," Gilbert averred, boldly.

She laid her head slightly on one side, resting her cheek on her right hand, while she gazed pensively at him. There was no denying that she was a very beautiful woman.

"Ah," she sighed—and if his life had depended upon it he could not have said for certain whether she was laughing at him or not—"what a pity it is that you can't both represent Kingscliff and have me near you! Is there no conceivable way of effecting the combination?"

Well, of course there was a way which was not only conceivable but so obvious that Gilbert was sure that she could not be thinking of it. Nevertheless, his heart beat faster and he was conscious of a constrained ring in his voice as he answered laughingly: "I think I ought to be contented with one or the other. We can't expect to get everything that we want in this disappointing world."

"But we can try," she rejoined. "I imagined that you were one of those people who always try to get what they want—and generally succeed."

Again he could make nothing either of her expression or of her intonation. Both appeared to be quite serious; and yet he was too shrewd and too sceptical to accept the flattering inference suggested. The hypothesis that she could be deliberately throwing herself at the head of a humble country squire was only admissible upon the assumption that she had fallen in love with that fortunate squire; and if such were the case—But Gilbert could not trust himself to dwell upon these perilous speculations.

"Oh, I assure you that I am by no means successful," he began hastily; for he had to say something, and how to end his sentence he knew not.

However, he was relieved from embarrassment on that score; for before he had got any farther, the door was thrown open and Mr. Segrave was announced.

"Another Mr. Segrave!" exclaimed Beatrice, rising. "Honours are falling upon me thick and fast this afternoon."

Brian strode into the room in time to catch her words, which brought him to an abrupt standstill. But it was only for a moment that he paused. Awkward encounters are seldom awkward in outward appearance, and this one had been anticipated on both sides, although it had now come about with unexpected suddenness. Brian, after shaking hands with Miss Huntley, said quite quietly, "How are you, Gilbert?" and Gilbert said, "Well, Brian?"—after which they all three sat down and began to talk commonplace as fast as they could.

For five minutes or so this was well enough, and in truth each of these admirably-behaved brothers, being sincerely desirous of avoiding unpleasantness, would have been content to go on in the same strain until one or other of them saw a fit opportunity for retiring; but they had to deal with a lady who did not love the commonplace, and to whom so matter-of-course a treatment of the situation may have seemed somewhat tame.

So after a time she addressed the elder, and—"When you came in," said she, "your brother and I were in full wrangle over the property which is mine now and was yours the other day. I have got it, and I am not going to give it up; but wasn't it a little bit cruel of you to sell it to me when you knew how badly he wanted it?"

Brian flushed slightly, but answered with-

out hesitating: "I wished the house to go, if possible, to somebody who would live in it."

"And how can you tell that I shall live in it?"

"I suppose you yourself can't tell," he replied, thinking of what Stapleford had said; "but there is the chance; and if I had sold it to—to anybody else there would have been no chance at all." He added in a somewhat lower voice, "I was very sorry to give up the old place; but it was necessary."

She chanced at this moment to meet his eyes, which were fixed wistfully upon her, and a swift change and softening came into her own. This, however, vanished immediately, and she turned to Gilbert, who was steadfastly contemplating the inside of his hat.

"When are you coming to be introduced to my people?" she asked. "You will find my brother full of political information and courtesy towards political opponents; and it wouldn't at all surprise me if Clementina were to amuse you. Some people are amused by her, I believe. Couldn't you come and dine with us quietly some evening?" She glanced at a list of engagements. "Would next Saturday at half-past eight suit you?" she inquired. "I see I have got two dinners down for that day, and as I can't go to both, I may as well go to neither."

Gilbert at once accepted, and she made a note of it. Then, glancing over her shoulder at the elder brother, "You too?" she asked.

"Thank you," answered Brian, with evident embarrassment, "you are very kind; but——"

"I have booked you," she interrupted, shutting up her tablets, "and you can't get out of it. Engagements must be kept, whether we like it or not; otherwise society couldn't hold together for a day. Those two dinner engagements of mine would certainly have been kept, if it hadn't been physically impossible to keep them. And that reminds me that I promised faithfully to go to tea with a cousin of mine who lives at the far end of South Kensington, and I ought to have been there half an hour ago."

The two young men rose simultaneously. Gilbert was the first to leave the room, and as Brian was following, she laid her hand lightly on his arm. "Don't throw me over on Saturday," she whispered. "I have heaps of things to say to you, and how am I to get them said if you only call once a year and time that one visit so very badly?"

Now this speech might be nothing more

than a little piece of friendliness, intended to show that Miss Huntley had not forgotten an intimacy which had once seemed to be pleasant to her; nevertheless it sent Brian down-stairs with a heart so full of good-will towards all mankind that the prospect of walking down the street with his brother was rather welcome to him than not. "Let us agree to blot out the past," he was inclined to say, "perhaps I judged you too hardly. Anyhow, the worst is over now; I shall not be in danger of dying of want again, and it was no fault of yours that I nearly starved myself once."

And indeed it was just as well that he was in so generous a mood; for Gilbert's first words were words of reproach and by no means of repentance.

"You know how to nurse a grudge and pay it off in due season, Brian," he remarked. "Do you consider that we are quits now, or have you any idea of coming down to Kings-cliff and working for the Conservative candidate against me? I dare say your support would just about enable him to carry the election, and the county generally would be delighted to see me beaten by your influence. I haven't as many friends as I used to have, you will be glad to hear."

This was not quite what Brian had expected; but he returned a soft answer. "I doubt whether I shall ever go back to Kings-cliff now," said he, "and I'm sure I wish you success, Gilbert. If you have lost friends, it hasn't been through me; for I have never seen a soul from the neighbourhood since I left home, except Monckton."

"The exception counts for something, perhaps; but the mere fact of your leaving home in the way that you did was enough to set people's tongues going; especially as they soon found out that you refused to hold any communication with me. As for your wishing me success, that is very kind of you; but you must excuse my saying that I would rather have had the chance of buying the Manor House than any number of empty wishes."

"Well," said Brian, "you heard me tell Miss Huntley just now why I couldn't offer you the Manor House."

"And I heard her answer. My dear fellow, neither she nor anybody else will ever live in that crumbling ruin, and I shouldn't mind laying you short odds that it passes out of her possession before the end of the year. Most likely I shall have to purchase it myself at some ridiculous figure—if that is any satisfaction to you. Well, as I say,

you have paid off old scores. When once a man has got a fixed idea into his head it is no use arguing with him, I know, and I suppose you will always look upon me as a swindler. Yet the fact remains that I have done simply what seemed to me to be right, and I should still be only too glad if you would allow me to hand you over the money which I shouldn't have been too proud to take from you, if our positions had been reversed."

"I don't want money; I have enough," answered Brian a little curtly.

The two brothers had turned out of Park Lane and were walking at a slow pace down Upper Grosvenor Street. Suddenly Brian stood still. "Look here, Gilbert," said he, "I don't think you have done right, so I can't say that I think so. It appears to me that you have gone dead against the poor old governor's wishes throughout—I don't mean only as regards myself, but about that sale of the building-land to Buswell. You must know that he would have done almost anything rather than that. But then, as Monckton says, you may have felt justified in disregarding his wishes; and I suppose many fellows would. Perhaps I am too proud to take money from you; but I'm not too proud to beg your pardon if I've done you an injustice. I don't know whether you quite understand how I feel about it."

"I don't know that I do," answered Gilbert, laughing; "but I know that I shall be very glad to be friends with you again, old man. And you certainly need not trouble yourself to beg my pardon."

He spoke with great cordiality and sincerity, and with no sense of shame whatever. The lie that he had told after his father's death, the treachery to which he had not been able to descend without a good deal of compunction, had faded from his memory, or, at the least, had fallen back into a dim recess thereof, beyond reach of present disturbance. No doubt he had disregarded Sir Brian's wishes, and no doubt also he had been justified in disregarding them. He was pleased with himself and pleased with his brother too. At last, then, this troublesome and rather scandalous quarrel was to come to an end!

And now, with much patience and good-humour, he began to point out how he had had really no choice in the matter of that building-land. "Nobody likes to see his estate diminishing; but if he can't make both ends meet, what is he to do? It's very much your own case. You didn't want to

sell; but you found that you must, and so did I. Besides, when all's said and done, there is such a thing as public spirit. The Kingscliff people would have had a very fair cause of complaint against me if I had gone on playing dog in the manger with them." And a good deal more to the like effect.

But Brian was not much impressed by this kind of reasoning, nor in truth was it quite as easy to him to make friends as it was to Gilbert. In his brother's sincerity he was determined to believe, and perhaps that was why he shrank from listening to explanations. He did not know that in so determining he had set before himself a simple impossibility.

At the corner of Grosvenor Square they parted. "Good-bye," Gilbert said, with a little nod and a wave of his hand. "We shall meet on Saturday, if I don't see you sooner."

CHAPTER XXIX.—A QUIET DINNER.

OF late, when, in the intervals of composition, Brian had relieved a weary brain by drifting into dreams of blissful impossibilities, he had pictured to himself some such scene as a crowded theatre, a young *maestro* bowing in response to the plaudits of the audience, and at his elbow a beautiful lady, with clear brown eyes, who seemed to participate in his triumph, and who whispered in his ear a word or two, more precious to him than thunders of cheering or columns of flattering criticism. Or perchance he might fancy himself sitting at the organ of some great cathedral, such as St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey; and, perhaps, lingering on one of the benches, after the rest of the congregation had dispersed, the same lady might be discernible, and in her brown eyes the dawning of a not displeased consciousness that that noble instrument was saying to her something which the player did not venture to say by word of mouth. Or again, it might be the old home at Kingscliff that rose up and became distinct from among those shadowy scenes; and the blue sea was dancing and laughing in the sunshine, and the brown sails of the fishing-boats were stealing slowly across the bay, and in the foreground was the Manor House, renovated and surrounded with flower-beds, and dear old Halcombe Head was looming, as of yore, out of a silvery mist. And this same lady with the clear brown eyes, gazing down from the heights, was saying that, after all, there was something better in the world than wealth

or rank or ambition, or even fame, and that, having found that better thing, she asked nothing more of fortune.

But, of course, it required no slight force of imagination to place words of that nature in the mouth of the particular lady in question; and indeed these dreams and fanciful attributions of his own sentiments to one who had never shown the faintest sign of sharing them were but a harmless and rather foolish pastime, at which Brian was ready enough to laugh when he laid down his pipe and went back to work again. He was not even sure that they were his own sentiments. Possibly he was becoming ambitious after a fashion; at any rate he was conscious of a great desire to succeed in the task which he had undertaken. He thought, too, that he would succeed, for he knew that he had never done better work of its kind, and Phipps was lavish of praise and sanguine prophecies. Love may be the best thing that the world has to give; but it is not the only thing, and a man who is worth his salt can very well make shift to do without it if need be. Thus Brian was wont to reason with himself, feeling, as he had felt for a long time past, that his path in life had already diverged too widely from Beatrice Huntley's to admit of any permanent reunion. He forbore to question Phipps with regard to her rumoured engagement. The first news of it had given him something of a shock, but when that passed off he saw how ridiculous it was on his part to be startled by an event which was absolutely certain to occur sooner or later. Nor did he know anything at all against Stapleford, who seemed to be a pleasant, unassuming, gentlemanlike fellow. Assuredly she might do worse than marry him, and it was scarcely to be supposed that, in London or elsewhere, she could find a man in all respects worthy to be her husband.

This was a very reasonable and sensible view to take, but it did not prevent Brian from feeling a little annoyed when, just as he reached Sir Joseph Huntley's door on the evening for which he had been invited, a very smart brougham dashed up, out of which jumped Lord Stapleford. He had not bargained for that. One may yield a tacit consent to the decrees of *diva necessitas*, but it is another matter to stand by and see them carried into effect.

Stapleford, unconscious of being objectionable in any man's eyes, ran hastily up the steps and clapped Brian on the shoulder. "Dining here, Segrave?" he asked. "That's

all right! I can tell you, if you don't know it, that you'll get a first-rate dinner. Poor old Joe isn't much to look at, and hasn't got much to say for himself, but everybody must acknowledge that both his cook and his cellar are beyond all praise."

Despite this handsome encomium, which in due course was fully justified, Brian was not best pleased with the feast to which he had been bidden, or with those who entertained him at it. Sir Joseph certainly was not much to look at, and if he had anything to say for himself he did not say it to our hero, while Lady Clementina appeared to think that she had done all that was required of her by extending the tips of her fingers to him. The fact was that they knew him only as the man to whom Beatrice had paid an exorbitant price for a house which they hoped that she would never inhabit. But what was much worse than the coolness of their greeting was that Beatrice herself, after she had said "How do you do?" and had introduced him to her relations, turned away immediately and began to talk to somebody else. There were a good many other people in the long room, people whom Brian did not know, and, as he said to himself, with a touch of ill-humour, did not want to know. Gilbert was apparently very much at home among those smartly dressed representatives of modern society; doubtless Gilbert at a dinner-party in Park Lane was quite the right man in the right place. "But I came here on a fool's errand," thought Brian ruefully, "and I ought to have known better, and I wish to heaven I had stayed at home!"

After what seemed to him a very long period of waiting, he was delivered over to a vivacious little woman with a fuzzy head of hair, who had not been seated beside him at the dinner-table for five minutes before she discovered him to be a complete outsider. Society in London, as in other places, great and small, is composed of persons who for the most part dislike outsiders. To make conversation to an outsider demands an effort; you must discover his tastes, his occupations, and something of his history. And why should anybody take all that trouble, when it is so much more amusing to talk to those whose ways and interests are the same as your own? Brian's neighbour troubled neither herself nor him long. Fortunately, she was provided with a more congenial companion on her right hand, so that there was no discourtesy in ignoring her, and listening to such snatches as could

be caught of the animated dialogue that was taking place on the other side of the table between Beatrice, Gilbert, and Stapleford. Not that the listener's part was particularly agreeable, or that the odds and ends of speech which reached his ears were of a nature to reward him for his pains. There is a kind of talk which is not without charm when addressed to oneself, but which sounds rather trivial and silly when addressed to others. Brian had never seen Miss Huntley flirt before; he was disappointed to find that she could do so with as much apparent enjoyment as other women, and it did not at all mend matters that she should be flirting with two men at once. He had thought her above that sort of thing. And surely it was a little odd that she should not have even a glance to bestow upon one who was only sitting opposite to her at that moment in compliance with her own urgent request! Upon the whole, Brian could not remember that he had ever in his life enjoyed himself less—even at a dinner-party.

After the ladies had left the room the conversation took a political turn, as a matter of course, for just then everybody was talking politics. A Conservative administration had been formed, in which no place had been found for Sir Joseph Huntley, his exclusion, according to general rumour, being due to his conviction of the impossibility of governing Ireland without a renewal of the Crimes Act. Ministers were accused of having entered into a Parnellite alliance, a course of action which was at that time held to be peculiarly heinous by their opponents; and several of those who were assembled round Sir Joseph's dinner-table tried to draw their host upon these points, but they met with no success. He replied phlegmatically that a satisfactory method of governing Ireland had not yet been discovered by either political party; that he did not believe in the existence of any compact between Lord Salisbury and Mr. Parnell; but that he was not in the secrets of the Ministry, and consequently could not divulge them. Lord Stapleford, who had earned the reputation of being one of the coolest young men in England, asked him point-blank whether office had been offered to him, and to this question he made no answer at all.

Then there was a great discussion about the probable result of the coming election, the general opinion appearing to be that, under any circumstances, the Radicals must come into power.

"What do you think about it?" inquired

Stapleford, turning to Gilbert. "You're a Radical, ain't you?"

"I am a Liberal," replied Gilbert. "The best-informed people say they don't know what to expect, so my opinion isn't worth much. Everything, I should think, will depend upon what may happen in the course of the summer and autumn. If we were to go to the country to-morrow I believe we should increase our majority."

"Upon my soul, I believe you would!" cried Stapleford, getting up. "I believe this country is utterly rotten; I believe the electors don't care a toss whether Russia gets India or not; I believe they wouldn't splutter and bluster for more than a week if O'Donovan Rossa were to be crowned in Dublin. They didn't consider that England was disgraced when Gordon was left to be murdered, or rather they didn't object in the least to England's being disgraced. What's the odds so long as the great Liberal party can be hoisted into power again upon the shoulders of an army of deluded chawbacons? The whole thing is sickening and disgusting, and I'll be hanged if I'm going to waste the summer in struggling against fate. I shall play cricket instead."

"That," remarked Sir Joseph deliberately, "is just the spirit in which a crisis ought not to be faced. If the educated minority lose patience and temper we shall be swept off to ruin by the mob, and by the agitators and theorists who lead the mob; and we shall not be much less to blame than they."

But Stapleford did not wait for the end of the harangue thus initiated. "Come on, Segrave," said he, taking Brian by the arm; "let's go up-stairs and talk to the ladies. If we want to be taught our duties as good citizens we can read the leading-articles to-morrow morning." And as they mounted the staircase—that celebrated marble staircase which Sir Joseph's father had brought from Genoa at a prodigious expense—he added: "Sorry to have dragged you away before you got a chance of a cigarette, my dear Segrave; but between you and me, Beatrice told me to bring you to her as soon as I could. She says she wants to talk to you in private."

This was welcome news; but perhaps it would have been more welcome if it had been otherwise conveyed. Brian failed to appreciate the adroitness of the diplomacy which had converted Stapleford into an ambassador; for he did not know how difficult it had lately become to that young man's cousin to keep him at a distance for

ten consecutive minutes. And so, when Miss Huntley had beckoned our hero into a small, dimly-lighted room opening out of the drawing-room, and had motioned him to take a chair near her own, her first remark was :

"You look portentously gloomy, not to say sulky. Has your dinner disagreed with you; or is it only that you dislike the society of your fellow-creatures as much as ever?"

"Well," answered Brian, "you know I told you long ago that I am out of my element in society, and I had no idea that you were going to have a party to-night. You asked me to dine quietly."

"To the best of my belief, you did dine very quietly indeed. At least, if you became noisy, it must have been after I lost sight of you. And this isn't a party; we never dine quite alone during the months of June and July."

"And after dinner, I suppose, you go to half-a-dozen crushes and balls. Do you really enjoy that kind of life?"

"I enjoy it well enough for a time; if it went on all the year round it would grow wearisome, no doubt, like every other kind of life. A man, I grant you, might be better employed, and, to do you justice, that is what most of you seem to think; but a woman's opportunities of enjoyment, you must remember, are much more limited than yours. Just for a few years—so long as her good looks, if she has any, last—she may play quite an important part in the little corner of the world which she inhabits; but when once she begins to go down the hill, her life is over, and only existence remains. I don't think you ought to blame us for making hay while the sun shines. However, I didn't bring you here to talk to you about myself; I want you to give me a full, true, and particular account of all that you have done and suffered from the date of your leaving Kings-cliff up to the present time."

"That would take far too long, and it would be a very dull narrative into the bargain."

"But if I want to hear it?"

"Really it wouldn't interest you."

"You won't tell me the story? Very well, then, I will tell it to you, and you will see that it is neither long nor dull, when concisely stated. In November last you accepted the post of organist at St. Jude's, North Streatham, and held it until after Easter, when you were pressed to resign in consequence of an entanglement with a particularly vulgar and unattractive young woman who used to sing in your choir. Vari-

ous versions were given of the affair, and hers seems to have been plausible; but you declined to give any version at all, so you had to retire. After that you returned to London, where you remained for a considerable time without employment, and if Mr. Monckton had not found you out and made you listen to reason, it is quite likely that you would have enlisted in the Life Guards, or done something else equally desperate. As it was you reluctantly consented to sell the Manor House to an unworthy person, and since then you have been engaged upon the composition of an opera, which will probably be produced in the course of next winter, and will take the town by storm. I believe that is a tolerably accurate account of your proceedings, so far as it goes."

"It is accurate—so far as it goes," assented Brian wonderingly; "but how did you discover all this?"

"I scorn to deceive you. I catechised Mr. Phipps, and when I had found out all that he knew, which wasn't much, what did I do but invite Mr. Potter to lunch with me one day when Clementina was out. And the world is very small, as I dare say you have heard many people remark before now; and if Miss Joy should have an old school friend living at Streatham, and if her friend's name should be Mrs. Peareth, would that be such a very extraordinary coincidence? What does seem to me extraordinary—much more so than my liking to amuse myself for two or three months in the year, for example—is your determination to hold aloof from old friends who, after all, have done nothing to deserve such treatment?"

"But—here I am," said Brian, smiling.

"Yes, here you are, because you couldn't very well help yourself; and ever since you entered the house you have been vowing inwardly that you won't enter it again in a hurry."

"Now how can you tell that, when you have never so much as looked at me?"

"I can see people without looking at them; and I know, without being told, when certain people are horribly bored and very cross. It is inexcusable to be cross upon such slight provocation. I was at least as much bored as you were during dinner——"

"Then all I can say," interrupted Brian, "is that I never in my life saw boredom more skilfully disguised."

"Thank you; I can accept that compliment with a clear conscience. I only wish I could return it." And then she proceeded to read him a lecture upon the duties which

each member of a civilised community owes to his neighbours, and which she declared that he was as much bound to discharge as to pay rates and taxes. If he wished to lead the life of a hermit, he ought to be consistent and seek out a new Thebaid for himself somewhere or other; but in large cities one must give and take, and no one should have the vanity to think that he can be quite independent. Why, even an accomplished musician might find that it was worth while to have a sprinkling of friends and well-wishers in the house, on bringing out a new opera, instead of an assembly of total strangers.

He listened to her good-natured scolding without any displeasure; for indeed this, like her cross-examination of Phipps and Mr. Potter, proved that she still took an interest in him and desired to be his friend. More than that he had already decided that he would never ask or expect of her. Then, when she went on to put a great many questions to him about the new opera, and the probable date of its production, and the singers who were likely to appear in it, and so forth, he was very willing to give her all the information that she asked for. But of herself and her plans, and her cousin Stapleford (whom she had accused by implication of boring her), she did not choose to speak; and perhaps it may have been disinclination to enter upon particulars of that kind that made her open the piano which stood in a corner of the room, and insist upon it that Brian should play over to her a few airs from his forthcoming work.

He protested laughingly that Phipps would never forgive a premature disclosure of what could not become public property for another four months at least; but she replied that she was not the public, and that, besides, Mr. Phipps would not be informed of his indiscretion, so he yielded.

Now to get Brian seated before a piano or an organ was very much the same thing as putting Lord Stapleford on to bowl, or asking Sir Joseph Huntley whether he happened to know anything about the report of the Royal Commission on Industrial Dwellings. After he had strummed some fragments of airs, it was easy enough to lead him on to Schumann, Chopin, and others of his favourite composers, and in a very short time he was blissfully unconscious of all external circumstances, save and excepting the presence of Beatrice Huntley by his side. Thus it was that he did not notice any accession to his audience until Lady Clementina advanced

from the background, where she and several of her guests had been standing for some little time, and began to say all manner of amiable and complimentary things. Lady Clementina did not know very much about music, but she liked to pose as a patroness of genius and she was always eager to get hold of the last social novelty, whether it might be an Indian Maharajah, or a celebrated actress, or an adventurous explorer. In the course of the evening someone had informed her that she was entertaining an angel unawares, in the shape of a composer of the greatest promise; otherwise the delicacy of Brian's touch and his masterly rendering of difficult passages might possibly have escaped her. As it was, she paid full homage to both.

"Why did you not tell us that you are writing an opera?" she asked naively. "I shall make a point of going to see it if I am in London when it is produced." Then she expressed a gracious hope that they might meet again before long, and that he would look in at her ball which was to take place in about a fortnight's time, adding that she would send him a card to refresh his memory.

Brian was amused and in no wise affronted by this rapid growth of cordiality on the part of his hostess. He was conscious, although she was not (for indeed she had paid no attention to him), that he had been absurdly sulky and bearish earlier in the evening, and he was not sorry to have an opportunity of proving to Miss Huntley that he recognised the justice of the admonition which had been addressed to him. Therefore, much as he hated balls, he accepted Lady Clementina's invitation, thereby earning a smile of approval from Beatrice, who, as she wished him good-night, whispered,

"I am glad to see that you are in a better humour now than an hour ago."

Well, certainly he was in a good humour, and, as he walked away, it seemed to him that the very streets of London had assumed a more kindly and hospitable air. He thought he was pleased because Beatrice Huntley had shown him that she was not fickle in her friendships; but if he had been given to self-analysis he might have discovered that what pleased him was not so much that as her passing hint that she preferred his company to Lord Stapleford's.

CHAPTER XXX.—GILBERT ASTONISHES HIMSELF.

If any credit be due to a lady who knows how to content three admirers, or potential

admirers, at one time and in one place, Miss Huntley must be admitted to have managed her little dinner-party very well; for not only Brian, but also Gilbert and Stapleford went their respective ways in a contented frame of mind, while each of the two latter flattered himself that he had received some distinctive marks of her favour. As for Gilbert, he thought that he understood women pretty thoroughly; and as a matter of fact, he did perhaps understand them as well as any one can whose orderly habit of mind leads him to classify all subjects, whether human or other, and who, in explaining conduct, is apt to make but a scanty allowance for inconsistency and impulse. He believed Miss Huntley to be a woman who fancied herself ambitious, but was in reality rather combative; a woman who enjoyed power, but enjoyed the pursuit of it still more, and one to whom a position of mere dignified ease offered no attractions at all. The type is not an uncommon one: he had met with several examples of it, and had noted the development of the same in various directions. It seemed to him most unlikely that Beatrice Huntley would ever marry Stapleford, whose station was hardly high enough to tempt her, while his personal qualities were not of a kind to excite her interest or sympathy. It would be a great deal more in keeping with her character to bestow her hand and fortune upon some man who contemplated fighting his way to fame in public life; nor was it at all surprising that he should arrive at this conclusion, since she herself had more than once suggested it to him in words of little ambiguity.

Now Mr. Buswell's advice to him, that he should espouse this beautiful heiress, was doubtless, in the abstract, excellent; and if he thought, as Buswell did, that his chance of securing the prize was by no means a bad one, vanity had little enough to say to that assumption. He was not in love with Beatrice, nor was she, to the best of his belief, in love with him; but, for the reasons above mentioned, he deemed it not improbable that she might accept him as her husband, while he, on his side, had a liking and admiration for her which seemed amply sufficient to meet the requirements of the case. Only then, there was Kitty Greenwood, whom he did love, to whom he had all but declared his love, and who, alas! had neither the fortune nor the qualities so desirable for the wife of an active politician.

For a long time he had shirked the dilemma towards which he was drifting; but

he had to face it at length, and then he had to go through the process of talking himself over—a painful process, which, however, terminated, as it was sure to terminate, in his according himself plenary absolution. In short, it came to this, that he must choose between ambition and love; and he knew—although he did not quite like making the admission—that love is fleeting, whereas ambition remains with us even when we have already one foot in the grave. For Kitty's own sake, it would be better to play her false—supposing that the transfer of his allegiance could be properly so described—than to obtain her consent to a union which would only too probably result in disenchantment and disappointment. Every day, too, that he spent in London strengthened his conviction that rusticity would never suit him. He went a great deal into society; he renewed acquaintance with many old friends; and there was scarcely an evening on which he did not meet Miss Huntley, to whom his attentions unquestionably appeared to be acceptable. It is true that every now and then she would startle him with some sudden half-ironical remark, as when, one day, she inquired whether he had obtained an unlimited leave of absence from Miss Greenwood, or when, on another occasion, she asked him why he had not taken the precaution of bringing Captain Mitchell up to town with him; but he was able to put an interpretation upon these mild assaults which robbed them of any disquieting element; for of course his attachment to Kitty had been no secret to her, and it was natural enough that she should seek to remind him of it, now that times were changed.

To take an unlimited leave of absence appeared, in truth, to be the best way of freeing himself from bonds of which he could not altogether ignore the existence; and, on thinking the whole situation over, he decided to run down to Kingscliff for the inside of a week, make a few necessary arrangements and escape, if possible, without seeing or being seen by the Greenwoods. That the plan wore a somewhat ignoble aspect was not to be denied; but who, after all, can run away with dignity?

He mentioned to Miss Huntley that he proposed returning home for a day or two; and she said, with an amused look:

"Ah! To bid your friends good-bye, perhaps."

"Well," he answered, "I think I may remain away rather longer than I had intended."

"I see. And it is well to be off with the old love before one is on with the new."

She enjoyed his confusion for a few seconds and then explained: "Beckton is the old love, London is the new; I trust you don't think that I meant to accuse you of any worse kind of faithlessness. You may remember that I always told you you would not be able to stand Beckton for long."

"Did you? If you did, you were quite right. It is my home, of course; but I don't feel as if I could live there from January to December without a break. Beckton is—shall we say—a little narrow?"

"Yes; and you are so broad in your views. No wonder it won't hold you! Come back as soon as you can, then, and don't forget to say all that is civil from me to our friends at Morden."

"I hardly think I shall have time to call upon them," Gilbert answered.

Nevertheless, he was conscious of a powerful and imprudent longing to call upon them. He wanted to meet Kitty just once more upon the old footing; he wanted her—preposterous as such a wish may seem—to retain a kindly recollection of him; and although he felt it would be a gratuitous piece of folly to seek her out, he could not help hoping that chance might bring them together, if only for a few minutes. And so when, on the day after his return, he encountered Admiral Greenwood in the main street of Kingscliff, and when the Admiral, with his customary heartiness, said, "Come along with me, my dear boy, and the ladies will give you a cup of tea," he had not the resolution to excuse himself.

"I suppose you didn't happen to see your brother in London, did you?" the old gentleman asked, after Gilbert had climbed into the mail-phaeton beside him.

To which Gilbert was glad to be able to reply: "Yes, indeed I did; and I'm sure you will rejoice with me when I tell you that we have agreed to bury our differences. I think Brian quite understands now that it was not possible to set my father's will aside."

"Come!" cried the Admiral; "that's good news. I never liked that will, nor pretended to like it; but as for setting it aside, why, as I've often said to Pollington and others, the thing couldn't be done without dishonesty. And so Brian sees that at last, does he? Poor fellow! it has been hard lines upon him; but I'm bound to say that it hasn't been over and above pleasant for you either; and you've kept your temper

very well through it all. I congratulate you most sincerely, my dear fellow."

Praise from that quarter was the more welcome to Gilbert, because he knew very well that Admiral Greenwood had been only half pleased with him hitherto. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and that anxiety to be spoken well of by all men which had more than once stood in Gilbert's way through life was likely enough to do so again. He was quite aware of this; but that he was in any danger of being diverted from his present purpose thereby he did not believe; and if he was conscious of an unwonted sensation of nervousness when he reached Morden Court and was led by his host through the house to the lawn, where it appeared that the ladies had ordered the tea to be carried out, that was no more than the most determined of men might have experienced under the circumstances.

At the same time, it gave him a disagreeable sort of shock to see Mitchell, who was clad in cricketing flannels, seated on the grass beside Kitty's chair. He felt like a retiring Prime Minister encountering his successor; and indeed it is not necessary to be a Prime Minister in order to feel how lamentable a thing it is to be succeeded by one's inferior. Nor was the Admiral's method of announcing him exactly what he would have chosen.

"Here's Gilbert Segrave back," called out that worthy, but tactless individual; "and he brings us good tidings. Brian and he are friends again."

Mrs. Greenwood said she was so glad, and Kitty murmured a few words to the same effect, and Mitchell said nothing at all; after which there was an interval of silence. If he had only had the two ladies to deal with, Gilbert would have known how to turn the occasion to account by delicately hinting that the reconciliation alluded to had been due to his initiative alone; but in the presence of Mitchell he shrank from putting forward any such insinuations, because he was quite sure that that uncompromising naval officer would not believe a word of them. Formerly he had felt nothing but a good-humoured sort of contempt for Mitchell, his chaff, his horseplay, and his occasional downright rudeness; but now he disliked the man and rather dreaded him. The honesty of honest dullards—if they only knew it—is a force more than equal to the knavery of half-and-half knaves.

But it soon became evident that Mitchell would be guilty of no discourtesy to any one

that afternoon. He was in an unusually sober and taciturn mood; he spoke only when he was spoken to; he responded very briefly to Kitty's efforts to make him talk about the cricket-match which Kingscliff had just won by eight wickets against a neighbouring eleven; he drank his tea gloomily while the others chatted, and at length got up, stretched himself, sighed, and said he supposed he must be going.

He was not pressed to linger. On the contrary, Mrs. Greenwood rose with somewhat suspicious alacrity, saying, "Well, then, I will walk as far as the lodge with you; I promised to go and see the gardener's wife, who is bad with lumbago." For although Mrs. Greenwood was the most hospitable of women, she was also the best of mothers, and, for aught she knew, Mr. Segrave might have called with a special purpose in view. Indeed, a visible and unwonted embarrassment of manner on the part of Mr. Segrave made her hope that such was actually the case. The Admiral had already strolled away; so that Gilbert and Kitty were left to themselves and could say what they pleased to one another without fear of being overheard or interrupted.

If Gilbert had felt embarrassed before, he ought to have felt doubly so now; but as a matter of fact he did not. Perhaps he was too self-engrossed to realise more than one side of the situation; at all events, he drew a long breath of relief and exclaimed:

"Thank goodness! we have got rid of that everlasting bore."

"Don't call him names," pleaded Kitty, with a ring of remorse in her voice; "you don't know how good he is!"

"Perhaps I don't," Gilbert confessed. "If you come to that, I'm pretty sure that I don't. He doesn't seem to me to be good for much, except to get in the way; but possibly I may be prejudiced, because he has so very often got in my way."

To this Kitty made no rejoinder; and a long pause ensued. It was a still, warm afternoon; what little breeze there was came fitfully from the westward, scarcely ruffling the surface of the bay, although a long swell, rolling lazily in from the Atlantic, fringed the curve of the shore with silver. The roses, which were the pride of Mrs. Greenwood's heart, were in full bloom; butterflies were hovering over the geraniums and heliotropes and calceolarias, which stretched in brilliant bands of colour to the boundary of the garden, and there was a sleepy hum of insects in the air. The most

practical of men will grow dreamy at times; and Gilbert, succumbing to the influence of all these well-known sights and sounds, which recalled memories of former summers to his mind, began to dream. What, after all, he asked himself, constitutes happiness? He had been very happy in bygone days, sitting, as he was sitting now, with Kitty beside him, and looking forward to a career which differed but little in essentials from that which he still contemplated. He had been going to fight his way to fame and fortune at the bar; he had always intended to make the bar a stepping-stone to Parliament; and ever, as the prize and crown of all his efforts, he had set before himself the winning of Kitty Greenwood as his bride. Why had his point of view changed? Why had political life assumed the first place in his affections, now that it had been brought so much more nearly within his grasp? Was it even certain that it really had assumed that place? That the pursuit of happiness is the one and only aim of mankind was an axiom which Gilbert considered to have been proved to demonstration. Some persons like to see their speeches in the newspapers; others like cultivating roses; others again derive pleasure from devoting themselves to what are called good works—nursing the sick, relieving the poor, visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and so forth. In nine cases out of ten the result is inappreciable, and in all the motive is the same. Gilbert's theory was that people not only will not but cannot do what they dislike. And if happiness—which is probably unattainable by any means—should be more nearly approached by marrying your own love than by writing M.P. after your name, or even Right Honourable before it? . . . But these were only vague speculations, in which it was the more pleasant to indulge because they were a little bit dangerous. He felt like a man who has allowed himself to be drawn into temptation, not meaning to yield to it, yet not absolutely certain that he will be able to resist it, and to whom that element of peril is in some sort a substitute for the forbidden fruit. He fancied himself telling Kitty that he loved her, that he always had and always would love her, and he wondered what her answer would be. That is, he wondered what the terms of it would be; for he had not much doubt as to the substance. Then, all of a sudden, there flashed before him the other and the less agreeable side of the picture. He was convinced that, when once his desertion of her had become

manifest, she would marry Mitchell. She was not strong-minded; she would give way to pressure; she would end by becoming very well satisfied with her good-natured, stupid husband and her children and her daily household duties.

"Oh, hang it all!" groaned Gilbert aloud.

His companion stared at him in surprise. She had been speaking for some minutes past, saying how rejoiced she was to think that Brian had at last come round to a better frame of mind, and hoping that perhaps he would now return to Kingscliff and see his old friends, even if it should not suit him to remain permanently among them. "Don't you wish him to come back?" she asked innocently, in response to the above ejaculation.

"Eh? Oh, yes; of course, I shall be awfully glad if he will. I—I beg your pardon; I was thinking of something else," answered Gilbert. And then, abruptly, "Talking of Mitchell—what has he been doing to make you proclaim his goodness so emphatically? You used to think him rather a bore, if I am not mistaken."

Kitty flushed a little. "I know I did," she answered, in penitent accents; "but it was horrid of me, and very ungrateful too. He has always been so very kind to me, and I remember that when I was a child I used to look upon him as quite a hero. He would be a hero, I am sure, if there were any fighting to be done."

"Oh, I have no doubt that he can fight as well as another," said Gilbert in a dissatisfied tone; "but a first-rate fighter—even a prize-fighter—may be a bore. Or do you think that that is impossible?"

He spoke so sharply that Kitty's cheeks became still more rosy as she replied, "I don't know—yes; of course, it is possible. But Captain Mitchell is not a bore; and I am very sorry that I ever called him anything of the kind."

This was more than Gilbert could endure. "You are trying to deceive yourself!" he exclaimed; "you won't succeed. Or, if you do, you will repent when it is too late, and when you have bound yourself for life to a man whom you can't love. It isn't enough that he should love you—I quite believe that he does; but what difference does that make? You can't marry all the men who love you. And I don't believe that Mitchell has it in him to love you a tenth part as much as I do!"

The words were out of his mouth before he could arrest them; for the very first time in his life, he was swept away by sheer passionate

impulse. And, instead of cursing himself for a fool, he rejoiced and exulted in his folly. It may be said without exaggeration that during the next half-hour he was a perfectly happy man. It is true that his reason had told him long ago that Kitty loved him; but to receive that assurance from her own lips was somehow an altogether different and far more delightful thing. What if all his fine schemes had been brought to nought! What if Buswell and the crew of Kingscliff land-grabbers should refuse to vote for him, since he could not approach them with the title-deeds of the Manor House in his hand! The world was well lost.

Most of us, unhappily, know how agreeable it is to cease struggling against the temptation to do wrong, but to give way to an overpowering craving to do right is a rarer and, doubtless, more refined form of gratification. Gilbert, appreciating this to the full, did not mar it by any reference to the magnitude of the sacrifice that he was making. He was greatly pleased with himself, and with all the world; he even found that he had a little pity at the service of his impotent rival when Kitty told him, as a profound secret, that poor Mitchell had proposed to her a few days before, and that she had been compelled to reject him for reasons which she stated at full length, but which it is needless to reproduce here. And after a time the old people returned; and the great news was communicated to them; and, Gilbert having been persuaded to remain to dinner, the Admiral produced a bottle of his famous old Madeira.

Thus it came to pass that Mr. Segrave did not go back to London to finish the season, but stayed at home in peace and contentment, which nothing occurred to disturb. For at this time Mr. Buswell was away, and there was a political lull, and the weather, for once, was all that could be desired by a pair of happy lovers.

CHAPTER XXXI.—MISS JOY IS ORACULAR.

UPON taking a calm review of circumstances, Brian came to the conclusion that it would be a foolish and unnecessary thing to shun Beatrice Huntley's society. He now felt more sure of himself. He was not going to be guilty a second time of the *gaucherie* of showing temper because, forsooth, she did not choose to bestow her attention exclusively upon him; he was determined to accept frankly the friendship which was all that she had to offer him and more than he had any right to claim; and if he should be called

upon, from time to time, to bear a sharp pang or two he would know how to conceal these. To see her, to hear her voice, sometimes perhaps to exchange a few words with her, would be ample compensation for such inevitable trials of his fortitude.

Nothing could have been more sensible than these resolutions, but what they may have been worth it is impossible to say, for the simple reason that Brian found no opportunity of putting them into practice. He called in Park Lane, thinking that he ought to do so after eating Sir Joseph's salt; but nobody was at home; and although his brother, who one evening did him the honour to dine with him at his club, informed him that Miss Huntley "went everywhere," this knowledge was of little avail to a man who happened to go nowhere. Gilbert, as we know, was more fortunate, and Brian learnt from him that Beatrice's engagement to Lord Stapleford was generally spoken of as a probable event.

"But it isn't announced yet, is it?" Brian asked.

"Oh, no!" answered Gilbert, smiling; "it isn't announced yet."

He had the air of knowing more than he chose to say; but Brian did not interrogate him further. It struck him that there was a suspicion of mockery in his brother's smile, and he had no desire to listen to a repetition of the warnings which had been addressed to him from that quarter on a bygone occasion. After all, Beatrice's destiny was beyond his control or influence; he would be told of it, no doubt, when she had made up her mind what it was to be—he did not think that her mind was made up yet—and meanwhile he had his work to occupy and console him. A day or two before that appointed for Lady Clementina's ball he received a post-card, on the back of which was written, in Miss Huntley's large, flowing hand, "Don't forget the 16th.—B. H." To be sure, there was not much danger of his overlooking the one and only invitation that lay upon his writing-table; but the reminder was very welcome to him as evidence that the fact of his having been invited was remembered by one whose own engagements were so numerous.

On the evening of the day above-mentioned he dressed himself with unusual care and paid particular attention to his white tie. He was quite ready by ten o'clock, but, despite his inclinations, remained steadfast and immovable for another two hours; because he had been given to understand that London ballrooms seldom begin to fill

until near midnight. Consequently, when he reached Park Lane he found the hall and staircase crowded with dense masses of humanity, and had no small difficulty in wriggling his way up to the landing, where his hostess stood, magnificent in diamonds and old lace. Lady Clementina's balls were always crowded, because they were always admirably done. The age in which we live is reproached, justly or unjustly, with being one in which wealth is all-powerful; nor can it be denied that to give a successful ball in these days costs a great deal more than it did a quarter of a century ago. Lady Clementina's command of ready money was practically unbounded; so that she had little trouble in outshining the financiers', bankers' and brewers' wives who were her most formidable competitors and in assembling all London under her roof whenever she was so minded. Unfortunately for her, she did not greatly covet distinction of that particular kind, but it had come to be expected of her that she should hold two or three such functions in the course of the season, and, as Sir Joseph, who detested but acquiesced in them, was wont to remark, they were good for trade, if they had no other merit.

Brian, in due course of time, was swept up-stairs and shook hands with her, and she looked as if she had not the ghost of an idea who he was. Then he penetrated into the ballroom, where the banks of flowers, the huge blocks of clear ice, and the little fountains which were splashing in every recess might have excited his admiration if he had had any eyes for these adjuncts. But he was there to see, and, if possible, to speak to, Beatrice Huntley, not to draw comparisons between Lady Clementina's entertainment and Mrs. Guldenmark's, or Lady Porter's; and his stature enabling him to look over the heads of the throng, he presently made out the object of his search, standing not many yards away from him, and surrounded by a phalanx of black coats, of which Stapleford's was one.

The moment that she caught sight of him she beckoned him to approach, and when, by dint of a little unceremonious shoving, he had managed to obey her signal, she bent her head towards him and whispered hurriedly, "Don't go away yet."

"I have only just come," Brian answered.

"So much the better. Can you stand this for another hour and a half, do you think? If you can, you might look about for me then. I am not going to dance to-night; but I can see that there will be no

peace or freedom for me before two o'clock. Will you wait?"

"Of course I will," said Brian; and thereupon she gave him a nod by way of dismissal.

He executed a movement of retreat towards the wall, and stationed himself in a sort of backwater, out of the eddying human stream, well content to bide his time. If Beatrice had told him to wait five hours, instead of only one and a half, he would have done her bidding with perfect cheerfulness. But, indeed, this ball did not seem to him to be nearly as dull an affair as those of which he had had previous cognisance. At Kingscliff, where everybody knew him, and where non-dancers were looked upon as social defaulters, he had always felt that he would rather submit to any imaginable form of penance than look on, all the night through, at a number of people bobbing round and round a hot room, with the chance of being himself compelled, at any moment, to go bobbing round also. Here it was quite different. No one noticed him, nor did he recognise a single acquaintance, except Sir Hector Buckle, looking very smart and spruce, who passed once through the rooms and vanished; and it was amusing enough, for once in a way, to catch a glimpse of the so-called great world. Some of the persons who passed close to him were really great. There were Cabinet Ministers among them, and Foreign Ambassadors, covered with orders, and Brian distinctly heard one of the latter say to a lady, "*Madame, je vous préviens que la Russie ne peut plus reculer et que la guerre est inévitable.*" This was most interesting; but the other scraps of conversation which reached his ears were scarcely of equal importance. He gathered from them that all these people had either come from Mrs. A.'s or were going on to Lady B.'s, and their chief anxiety appeared to be to find out whether those whom they met were engaged upon the same exciting programme. Also, he noticed, that a large majority of these pleasure-seekers were past middle age, and he wondered what could be the inducement that kept them out of bed at a time of life when they ought to have been thinking seriously about economising their vital forces. The old women, of course, might have marriageable daughters; but the old men would surely have been happier at home. And where were all the young men?

But these notes and queries were put a stop to when a lady of noble proportions,

who had been carried through the doorway on the top of the flood, extricated herself with a vigorous plunge, and landed breathlessly by Brian's side.

"Well, Mr. Segrave," said she, "I did think that you would remember me; but I suppose I am not the sort of person whom any one would expect to meet in a grand London ballroom."

"I am very glad to meet you, at all events," answered Brian; and indeed it was a real pleasure to him to recognise Miss Joy, beaming all over with good-humour, as of yore, and wearing the self-same ruby velvet gown with the tail of which she had once swept Gilbert's chair from under him. "I am like the Doge of Venice at Versailles," he added; "astonishment at finding myself where I am exhausts my capacity for wonder. But it isn't very wonderful that you should be in the same house as Miss Huntley, is it?"

"It is rather wonderful that I should be in *this* house," Miss Joy replied. "I am supposed to be on furlough just now, and of course my name doesn't appear in Lady Clementina's visiting-list; but Beatrice insisted upon it that I should come to-night, because she knows how much I enjoy spectacles of this kind. So I put my pride in my pocket and came."

"We seem to be in the same boat," observed Brian, "and we can enjoy the spectacle together. I would ask you to do me the honour of dancing with me, only——"

"You would meet with a polite, but decisive refusal if you did," interrupted Miss Joy, laughing. "Do you think that I have no shame, and that I am incapable of distinguishing between Kingscliff and Park Lane? But I'll tell you what you might do for me, if you were inclined to be good-natured—you might take me down-stairs and give me something to eat."

Of course he was quite ready to do that, and by the exertion of some physical force he succeeded in piloting his companion down to the supper-room, where, as need hardly be said, everything that art and luxury could achieve in the culinary line was at her disposal. However, he soon discovered that Miss Joy's request had not been prompted by any greedy appetite, for she would take nothing but a morsel of aspic and half a glass of champagne, and as soon as she had finished this frugal refreshment she drew him aside into one of the smaller rooms, which for the moment was untenanted, saying: "Now we shall be able to talk comfortably."

And when she had settled herself down upon a sofa, it was an odd and rather disappointing thing to find that she wanted to talk about his brother, not, as usual, about the manifold perfections of her beloved patroness. Where was Gilbert? she asked. Did he propose to remain in London long? And why was he not at the ball? "I know he is in town, because Beatrice told me that she had met him several times; and perhaps he may be in the house now, though I don't think he can be, for I had a good look all round the rooms before I fell in with you."

"I believe he is in town," answered Brian, who had not been informed of his brother's return to Beckton; "but I can't tell you much about his movements. I dare say Miss Huntley sees more of him than I do."

Miss Joy gave a dissatisfied grunt. "But I should have thought that, with this general election coming on in the autumn, it would be important for him to be upon the spot," she persisted. "Isn't he going home again soon?"

"Really I don't know," replied Brian wonderingly. "Why do you ask?"

"Oh, I am naturally inquisitive; when I know something about people I always want to know more. Perhaps I know more than you suppose about the way in which you have been going on since we last met."

"I am aware that Mrs. Peareth is a friend of yours," said Brian.

"Oh, Beatrice told you that? Did she tell you that she made me take her out to Streatham and call upon the Peareths with her, so that she might learn the truth about your rupture with them? I think that was a very pretty compliment to pay you. And, as luck would have it, who should come in while we were sitting there but that absurd little Mrs. Dubbin herself! You must indeed have been hard up for amusement before you took to flirting with *her*!"

"But I never did anything of the sort," cried Brian indignantly. "I do hope that Miss Huntley—and you know better than to believe it of me!"

"I can believe anything of young men," answered Miss Joy sententiously. "From what I have seen of them—and I have seen a good deal, first and last—I should say that there are no bounds to the folly that they are capable of, if encouraged by forward and vulgar girls. Mrs. Peareth took your part, however, I must confess, and said you had been very badly treated. As for Beatrice, she would never admit that you could do wrong. I don't know whether you have

found out what a high opinion she has of you."

"Is that meant sarcastically?" inquired Brian.

"Oh, no; she took a liking to you from the first; and when she takes likings of that description they are always strong ones." Miss Joy paused for a moment and sighed. "I have often wished of late," she continued meditatively, "that you were a lord, or a distinguished personage of some sort; because, if you were, you might fall in love with dear Beatrice and marry her. I shouldn't have any fears for her future then."

"Thank you," said Brian, laughing; "your remarks have at least the merit of candour. But I didn't know that lords and other distinguished personages were more susceptible than the rest of mankind."

"I am sure you understand what I mean; it is Beatrice who is not susceptible, poor dear! No man has ever yet succeeded in touching her heart; in spite of which, situated as she is, it is almost inevitable that she should marry before long. I suppose you have heard rumours about her and Lord Stapleford. Well, do you know, I quite hope she will take him. He isn't brilliant; but he is honest and good-tempered, and what is better still, I think he really loves her. As his wife, she could take a leading position in society, and make interests of many kinds for herself. You see, the danger is that—putting love out of the question in the way that she does—she might be attracted by talent and plausibility. An unscrupulous man, who wanted her money for his own selfish ends, might get her to take an interest in his career, especially if it were a political career; and then——"

"Are you thinking of any person in particular?" inquired Brian.

"There are always plenty of such persons about," answered Miss Joy evasively. "And she hasn't accepted Lord Stapleford yet."

"Perhaps he hasn't asked her yet."

"Oh, she hasn't allowed him to ask her. It is easy enough to keep a man from proposing to you; I could do that myself, though I have no pretension to be as adroit as she is. You needn't laugh. No great ingenuity is required to protect me from troublesome suitors nowadays, I know; but I really was not so bad-looking once upon a time; and just at that moment I was thinking of a very eligible young man whom I once held at arm's length until he went off in a huff and never came back again—which I was rather sorry for afterwards. But, as I was

saying, Beatrice won't let Lord Stapleford come to the point; which shows that she is hesitating. It is arranged, I believe, that he is to meet us at Homburg next month; and then, I trust, she will give him his answer. It will be a very great pity if she dismisses a man who has so many good qualities and no defects, unless it be a defect to be rather commonplace."

Brian really could not concur. If Miss Huntley had not yet met any one for whom she could care as a wife ought to care for her husband, surely it would be better that she should remain unmarried until she did. What was there in her situation which rendered an immediate marriage so desirable? He had many arguments of undoubted weight to urge in support of his views and against Miss Joy's, and he was bringing them forward, one by one, when, to his horror he heard the clock on the mantelpiece strike three. "Good Heavens!" he exclaimed, "I had no idea that it was so late. I—I must take you upstairs again, if you don't mind; I have an engagement——"

"Off you go then!" returned Miss Joy, laughing at his dismayed face. "You can leave me here; I am big enough to take care of myself."

Perhaps it was not very polite; but he took her at her word. It would be too heartbreaking to have lost what might very likely be his last chance of an interview with Beatrice before she left London. He ran quickly up the staircase, which was almost deserted now, and entered the ballroom, where the crowd, though less than it had been in the earlier part of the evening, was still large. Seeing at a glance that Beatrice was neither among the dancers nor the spectators, he pursued his search through the adjoining room and discovered her at length, sitting quite alone beside an open window, in what appeared to be the library.

"I am so very sorry!" he began breathlessly. "I was talking to Miss Joy, and I didn't notice how the time was slipping away."

"I thought you had gone home to bed like a sensible man," she answered. "I am glad you found Miss Joy so fascinating, for I wasn't set at liberty as soon as I expected. Stapleford has only just left."

She seemed to be a little tired and out of spirits. Could it be that Stapleford had already demanded and obtained a definite reply? Brian scrutinised her anxiously, and she may have divined his thoughts, for she smiled and said,

"I have been upon the social treadmill for rather too many hours at a stretch, that is all. I wanted to have a long chat with you about things in general; but now I feel too stupid to talk to anybody. Happily, the end of all this monotonous revelry is not very far off; I don't think I could stand much more of it. Next week we go to Goodwood; then to Cowes, and then—oh, how glorious!—I shall be my own mistress once more, and Miss Joy will take me away to Homburg to recruit my jaded system."

"I am not going to Homburg, though," Brian could not help saying ruefully, "and I suppose I shall have no further opportunities of meeting you among the monotonous revellers of whom you have become so weary."

"Well, but that is just what I was thinking about," she rejoined, straightening herself in her chair and speaking with more animation. "Why shouldn't you come to Homburg? You can't stay in London all the summer; you won't care to go to Kings-cliff; and if you haven't done with the labours of composition yet, why, pianos can be hired at Homburg as well as anywhere else, and there are certain spare hours in the middle of the day during which most people go to sleep, because they have nothing else to do. I would undertake to amuse you or find amusement for you in the mornings and evenings."

The suggestion was certainly a tempting one. Brian had not given a thought to the coming summer; but now he reflected that he was very well able to afford himself a holiday, and how could he spend it better than by betaking himself to a place where he might count upon seeing Beatrice every day? He fancied, too, that there was something more in her eagerness than a mere desire to be kind, or even to secure for herself a certain variety of companionship. It was no very far-fetched or extravagant conjecture that, at a time of crisis in her life, she might wish to have near her a friend upon whose sympathy or even advice she could rely. For of course there are situations in which simple honesty and devotion are of more value than the worldly wisdom of a multitude of counsellors.

"Would you really like me to come?" he asked, after a pause.

"Odd as it may appear," she answered, laughing, "I really should." Perhaps it was a somewhat tardy movement of compunction that made her add: "I always try to collect as large a circle as I can in places of that

kind. Stapleford has promised to join us, and I dare say there will be others. I don't think you will find it dull."

He understood her meaning; but indeed the caution was not needed. If in the recesses of his heart there had still lurked the shadow of a lingering hope, this had been dispelled as much by her outspoken friendliness as by Miss Joy's assurance of the good opinion that she entertained of him. Well; he was

thankful to have it so, since nothing more was attainable. His influence over her, if he possessed any, would at all events never be exerted save for what should seem to him to be her happiness, while his own would assuredly be increased by proximity to her. That, if it did nothing else for him, would relieve him from the torture of suspense and enable him to see for himself whither her destiny was leading her.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

By FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

IF poets were produced as perfected flowers are, their growth would be a fascinating study. And there are analogies. They have their hours of expansion in the life-giving sun, and of self-closure and reverie in the silence and coolness of evening; they reach upward to breathe all favouring influences, still holding fast to mother earth; and when their flowers, each "after his kind," uncloset in varying forms and colours, the height and glory of their being is attained. In thinking of the blossoms of the ideal world it is natural, by comparison, to "consider the lilies," and to wish that all the unfoldings of thought and feeling were as simple and spontaneous as theirs.

The student of poetry has a task unlike the florist's, for the latter knows well the objects of his care; he anticipates their modes of foliage and flowering, while the poet often proves to be a specimen of a new order—not in the books—not to be comprehended by pedants' rules, nor to be judged by safe precedents. Pope and Dryden, whose points were as obvious as cudgel-blows or rapier-thrusts, were as well appreciated at first as to-day; but poets of finer mould, like Words-

worth, Shelley, and Keats, passed through periods of lifelong trial before coming into their inheritance.

It is over forty years since Lowell began to write, and though his poems in dialect had immediate popularity, his higher and serious work, until within a recent period, found small favour with critics or with the American public. The most of his British admirers, even now, read the "Biglow Papers" by the help of a glossary, and ignore his other poems.

His father was an eminent clergyman in Boston, learned, saintly, and discreet, who at the time of the general Unitarian movement, refused to take either side

of the controversy, and called himself simply a Congregationalist. He

lived at Cambridge, nearly four miles from his church, in a large and plain wooden house, built before the revolution. "Elmwood," as it was called by Dr. Lowell, is surrounded by noble elm, ash, and pine-trees, mostly of his planting, and appears dignified and grave to-day, as becomes a house which knew the "good old colony times." It was there that our poet, the clergyman's youngest son, was born, February



J. R. Lowell

22, 1819—Washington's birthday—and there he lived almost without interruption until he was appointed United States Minister to Spain.

His mother, Harriet Traill Spence, descended from an Orkney family, was a woman of superior mind, somewhat eccentric, fond of reading and of Scotch ballads; and her children were nurtured as much with poetry as with religion and maternal love. The ballad of Sir Patrick Spens (who might have been an ancestor) was a favourite with the family.

Elmwood had a large and rich collection of books, and the poet was apparently turned loose to *browse* in it, according to Dr. Johnson's phrase. Hakluyt, Purchas, Marco Polo, "Don Quixote," "Pilgrim's Progress," romances of Arthur and Charlemagne, Shakespeare and the long line of poets and dramatists, were read with eager delight. Nothing came amiss to his all-devouring mind except mathematics, logic, philosophy, and the other studies prescribed by college regulations. But thanks to his evident natural abilities, and perhaps to the regard felt for his father, he passed the examinations and received his degree.

The Cambridge of that day was rustic and provincial. In the college faculty and in the town there were marked characters whose whimsical traits are sketched in "Cambridge Thirty Years Ago." This article appeared in *Putnam's Monthly*, 1853, and was afterwards included in "Fireside Travels," the most charming of Lowell's volumes of prose. The ancient speech which bears the name of "Yankee," was then in common use among the uneducated—"uneducated," they would have said—and traces of its slipshod forms and nasal accents could sometimes be detected even in the sedate utterances of the learned. But the thought of employing the dialect in satire or in bucolics did not occur to Lowell till later.

He was an active pedestrian, and explored the region about Cambridge like a naturalist, which he was not. His haunts were under the willows on the river bank, about the picturesque, wood-fringed lake called Fresh Pond, the heights of Belmont, the Waverley Oaks—huge trees of unknown age, standing as if grouped for a painter—Beaver Brook, whose pretty cascade and mill are in the heart of one of his most perfect poems, and Sweet Auburn, a group of wooded knolls near Elmwood, now the site of the well-known cemetery. Many of his reminiscences of Cambridge scenes and people are in his "Indian

Summer Reverie." Evidently his love of nature was an absorbing passion, and it led him to make distant excursions in later years, as to Moosehead Lake in Maine, and to the Adirondacks in north-eastern New York (in company with Emerson, Agassiz, Wyman, and Stillman), where he met lumberers, trappers, and deer-hunters, and came to know—

"The shy, wood-wandering brood of Character."

He studied law, but made no serious attempt to practise it; he was predestined to a literary career, and had no settled employment except in aiding the anti-slavery cause, until, in 1857 he succeeded Longfellow as professor of modern languages and literature in Harvard College.

He was early married to Miss Maria White, a lady of delicate beauty, and of natural gifts and graces. She wrote several beautiful poems, which were privately printed in a memorial volume after her decease. Of the children of that marriage only one, a married daughter, survives. The death of the mother (1853) was the subject of one of Longfellow's most exquisite poems, "The Two Angels."

Lowell's Rembrandtish portrait by Page, painted about the time of his marriage, shows a thoughtful face; luxuriant auburn hair, parted evenly upon a fair brow and hanging in long wavy locks; a full, ruddy beard spread over a broad falling linen collar, and a rather spare figure, with good square shoulders, clad in a loose coat of coarse, brown cloth. Poet, enthusiast, dreamer! would be your first thought in looking at the far-away expression of the eyes; but the courage and composure shown in the mouth would make you suspend judgment, and you would conclude that imagination and common sense were fairly balanced. The face, costume, and manner of that portrait, so severely simple, offer a remarkable contrast to the picture of the foreign minister in London at the height of his fame.

His study at Elmwood was a large front room on the upper floor, with a view of the river winding through the marshes, and of the distant city, on one side, and of the beautiful cemetery grounds on the other. There were shelves of books, engravings, and casts, a table with papers, loose volumes and pipes in pathetic disorder, and a few comfortable chairs. There he received his friends, some of whom had the habit of coming on Sunday afternoons, and between the slow whiffs of smoke ideas were pleasantly exchanged without phrase. In his "Winter

Evening Hymn to his Fire" is a picture of a smoker's elysium. It was not all tobacco.

"Now the kind nymph to Bacchus borne
By Morpheus' daughter, she that seems
Gifted upon her natal morn
By him with fire, by her with dreams,
Nicotia, dearer to the Muse
Than all the grape's bewildering juice,
We worship, unforbid of thee;
And, as her incense floats and curls
In airy spires and wayward whirls,
Or poises on its tremulous stalk
A flower of fraillest revelry,
So winds and loiters, idly free,
The current of unguided talk,
Now laughter-rippled, and now caught
In smooth, dark pools of deeper thought."

He naturally took the lead in conversation, or rather, I should say, his friends were better pleased to listen to him than to talk; but no one was more courteous or hospitable to the opinions of others. In his youth it may have been true of him, as *Hosea Biglow's* ghostly "gran'ther" says—

"When I wuz younger 'n wut you see me now,—
Nothin' from Adam's fall to Hudly's bonnet,
Thet I warn't full-cocked with my judgment on it."

At the time I recall (1853—1859), although his spirits were sometimes exuberant, his habitual manner had a mellow, Indian-summer glow. His conversation was suggestive and inspiring, and a sense of exaltation followed, as from seeing a play of Shakespeare or hearing a symphony of Beethoven. But at times, when in his comic vein, his audacious invention, his deft touches in dressing a rustic legend, his assumption of Yankee shrewdness or clownishness, his exquisite mimicry of antique pedants and other droll people, made him the most marvellous of story-tellers. In the course of an evening he often made jokes enough to set up half the professional humorists of America.

His early verse was in the orthodox manner, without a hint of comedy; it was sweet and tender, sometimes strong, but often plaintive, reminding one by its spirit rather than by form or phrase of Keats and Tennyson. His individuality was not then so marked as it afterwards became, and there was at times a vagueness of impression. Still, many of those early poems have an unfailing charm for sympathetic readers. I may mention "Ambrose," "To a Pine-Tree," "The Forlorn," "To the Dandelion," "She Came and Went," and especially that grand vision, "Sir Launfal." The sense of beauty is no more marked than the primitive-Christian character; the poems are fervent with apostolic zeal. As time went on his touch became firmer, and the sounds from his lyre had more definite rhythm and more character in melody. This clear sonorousness was

heard in "The Present Crisis," just before the Mexican war, when it seemed that the domination of the slave power was to be perpetual. The measure is that of "Locksley Hall;" but the thought is not Tennyson's; it is an original and impassioned outburst. Passages were often heard in anti-slavery meetings, where they sounded like the burden of a prophet. One would not need to quote them in the United States, where thousands of my age know them by heart; but I fear that to some readers of *GOOD WORDS* they may not be so familiar.

"Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

"Then to 'side with Truth is noble when we share her
wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just."

By the light of burning heretics, Christ's bleeding feet; I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back."

"For humanity sweeps onward; where to-day the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands.
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn."

While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn."

There are some turgid passages in this poem, less to be blamed in the periods of an orator than in the deliberate measure of a poet; and, occasionally, the confusion of metaphors is perplexing; but as a whole it is magnificent, and will live as long as a free republic survives.

The people of the North gained a great point by their activity in settling the Western country. Looking back upon this twenty years afterwards *Hosea Biglow* exclaimed—

"O strange New World, that yit wast never young,
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung,
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
Was prowled roun' by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
An' who grew 'st strong thru' shifts an' wants an' pains,
Nussed by stern men with empires in their brains."

Thon, skilled by Freedom an' by gret events
To pitch new States es Old-World men pitch tents." &c.

The Southern leaders thought to offset this by seizing a part of Mexico to form new Slave States. There was no difficulty in bringing about a war, mendaciously declared to be begun "by the act of Mexico." There was a call for volunteers, and in due time a recruiting sergeant appeared in Boston. Lowell was in the office of Mr. Burbank (now a judge), when the sound of drum and life drew him to the window, overlooking Court Square. It was a crusade for slavery! But

the sense of humour got the better of his wrath, as he imagined the caustic replies a shrewd Yankee might make to the invitation. Shortly after the first poem of *Hosea Biglow* appeared in the *Boston Courier* :—

"Thrash away, you'll hev to rattle
On them kittle-drums o' yours,—
'Tain't a knowin' kind o' cattle
Thet is ketch'd with mouldy corn;
Put in stiff, you fiter feller,
Let folks see how spry you be,—
Guess you'll toot till you are yellor
'Fore you git shold o' me!"

The stage-setting of the new comedy was as ingenious as the verses. The letter of the supposed father and the grave introduction of *Parson Wilbur* with its delicious pedantry were in perfect keeping, and the effect of the whole with those "to the manner born" was irresistible. The abolitionists were in ecstasies to see the war carried into the camp of the enemy. The stinging arrows of ridicule annoyed the pro-slavery party as no eloquence of invective could have done.

Then came a narrative of the adventures of *Sawin*, a volunteer in the invading army. The fun of this, to those who understand the allusions, is uproarious; no staid adjective fits it. The chief object of the satire was Caleb Cushing, of Massachusetts, then a general, afterwards a noted diplomatist. There was another witty letter from the same burlesque-hero (*Sawin*), giving vent to his disgust with Mexico and the service. There were other skits—at pro-slavery editors, at the Democratic candidate for Governor, "John P. Robinson," he who got an unexpected notoriety, and at the Whig assailants of Dr. Palfrey. In the first couplet of the latter is the perfect picture of a rural Yankee in a state of surprise.

"Nä? Hés he? He häint, though! Wüt? voted agin him!
Ef the bird of our country could ketch him, she'd skin him."

But it is evident that even for Americans the "Biglow Papers" ought now to have explanatory notes. In the slang of the day the Mexican war is now "ancient history," and even the great events from 1860 to 1865, the most momentous in their results of any since the discovery by Columbus, are often lightly mentioned—except by those who took part in them.

The second series of "Biglow Papers" had its birth in the terrible war of the rebellion, and has naturally less of the comic element. It has the humour of a mature man, genial and jocosely at times, but oftener saddened by painful experiences.

No reader should forget the Introduction, upon the development of the Yankee dialect; its wealth of citations and its exquisite style

make it one of the most fascinating chapters in literary history.

The poems cover a wide range, and are in various styles. I will comment only upon two, the sixth and the tenth of the series. "Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line" (No. VI.) is a description of spring in New England, the fullest, daintiest, and most truly poetical in existence. The dialect is moulded by the sentiment without losing its simplicity; all the talk of birds and flowers seems natural in the softened phrases of the Yankee swain. I doubt whether the description would not have lost its charm if written in literary English. The exquisite touches in this poem can be felt, but not communicated. Quotation is impossible; it would be wanton mutilation; the poem must be read as a whole.

The tenth of the series is in many respects the most powerful, and is certainly the most pathetic of Lowell's poems. It begins afar, and approaches its intended theme with surprising art. The poet had been requested to be funny :—

"You're 'n want o' sunthin' light an' cute,
Rattlin' an' shrewd an' kin' o' jingle-ish,
An' wish, pervidin' it 'ould suit,
I'd take an' gitify my English."

In successive stanzas, containing some of the loveliest pastoral images, the reader is led toward the all-absorbing subject of the war, then in its darkest period, and follows the poet through his walks, joyless amid the rural beauty, his soul full of an agonising desire for an end to the struggle. A few lines in passing :—

"Sights innoerent ez babes on knee,
Peaceful ez eyes o' pastur'd cattle,"

"Under the yaller pines * I house,
When sunshine makes 'em all sweet-scented,
An' hear among their furry boughs
The baskin' west-wind purr contented."

"Or up the slippery knob I strain
An' see a hundred hills like islan's
Lift their blue woods in broken chain
Out o' the sea o' snowy silence;
The farm smokes, sweetes' sight on air,
Slow thru' the winter air a-shrinkin', &c."

Lowell had lost three nephews and other near relatives in the war, and his references to them can hardly be read without tears. There is a cry of pain in every line. As he thinks of them, he "half despises himself for rhyming."

"Wut's words to them whose faith an' truth
On War's red teelstone rang true metal,
Who venter'd life an' love an' youth
For the gret prize o' death in battle?
To him who, deadly hurt, agen,
Flashed on afore the charge's thunder,
Tippin' with fire the bolt of men
That raved the Rebel line asunder!"

* The yellow pine resembles the Scotch fir.

This last stanza refers to General Charles Lowell, who, after he knew he was mortally wounded, led his men in a successful cavalry charge at the battle of Winchester.

The poem ends with an inspiring invocation to peace—peace that should come with triumph and “the step of Victory’s daughter.” The reader seems to have slowly ascended a hill like Pisgah, with a prospect beyond that awes him to silence. No sketch can convey this eloquence of the heart; it rouses emotions, at least with those who remember the awful war, which we must call sublime.

Viewing Lowell as a poet his mind seems to have two independent functions: in serious verse he might be weighty, incisive, imaginative, or tender, but when he is *Hosea* he revels in ludicrous images, droll conceits, and quaint terms of expression. In his serious moments a poetical image, as in Wordsworth’s line,

“Floats double, swan and shadow;”

while in the humorous half of his existence the vision of the stately swan above is attended by the shadow of a mirth-provoking gander below. The reflection is a jocose similitude—not a disenchanting *parody* of sentiment but a comic *twist* of it—giving the lively shock of the unexpected, which is wit. These distinct spheres have seldom encroached on each other, except in the poem last cited. Perhaps he has done his best things in comedy, but it may be only that his comedy is more easily apprehended. In the dialect he is at home:—

“For puttin’ in a downright lick
“Twixt Humbug’s eyes, there’s few can metch it.
An’ then it helms my thoughts ez slick
Ez stret-grained hickory doos a hetchet.”

In every other man’s hands the dialect has been fatal to sentiment: Lowell only has made it the vehicle of feeling and the framework of poetical imagery.

I think, however, he has written some things of a far nobler order than the comic poems.

The two parts of the “Biglow Papers” have been considered together, though they were separated by a space of twenty years. They differ, but complement each other, as they cover the periods of blossom and fruitage. Among the poems of the interval was “A Fable for Critics,” a vivid and humorous characterization of American authors. Its grotesque macaronic lines, with impossible rhymes, its exhaustless store of double-shotted puns, its keen analysis and common sense—despite some hurry-skurry passages—make

it one of the most enjoyable of satires. There was naturally some outcry, especially by Poe, who had been a merciless tomahawker of New England authors, and who, like Dickens’s hangman, objected to the treatment when applied to himself. The “Fable” shows the good-humoured audacity of young blood, and, although not always entirely just, is not wilfully unfair. The chief sketches, though tinged with caricature, are still the most faithful and effective portraits of their subjects in existence. The satirist anticipated the verdict of the succeeding generation. The best passages of the poem, not vouching for their absolute truth in every instance, are those referring to Whittier, Theodore Parker, Emerson, Willis, Lydia Maria Child, Bryant, Dana, and Cooper. The reader will see that the national vanity is not spared, and that the lines are as full of good-humoured counsel as of pungent wit.

There are many places at which a well-used volume of Lowell naturally opens; for instance, at “Beaver Brook,” which is so perfect in thought and art that it might serve as an object-lesson in picturesque verse. “The Foot Path” is another subtle and fascinating conception—a trail which imperceptibly leads beyond earth and time into an ideal world. There is nothing in Emerson more transcendental than this. “The Dead House” is full of striking lines which become a part of memory. If one should desire a contrast, a bit of dainty, scholastic humour, he could scarcely ask for anything more delightful than the epistle to Mr. John Bartlett on sending a seven-pound trout.

“Fit for an Abbot of Thelème,
For the whole Cardinals’ College, or
The Pope himself to see in dream
Before his lenten vision gleam,
He lies there, the sogdologer!”

“The First Snow Fall,” though printed in a comparatively late volume, was written a long time ago, and went through the newspapers for many years. It was the first of Lowell’s serious poems to obtain popularity. The last stanza has been often quoted:—

“Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That my kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.”

“The Courtin’,” originally a ballad of six stanzas, grew to twenty-four, and though the first sketch contains the substance, the added stanzas so fill out and heighten the rustic picture that the most exacting critic would hesitate to pronounce any of them superfluous. This may be regarded as a trifle by some; but it is of the essence of

New England life in the last generation, a "Flemish picture" of old manners and speech, exquisite in feeling and treatment—in fact, one of those miraculous trifles which only genius creates, and which the hearts of the Yankee race will for ever preserve. The comic and the tender elements are vitally interlaced. You may smile at the simple pair, but if you reflect you will see that their "courtin'" is a part of the never-ending, ever-beginning drama, the same in palace as in farm-house, to which no son or daughter of Eve can be indifferent. There are naturally many characteristic local touches; but how explain "crook-necks" to people who haven't the sun to ripen squashes? or "queen's-arm" to those who never saw the treasured flint-lock Queen Anne muskets, once borne in the French and Indian wars?

"God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

"Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldj all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hinder.

"The wa'n't logs shot sparkles out
Towards the poottiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

"Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord busted

"The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Es the apples she was peelin'.

"She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelins flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

"He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

"When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldj sot pale as ashes,
All kin' o' 'smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

"For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose natures never vary,
Like streams that take a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenaoary."

The "Cathedral" was suggested by a visit to Chartres, and is an excursion into the higher regions of thought. Its main theme is the philosophy of religion in its relations with art and science in human life; and this is presented from what might be called the mediæval view. Yet it is far enough from discussion which depoetizes, and from dogmatism which petrifies. There are number-

less bright points of description; but the strongest impression is made by the hints of faith and repose, which, like the glimpses of beauty in the grey stones of the edifice, touch the heart through the imagination. The vocabulary for such a poem must be ample; no "sweet simplicity of phrase" is possible in dealing with metaphysical subtilities, or with the glancing lights which a poet sees playing over old shrines and old beliefs. To an instructed reader this is a fascinating study, and it leaves an impression which, if vague, is ineffaceable. Its conservative tone is an indication of the poet's tendency—like that of Lord Tennyson—painful to those who still feel their pulses and their memories thrilled in reading "The Present Crisis" and "Locksley Hall." Septuagenarian poets may lose their early enthusiasm, but, fortunately, they cannot rob their readers of theirs.

The "Commemoration Ode" was written for a celebration by graduates of Harvard University in honour of those who served their country in the field during the war of the rebellion. It was a remarkable occasion. Many eminent soldiers were present, including Meade, the hero of Gettysburg. The proceedings were simple but on a high key; for memory and imagination were busy. Much of the impressiveness of the scene was due to Lowell's rapt and powerful rendering of the noble ode. The passage referring to Lincoln was received with cheers that were sometimes choked by emotion. No man who had the fortune to be present will ever forget that day. To perpetuate it the stately Memorial Hall of the University has been erected, the finest academic building in the New World.

There are great lifts of imagination and billows of passion in Lowell's odes, but in his shorter lyrics instances of the perfect fusion of feeling and melody in crystal lines are not frequent. He is primarily poet, but with a tendency to philosophy. In landscape he sees the natural object and he paints it; but *through it* he sees also its significance and its ideal relations. In the sparkling waters of Beaver Brook he not only sees Undine flooding "the dull wheel with light and grace," but the flood, "thick here and there with human blood," turning "the world's laborious wheels." In his best poems the mind is led from the visible object or image to the thought behind it. This gives his verse its ennobling character. Such poems have no need of added, formal moral; in their conception they are each an entire moral. "Sir

Launfal" is legend, picture, and Christian parable in one. Observe how the "Dandelion" glows with feeling and boyish memories!—how "Ambrose" and "Godminster Chimes" breathe charity and toleration!—how "The Forlorn" teaches sympathy!—how "Rhœcus" bids us listen to conscience!

Grace is the form accepted, the thing accustomed, expected; originality is novel, startling, or reactionary, and at first blush bids us pause. Grace and originality generally exclude each other. What is the fashion of to-day? Either cold, marmoreal elegance, or cloying sweetness, both rolled out on a Hollandish level, with never a guttural or sibilant, much less a disturbing image—lines to be chanted in monotone at dusk in a rose-garden or in a dimly-lighted and perfumed room, by a mild curate to an admiring audience of vestals, or by an effeminate Theocritus to a band of languishing Sapphos—such seems to be the fashion. Can one believe that such verse-makers or the lovers of this "grace" have any feeling for the masculine vigour, or the bold and often rude imagery of the masters? They may shrink from avowing their distaste for Shakespeare, but if any modern poet were to write of the waves "curling their monstrous heads"—of the heavens as "inlaid with patines of bright gold," or were to venture upon the magnificent hyperbole, "the multitudinous seas incarnadine," what a chorus of horrors would arise!

Lowell apparently sympathises with Chaucer in his joy in nature, and in his pleasure in the study of character; he is moved "by the frank flow of Dryden's lusty song;" by the ideality and directness of Emerson; by the quaintness of Donne, and the energy of Marvell. He never shrinks from a bold figure,

never sacrifices force or weakens a thought by prettiness of phrase. Readers of insight and receptive imagination have long recognised his qualities, and are willing to condone the occasional roughness which comes with strength and the superabundance of imagery which springs from a teeming brain. The poet in whose verse nothing is found to forgive seldom has much to admire.

But Lowell is not solely poet: there is in him an element of "Poor Richard," or fundamental wisdom; and it is for this reason that he is so many-sided. This combination is shown most clearly in his prose, which has the basis of sense and judgment, the enrichment of learned allusions, together with the profusion of imagery which marks his best poems. "Among My Books" and "My Study Windows" are essays such as only a poet could have written; and at the same time they show qualities in which most poets are wholly lacking. The last volume, "Democracy," is made up of addresses delivered here while he was minister. The reading world well knows his prose; and I have left myself no space to comment upon it even if it were necessary.

I have not mentioned his connection with *The Atlantic Monthly*, because the origin of that magazine was referred to in my previous article on Holmes.

Who would have imagined forty years ago the destiny prefigured in the calm eyes of Page's portrait? It is much for a man that he has filled with distinction the highest place an American president has to bestow; that he has come to be recognised as one of the first of prose writers; has an enviable rank among living poets, and has produced by far the most brilliant satire in the language.

THE YELLOWHAMMER.

OUT on the waste, a little lonely bird, I flit and I sing:
My breast is yellow as sunshine, and light as the wind my wing.

The golden gorse me shelters, in the tufted grass is my nest,
And *sweet, sweet, sweet the world*, though the wind blow east or west.

The harebells chime their music, the canna floats white in the breeze,
But as for me, I flit to and fro and I sing at my ease.

When the thyme is dripping with dew, and the hill-wind beareth along
The pungent scent of the gale, loudly I sing my morning song.

When the sun beats on the gorse, the broom, and the budding heather,
I flit from spray to spray and my song is of the golden weather.

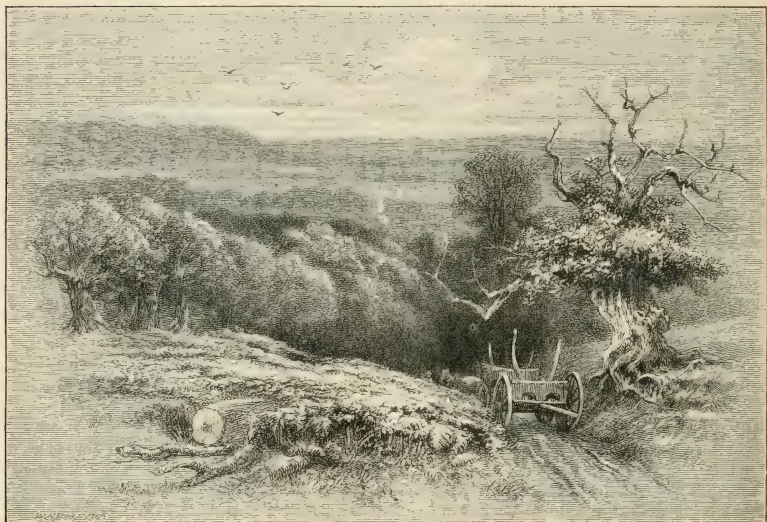
When the moor-fowl sink to their rest, and the sky is soft rose-red,
I sing of the crescent-moon and the single star overhead.

Out on the waste, out on the waste, I flit all day as I sing
Sweet, sweet, sweet is the world—dear world—how beautiful everything !

Only a little lonely bird that loveth the moorland waste,
 And little perhaps of the joy of the world is that which I taste,

But out on the wild free moorlands, on the gold gorse-boughs I swing,
 And *sweet, sweet, sweet the world ; oh sweet, ah sweet !* the song that I sing.

WILLIAM SHARP.



A Peep over the Surrey Woods.

THE HARVEST OF THE WOODS.

An Artist's Notes.

By CHARLES WHYMPER.

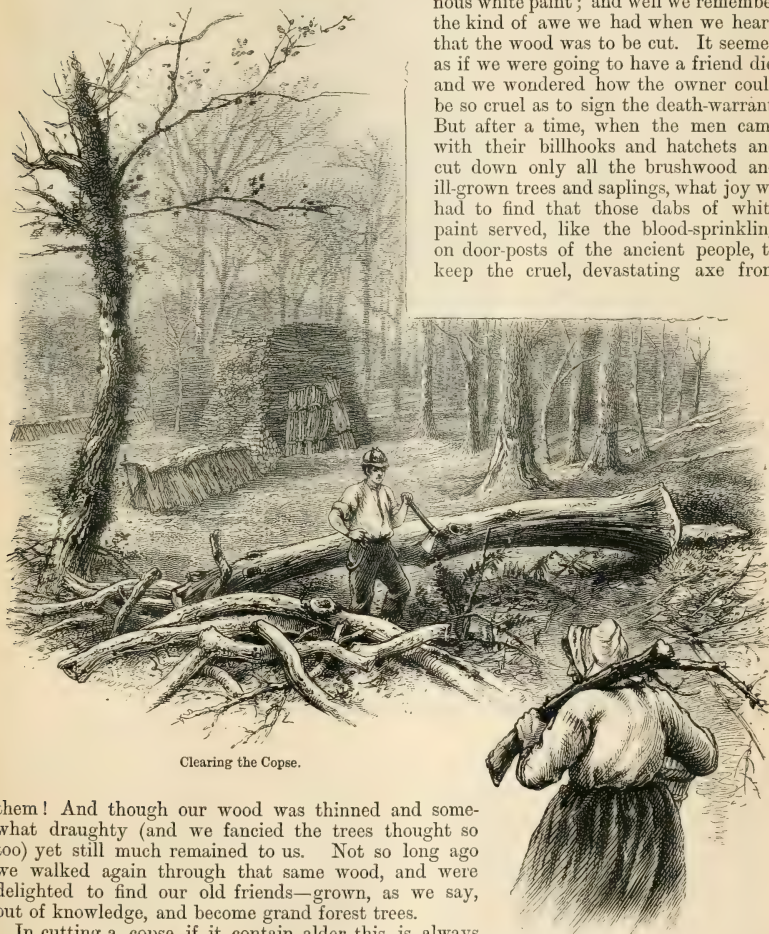
WHETHER timber or underwood pays best to grow is a subject that has been threshed out thoroughly, with the result, as one might expect, that locality so far alters the conditions in each case that one rule for all will never do. But we believe, however, that in the majority of cases underwood stands first ; so we will commence with it.

Where underwood is grown along with timber it is liable to great deterioration in value, as the trees grow higher and higher. Copse so laid down will, for the first twenty years, perhaps, produce a growth of underwood at the value, roughly, of £8 to

£12 per acre ; whereas the same copse, when it has existed for forty years, will yield but a mere nominal amount of underwood. So much is this the case, that we have met those who hold the view that very little is gained by the attempt to grow these two classes of timber on one spot. Against that must be put the fact, that up to a certain period the underwood is of the very greatest use in sheltering the young trees and in forcing them up. Underwood by itself, uninfluenced by trees over it, will continue healthily and vigorously producing a good crop every eight or nine years for more than a century ; indeed, if it were possible

to find exact record of how old some of the strong growing copses of Surrey and Sussex are, we believe it would be found to be the longest-lived crop known. The woods yielding either timber or underwood are equally, of course, left alone during the growing

months, and not till the end of October or November does the harvest of the woods begin. One of our earliest recollections is that of the sorrow we felt on going through a wood (that was dear to us as a most magnificent nursery and playground), and finding our favourite trees marked with ominous white paint; and well we remember the kind of awe we had when we heard that the wood was to be cut. It seemed as if we were going to have a friend die, and we wondered how the owner could be so cruel as to sign the death-warrant. But after a time, when the men came with their billhooks and hatchets and cut down only all the brushwood and ill-grown trees and saplings, what joy we had to find that those dabs of white paint served, like the blood-sprinkling on door-posts of the ancient people, to keep the cruel, devastating axe from

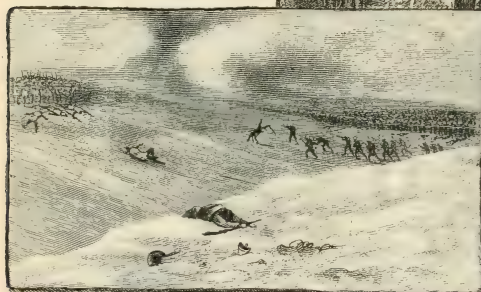


Clearing the Cope.

them! And though our wood was thinned and somewhat draughty (and we fancied the trees thought so too) yet still much remained to us. Not so long ago we walked again through that same wood, and were delighted to find our old friends—grown, as we say, out of knowledge, and become grand forest trees.

In cutting a cope, if it contain alder this is always left to the last; so, also, if there be any growth suitable for walking-sticks; and those for hop-poles are again set apart; all is sorted out for different ends. The spray-ends of birch go to the broom-maker, to be made up into the ubiquitous garden-path brush. Then there are faggots to be tied up from the waste bits of bough-ends; pea and bean sticks, too; whilst the rest is kept for hoops and hurdles, and the like. The trade in these long laths for hoops is a very considerable one, and much

of this kind of product of our own land goes abroad, and returns again some day, perhaps from the West Indies encircling sugar-casks, or binding strongly together tea-chests from India or China. Probably of all woods most suited for hoop-making chestnut is the best; some, however, are partial to hazel. In bundles you will generally find some of both, although they are supposed to be sorted out as one or the other. The splitting of the rods into these laths or hoops is done in the woods; and there, too, they are packed into those long, neat bundles that we have all seen in the station-yards. The men who do this branch of the work are of no peculiar class, nor have they had any very distinctive education or appren-



First and last of the alder-tree.

ticeship. Through the summer months they just work in the fields like any other labourer; and during those winter months, when they have got through all their woodcraft work, turn to hedging or ditching, or whatever may be going. Such peculiar knowledge as they have they just pass on by the son serving with his father a year or two as helper. This is most certainly the case where there is much woodland in the district; but where woods are few and fields many, you find that those who have the knowledge are also few and far between, and it is not uncommon in such places to find the owners of copses hiring men from a distance

to clear their woods, and to make hurdles and the like.

We have already referred to alder as being left when the other underwood is cut; and the reason is, that before it is of any use, for the purpose for which it is generally grown, it must be stripped of its bark; and this is of course best done when all barking is done—namely, in the spring-time. Alder-wood has for centuries been used in the manufacture of gunpowder; and it is no uncommon thing to find copses entirely of it alone, and these are most frequently placed in some low-lying spot where a little brook runs through the middle, and soft, rushy

land lies on either side. "Dogwood," also, is in great request by the powder manufacturers, and this is probably the highest-priced kind of underwood grown. After the alder is peeled it is cut into neat lengths of three feet, and by-and-by they are sent off to Hounslow or Waltham Abbey, the Government mills, where they form the base of the destroying powder. Passing sad it is to think that the final result of the life of these graceful, slender stems, growing by this "silver beck," will be DEATH! and that the pale blue smoke from that empty cartridge-case tossed aside in Soudan's sand comes from wood grown on generous Surrey's soil.*

There is practically no waste when underwood is cut, for, as we enumerated just now, the purposes to which the various kinds of growth can be put are without end; and the very chips and shavings from the hoops are all gathered up, tied in neat bundles, and sold the country round as the best of lighting firewood, at about ten shillings a hundred bundles. In certain districts they use these said chips and shavings for thatching out-houses and cart-sheds. A very permanent, sound roofing it makes, infinitely more lasting than ordinary straw thatch; and the colour it turns is most grateful to the artist's eye, for it mellows into a warm grey, with suggestions of purple, complemented by cool, pale-green lichens, which always grow over wood where given the opportunity; and an old cart-shed so thatched is always an attractive bait to sketchers as it stands nestling under some giant elm or chestnut.

It seems certain that the prominent place English oak used to take in thought and in actual life is likely to cease, for ever since iron came in as the material for building ships, the value of oak has deteriorated. It is somewhat melancholy to think of this—one of the peculiar institutions of England—thus being eradicated. No longer can poet sing of England's wooden walls, stout and strong, built from her native oak. No longer can painter find those fine forms the old oak frigates had; for whether for war purposes or those of trade, iron has once for all swept wood from the contest, and nothing floats but unpicturesque tin kettles. We are, however, in considerable doubt if oak sufficient for all the thousands of huge ships that are now built would have been forthcoming if it had been wanted; for—as with other timbers

of slow growth—when their use was discovered, they were ruthlessly cut down and not planted, so here in England, up to fifty or sixty years ago, owners were hacking and hewing down every oak tree that they could lay hands on and never giving a thought to replacing them. Fortunately then, perhaps, for us who love the woods, iron came in, supplanted oak, and now the oaks have rest; and each year shedding here and there an acorn, they still help to perpetuate the tree which above all others is most closely connected with England's name.

Bark (which, when stacked in the wood in those long undulating stacks, makes always a sight beloved by painters) is, for other reasons also, certainly not worth now what it used to be; and we have heard of cases in Sussex where bark, which years ago fetched as much as £20 a load, is now sold for but very little over half that sum. Barking is to those who watch it going on for the first time a very unique sight. There lies in the foreground a monarch fallen low, with his great limbs stretching far and wide, the earth all ploughed up round him; shining, glistening, golden yellow his great limbs are, as the bark is by skilful hands stripped from them. All the smaller branches have been lopped off and are thrown to one side, whilst the bark is being stacked to season and dry prior to going to some yard, where it will be denuded of all moss and lichen, and then broken, or hatched, into small fragments some two or three inches square. Then into great bags it is packed, and away to Bermondsey or some other haunt of tanners, for it is in the making of leather that its astringent properties are wanted. (The modern tanner has discovered some chemical agency which he uses in place of English bark; but we are not certain that we who wear his leather have any peculiar cause for being grateful for this modern discovery.) Finally, when all these preparatory stages have been got through, the waggon comes, a rough crane is extemporized, and the giant is got, creaking, on to the appointed place. The owner of the soil groans too, and long after the "wain" has gone, as he looks at the destruction caused by those terrible great wheels. Frequently it is to be feared that there is a callous recklessness about the timber merchant's men, in cutting down and knocking about, and generally spoiling as much as ever they can, that is to be vastly regretted. The loss of what actually is carried away is sad enough, and this additional devastation certainly ought not to be, for there is no

* We have very frequently met with those who, knowing to what end good barley is put, i.e. malt, have from conscientious ground refused to grow it; but we have never heard of the same susceptibility having been displayed in regard to the growing of alder.



Loading the wain.

essential need for it; with greater care it might be easily avoided. The hands of the men who bark get stained quite black from the juice that exudes, and very hard it is to wash off and get free from. "You should come out here in the spring, when the oak timber is thrown (because, you see, the sap be rising and the bark strips then), and just sit down on a stick fresh peeled—I means a trunk, you know—and sniff up the scent of that there oak bark. It goes right down your throat and preserves your lungs, as the tan do leather." These are the words of Jefferies' immortal gamekeeper. Charles Kingsley too expatiated most lovingly on the charms of his favourite fir wood; and all

who have ever experienced the subtle pleasure derived from inhaling the aroma of wood and forest, will be ready to agree that it is hard to overpraise it. But how far velvetreen's argument, that your lungs will get actually tanned and strengthened, is strictly accurate we are not prepared to say. It is very marked how more and more towns are swallowing up the country, and country life is but seldom accepted by any except those who are compelled to it; even those who have country houses seem to endeavour, as far as possible, to live elsewhere. Everyone professes a great admiration of and love for the country, but as a rule they go to it as seldom as possible, and usually choose just that time when everyone else is also going there; and we believe their desire to see and know the country is infinitely less than their determined wish to form part of a gaping, gabbling crowd, who desire to know nothing of nature whatsoever. But to those who are really in earnest, and who do wish to learn

about nature's marvels, we do not think there could possibly be a better time or place than the spring-time in the woods. The year ought to begin then, for then all life begins. Spring-time is nature's true birthday. The colours of the young leaves are then more varied than they are in full summer, and more delicate in their variation even than in golden autumn. Yet this is peculiarly just the time that most people elect to be living in town. Nothing can surpass the glories of a woodland scene in the early spring: it is exhilarating to a degree; but how few have really experienced it!

We had put into our hands quite recently a valuable paper on "The Self-sown Oak-Woods of Sussex," by Ralph W. Clutton, and there we found in print the expression that we have often heard in the country-side, that the oak-tree is the very "weed of the soil;" and that "this is so much the case, that neglected grass fields, or fields laid down with furzes, soon become covered with a plant of young oaks; and as a rule all enclosed coppices throw up an indigenous crop of oak." Poor land, from a farmer's point of view, can nearly always be made to grow a good crop of some one timber or another. This has been the case on what looked like the



Sawing the logs.

most hopelessly sterile bare hill-sides in the north country; and the coldest, poorest clay, which is next to good for nothing to an agriculturist, is an excellent soil for rearing slow-growing, and therefore most valuable English oaks. Mr. Clutton points out that "as the oak, in its earliest stages of growth, has a long tap-root, a deep soil, free to a certain depth from rock, is necessary to its rapid development. Oak will grow with considerable luxuriance in a gravelly soil, but on arriving at a size fit to be called timber, it becomes what is called 'shaky;' and it will be found on felling to be little more than a bundle of laths, utterly unfit for the uses to which oak timber is generally put." Oak requires clay, and it is singular that this most English product should grow with clammy, cold clay at its feet, and the chill winds blowing through its boughs, before it becomes the solid, stolid thing we love.*

Another pure native of Britain is the yew, but rarely grown now. This tree was, at an earlier period of this country's history, of great importance; and poets have sung of—

"Th' elastic yew, whose distant wound,
With England's rivals heaped the ground,"

* We readily acknowledge our indebtedness for much of the information contained in this article to Mr. Clutton's paper.

as if it, in itself, was the very base of the country's strength. The English archer would have his longbow made from no other wood; and proudly vaunted that then it took an Englishman to bend it. But this was long ago, and Evelyn lamented and said it was "to be deplored; for the barrenest ground and coldest of our mountains might be profitably replenished with them." Its wood is tougher even than the oak itself, and in Hampshire, where unfettered it grows freely in the New Forest, there is a saying that "a post of yew will outlast a post of iron."

A last thought and we have done. To him who walks the woods with eyes that see, there comes that power of so knowing

the types of the trees, that pleasure is unwittingly found in comparing one with another. Trees of the same species vary infinitely, just as man or any of the other families of animals do. An oak should be so and so, but frequently you will find oaks that in some degree resemble elms, and *vice versa*. Some trees again seem born ugly, though of lovely parentage, and never at any period of their life's history in outward shape show the true type. The attainment of that knowledge that tells one at once a well-grown tree from an ill-grown, is an attainment that adds simple enjoyment to every day's walk, and gives keener and more intelligent pleasure in the recollections of our visits to England's woods and forests.

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

THERE is hardly a vice or a virtue in the world which has not more or less the habit of reproducing itself. When a man begins to lie he finds himself often enough compelled to go on, and one falsehood breeds many. He that has stolen may find himself so placed that he must steal again. But the actual compulsive force of vice to vice is hardly found anywhere so strongly as in intemperance. The habit catches, not merely on the man who himself is abandoned to drink, but on people who surround him, and who are grieved and wounded by his folly. "Qui a bu, boira," is as true a proverb as ever was set upon paper, but it is equally true that he who has not drunk before may take to the foolish solace out of mere misery at seeing somebody else fall into the trap it sets him.

Ned Blane must needs take to drinking because Will Hackett declined to keep himself sober; and now, for the salvation of a life or two, as the fate which guides the destinies of men would have it for the nonce, another must needs enter the devil's circle, and go whirling towards the gulf for a while, only to be arrested at last by the force which set him in motion.

Mary Hackett was on terms of some familiarity with the Bard, and in her happy days had been wont to laugh with much heartiness over his effusions. Shadrach thought too highly of his gift to believe

laughter at its manifestations to be within the sphere of things possible, and in his own simple-minded way looked upon himself as being by the possession of the gift set apart from other people. Mary had, on one occasion, when at a school-room tea the Bard had read a set of verses more or less pertinent to the occasion, so far relied upon her power over her own risible muscles as to congratulate him upon his production, and from that hour Shadrach was her willing slave. He was perfectly certain of the divine afflatus within himself, and yet his faith asked for a good deal of bolstering up from without, and he had as good an appetite for praise as if he had been an amateur actor, or the poetic pet of ladies in an obscure literary London circle.

It was a matter of absolute necessity that Mary should put her hand to some kind of work, and after much casting to and fro in her mind as to the best way of earning enough to hold body and soul together she decided on starting an infant-school. News of this enterprise no sooner came to the Bard's ears than he set to work to hunt out pupils for her, and brought her half-a-dozen of the poorer sort, whose parents paid her sixpence per week a head. When the Bard happened to be engaged on night work at the Old Blazer, he would brighten himself up on an afternoon and hie, in his tall hat and rhinoceros broadcloth, and parti-coloured comforter, to the little outhouse of a place which

Mary had hired for her school, and there humbly presenting himself would listen with a beaming satisfaction to the infant lessons. The scene inspired him to one of his highest poetic flights, and, since the production has a rare fine heart if but little art in it, a verse or two of it may deserve to be recorded in a form somewhat more stable than the penny leaflet, in which the Bard dared to print and publish it, could secure for him.

"How sweet it is to be a child,
So pretty, innocent, and mild;
And, oh, it is a lovely thing
To hear the little infants sing.

"With Mrs. H. they live by rule,
At nine o'clock they go to school,
And there they learn and there they sing,
And, oh, it is a lovely thing."

The Bard was allowed to go to the school, and he became a familiar figure there; but little by little the beaming complacency faded out of him, and days came when he would sit glum and silent, and when even the scholastic successes of a niece of Hepzibah's, who was six years of age and had mastered many words of one syllable, failed to delight him. Then later he began to have little oddities of manner and motion which the schoolmistress was slow to understand. By-and-by these little oddities so grew and multiplied that she was forced to battle with herself lest she might understand them. And then at last in spite of herself she was compelled to understand and to beg the falling Shadrach to cease his visits.

The doing of this cost her bitter tears and many a new heart-ache. But half her little world seemed now floating on that hideous drink whirlpool, and swirling towards its depths. Her husband she had found out long ago. Then her most faithful suitor, who had passed as a model of what a man should be, followed on the same road. The smart, bright, genial lad was clean spoiled. He had grown haggard and unkempt and surly, and his old friends had begun to give him the cold shoulder, and to pass him with averted unrecognising glance in the street. All this, as she knew full well, was in part the fruit of her unhappy marriage. It weighed upon her conscience to think that she was in any measure responsible for it. And though no man, or woman either, is the keeper of the foolish brethren who will seize any excuse for rushing on their own mischance, she knew that but for the misery of that propelling cause which she herself had afforded him, Ned Blane would have lived respected and respectable, and the knowledge hurt her bitterly and often.

And now that the harmless, gentle-hearted

Bard had joined the swinish ranks she saw her own work in the matter still. Ned Blane's misery and his falling off were breaking Hepzibah's heart, and Hepzibah's unhappiness had started Shadrach down-hill.

Now this particular vice is the only one in nature in which shame and remorse for the crime lead to the crime's continuance. The wretched Bard's humiliation at his dismissal sent him back to his momentary comfort, and next day's conscience and headache sent him back again.

This dreadful new departure could not remain hidden long from Hepzibah's eyes, and when she beheld it the staunch creature's heart seemed like to break at once.

"Shadrach," she said, "you can go home. You'd better. But, oh! to think that a man wi' gifts like yourn should demean himself to this, which is a thing as the brutes that perish would not do."

The wretched Shadrach swayed, and beamed upon her with a fatuous smile.

"Wass good talkin'?" said Shadrach. "Does man's heart good?"

"I do' know what it does for a man's heart," cried Hepzibah with sudden tears, "I know it breaks a woman's. And Master Edward too! Then you, that was thought to be the soberest i' the parish! Go away, Shadrach, do; and God forgive thee!"

"That's a lill too much," Shadrach protested, moved vaguely and stupidly by her tears. "Tell you what it is, Hepzibah. It's Mist' Ned. That's what it is. Breaks your heart see fine young chap like that."

"Oh, you fool!" said Hepzibah bitterly. "What's poor Mister Ned's fault to you as you should go an' copy it? Go away, and never let me see you any more!"

"All right," responded Shadrach. "I shall go to th' Arms, and ask for Mister Ned. Said he wanted me to pay for a drink, because he saved my life—didn't he? So I will."

"D'y'e think he'd be seen drinking with the likes of thee?" demanded Hepzibah, driven nigh to her wits' end. "Go home, an' be a laughin'-stock along the road."

And therewith her tears became a passion not to be resisted, and she hid her face in her apron after the manner of her class, and cried as if her heart were fairly broken. Shadrach took himself away, and left her to her grief, ashamed enough to be glad of absence from her, too bland and mild in his cups to be wrathful with her or with himself, and easily restored to a condition of vacuous self-satisfaction.

It was early evening still, and when, an

hour later, Ned Blane reached home he glanced askance at Hepzibah's red eyes, and guessed himself the cause of her grief. He was more sober than he had often been of late at that hour, and the unspoken reproach of her face, its hungry pity and affection, stung him. It angered him to be pitied and wept over. A well of self-scorn and hatred lay within him, and threatened every moment to overflow its bounds, and drown heart and soul in its nauseous waters. And nothing seemed to keep those inward bitter sluices closed but wrath at anything which helped to open them.

He and Hepzibah were alone in the kitchen. She busied herself in preparing a meal for him, but she had not so far mastered the hysterics of her weeping that she could control herself completely, and an occasional sob escaped her. He, lounging against the upright of the mantel-shelf, with crossed feet and arms, looked angrily at her for a time as she went to and fro about her duties, and at last he broke out fiercely.

"What's the matter now? What sort of a house is this to come home to?"

"Who made it the sort of house it is?" Hepzibah almost shrieked, turning upon him.

"Eh?" he said, advancing a step and staring wildly at her. "Eh? What's that?"

"You," returned Hepzibah. "Ay! you may hit me, if you like, Mister Ned. Me as nursed you when you was a child, and loved you better than if even you'd been my own."

"Hit you!" he answered her with a feigned contempt. "Who's going to hit you? What's set you on this tack?"

"As if one of you wasn't enough!" cried Hepzibah, struggling with a new burst of tears. "There's Shadrach must take to it. It's all your fault, and I'll tell you the truth, if you killed me the next minute. The poor silly creetur's tied to me, and you break my heart, and it breaks hisn to see it, and he's took your mad ways out of trouble."

"Has he?" said Ned roughly, and flung into the garden, where he paced gloomily up and down.

Hepzibah came to him a few minutes later with an apologetic and tender manner, and told him that tea was ready.

"Never mind the tea, dear," Ned answered. He had not given her a word of affection for months, and the phrase half frightened her, she could guess so little what it meant.

He walked about the garden for an hour,

and at last entering the kitchen stood there irresolutely for awhile, and then, as if with a sudden impulse, made for the hall and seized his hat. Hepzibah ran after him.

"Don't be afraid," he said, turning round upon her. "I'm going to put an end to this."

"No, no, Master Ned," she besought him, clinging to him.

"Don't be afraid," he said again. "I shall be back when I've found Shadrach and seen him home. I'm going to have a word with him. Let me go."

He was very grave and solemn, and there was a look on his face which she had never seen before. She released him, and stood in the doorway looking after him as he walked toward the King's Arms. He disappeared in the gathering dusk, and Hepzibah went within, wondering and fearing.

There was a side bar at the King's Arms which gave upon a by-street, and this chamber was frequented by the rougher sort. Ned walked into it, flinging the door aside and gazing about him. Shadrach was there, with the shining hat brushed the wrong way in half a score of places, and tipped drunkenly over one eye. He was clinging to the counter with one hand, and gently and rhythmically waving a quart pot in the other, whilst he smilingly spouted some specially prized verses of his which no man listened to.

Ned laid a hand upon his shoulder.

"Shadrach, come with me."

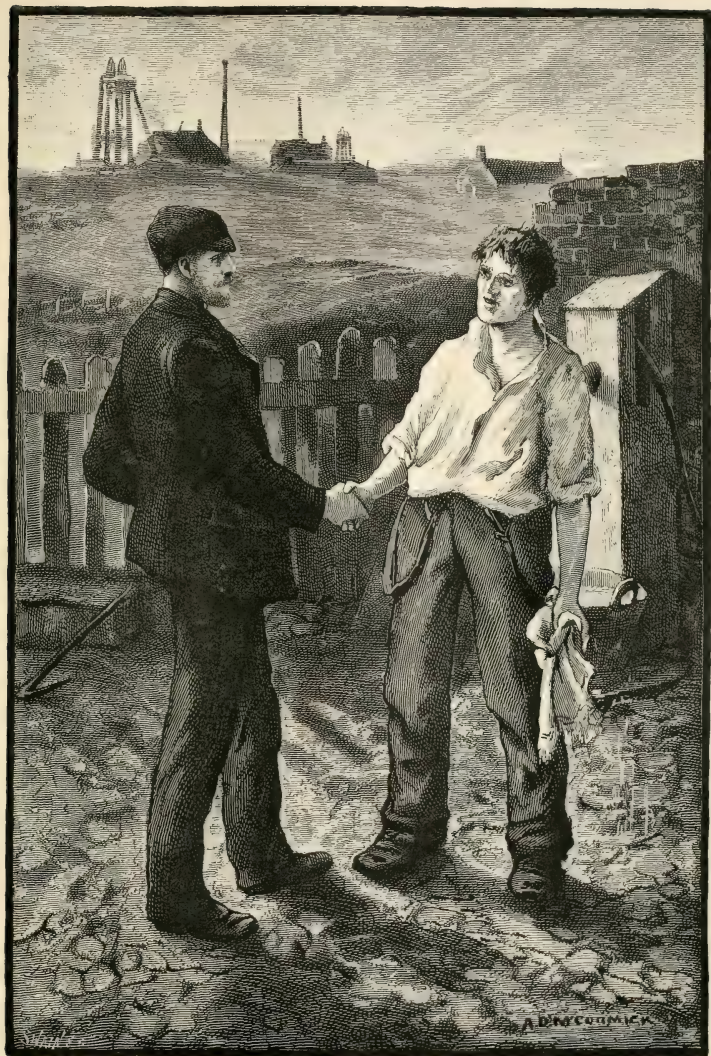
"That you, Mist' Ned," said Shadrach. "Yo' pitched into me once because I'd niver stood a drink after yo' saved my life. This is Mr. Blane, lads, the gentleman as saved my life in th' Ode Blazer. Th' Ode Blazer's Hero, this is. He's the best gentleman i' the wide world, let the next come from wheer he wool. Have a drink, Mist' Ned?"

Blane quietly took the pot from Shadrach's hand and poured its contents on the floor.

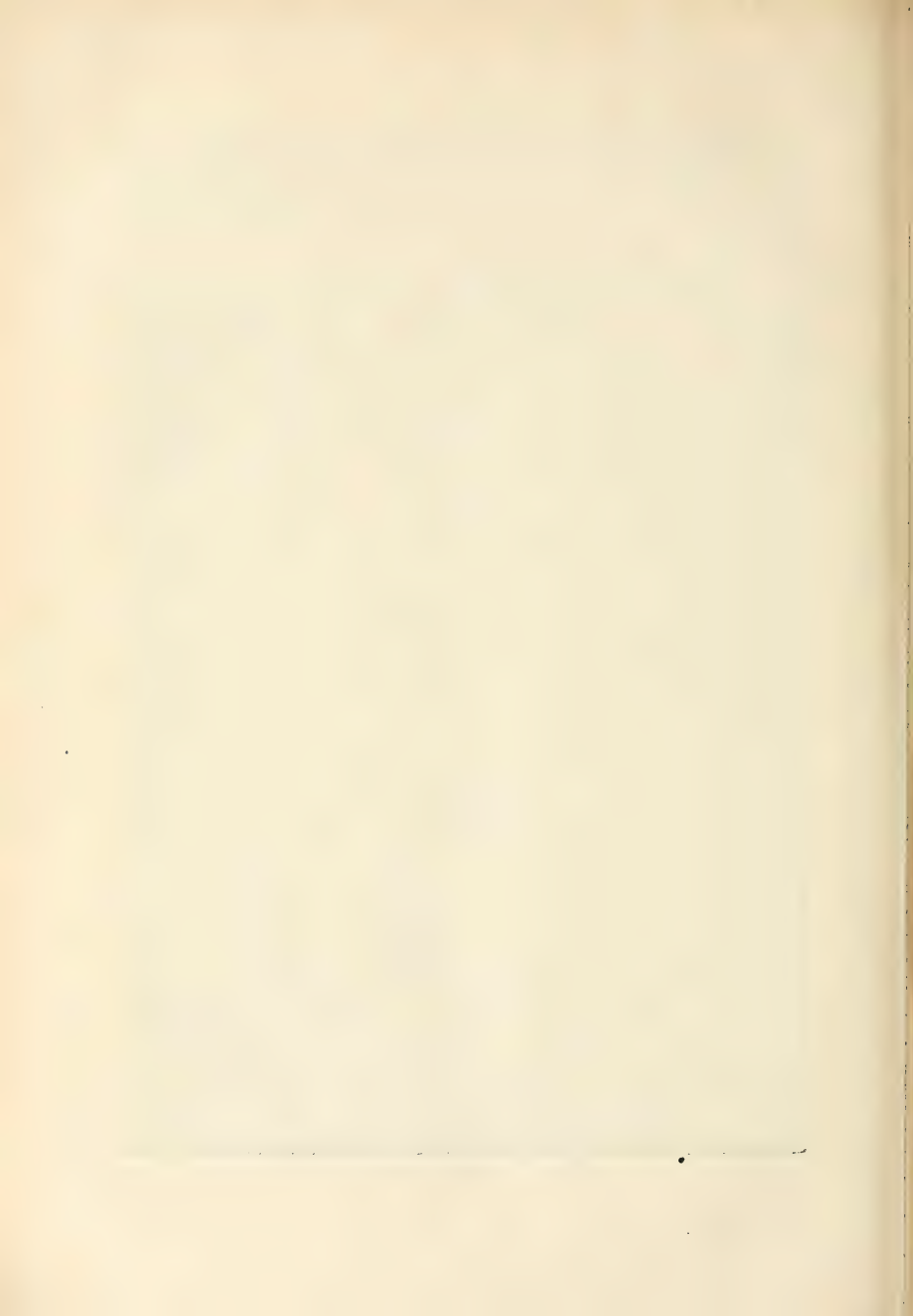
"Come with me," he said. "You don't seem to know when you've had as much as is good for you. You'll drink again when you see me drink again, and that, my lad, shall be never. And, mark me, Shadrach, if you drink before I do, I'll break every bone in your body."

CHAPTER XVI.

SHADRACH wept a little and declaimed somewhat, in his own manner, but Ned led him away by the collar and made an end of his objectings. Hepzibah was astounded at the sight of her young master returning a



"It's a bargain as the pair on us'll keep."



mere hour after his departure. He went straight to his own room, and the grieving, faithful servitor, not knowing what had happened, listened to the solid footsteps tramping to and fro, to and fro, overhead, until long past midnight.

At early dawn Ned was up and away to Shadrach's cottage. The Bard was already astir, awkwardly pumping upon his own head in the back yard. Blane took the pump-handle and sent forth a copious stream until Shadrach withdrew his head from the descending torrent, and began vigorously to towel himself, casting a sidelong look at his companion meanwhile.

"Well?" said Ned, when Shadrach had scrubbed away in silence for a minute.

"Well, Mister Edward," returned the Bard.

"Do you remember what happened last night?" Ned asked.

"I've a sort of a memory on it," said Shadrach, shamefacedly.

"You'd better have a clear one. Hepzibah told me last night that you had taken to drink because I had. That was the long and the short of it. Now, I'll have nobody going to the Mischief on my account, if I can help it, and if I can't go alone I won't go at all." He said this with a sort of bitter facetiousness which somehow made it easier for him, but it was pretty obvious that he meant it. "So I promised you that you should drink again when I did, and that if you drank before I did, I'd break every bone in your body. Do you remember that?"

"I can't say as I don't, Mister Edward," responded the Bard, still towelling briskly.

"You'll remember it now, if you please." said Ned.

"I'll remember it, Mister Edward," Shadrach answered, and on a sudden began to blubber. "If this is what things has come to, I'm gay as iver I made a fool o' myself. If I'd ha' guessed as it'd ha' put a stopper on thy game, Mister Ned, I'd ha' got drunk ivery night for fifty year."

Ned turned away and paced the yard quietly for a while, and suddenly wheeling on Shadrach held out a hand to him.

"It's a bargain, Shadrach, between you and me."

"It's a bargain, Mister Edward," said Shadrach, taking the proffered hand, "and it's a bargain as the pair on us'll keep."

So Ned left him, having carried matters with a sufficiently high hand considering that he had been the first transgressor. When he was alone again he fell into a sick

loathing which was half physical and half spiritual. It shamed him to pass people in the street, and to endure the most casual glance and greeting. It shamed him to think of his near past, and the foolish path he had travelled since Hackett's marriage. Shadrach's grotesque expression of affectionate devotion shamed him. His whole heart was sick with shame, and his body was sick with palled brandy and the aching, burning, and nauseating desire of more. But through it all he felt he was a man again, and some ray of hope and promise of victory struck through the sick gloom which dwelt upon him. To have been a man once on a time, and to have been called a hero, and to have sunk as he had! By snatches his very pains translated themselves into a kind of triumph. At least he was a man again and was suffering and not yielding. Suffering! For these brief seconds it was a joy to suffer.

Then he would have a farewell glass, and would be rid of this horrible nausea, without in the least diminishing his utter determination to have done with his old vile courses. He could be himself again at a mere expenditure of fourpence, could be rid of this aching passion of need, and find himself strengthened for the fight. He would make his enemy serve his own turn and would borrow from him weapons wherewith to fight him. The outlying public-houses were already opening. To yield this once was not to yield. It was but to recoil to spring the better. He would do it.

No. There were manhood and honesty in the man. He would not do it. He had passed his word. Had he ever been a liar? Should he begin now? No, by earth and heaven!

And so, now up, now down, he passed the gauntlet of his cravings, and reaching home locked himself within his room and threw his key out of window, thereby making victory certain until such time as Hepzibah should rise. A mere half-hour gained, but something in the circumstances.

Now, when it was out of his power to fall, the temptation suddenly dwindled into nothing. He laughed at it, though his laughter was bitter, and hurt him as much as it would have done to shed tears. He had had but an hour or two of heavy sleep during the night, and now he cast himself upon the bed, and after tossing for a time fell into a slumber which endured until Hepzibah knocked at his door. She was gone before he could call to her, but he heard her clattering about in the yard a few moments,

and threw up the window to speak to her. She stared to see him already dressed, with his hair dishevelled from his twistings and turnings on the pillow.

"I dropped my key out of window an hour or two ago," he said. "There it lies, behind you. Open my door for me."

"Lawk a mercy, Mister Edward!" said Hepzibah. "Haven't you been to bed all night?"

"Yes," he answered, "I was up and out hours ago. I have been lying down since. Let me out, and I'll tell you all about it."

Hepzibah took up the key, re-entered the house, and released him. When he descended there was nobody else astir. Hepzibah was laying the breakfast things in the kitchen, and for awhile he stood in silence.

"You was to tell me all about it," she said at length without looking at him.

He told his story without a word of contrition or remorse until he came to the end.

"I've promised Shadrach," he said then, "and I've promised myself. There's an end of it."

Mrs. Blane entering the kitchen saw Hepzibah crying over Ned and embracing him.

"Why, what on earth's the matter?" she asked wonderingly.

"Nothing," said Ned in answer. "There, there, Hepzibah! It's all over."

Mrs. Blane was one of those women who would infinitely rather suffer than have nothing to be martyred by. She had seen the lad growing a bit wild—like his father—and had shed a tear or two about it, amiable, enjoyable, and self-consolatory. But she had missed the graver signs, and knew nothing of the history of the past twelve hours. She let things go for the meantime, knowing that Ned's "nothing" meant nothing for her hearing from his lips. Breakfast was despatched, and the young fellow went about his business.

The great fight was fought and won, for once. He felt, looking back at it afterwards, that he had come out of it by something of a scramble, but he had escaped somehow. It had to be fought over and over and over again, but the footing was surer and the fight briefer and less severe time after time, until at last Old Blazer's Hero held his head erect again, and walked about his duties and such pleasures as the world still held for him—a saved man.

Life is full of queer problems, and many of them are inscrutable and insoluble altogether. But the strangest that ever presented itself to Ned Blane's experience was that the fruit of his own folly should cure him.

(To be concluded next month.)

THE HOME OF THE ARYANS.

By PROFESSOR F. MAX MÜLLER.

IF we find the same words with the same meanings in Sanskrit, Persian, Armenian, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Slavonic, and Teutonic, what shall we say? Either the words must have been borrowed from one language by the other, or they must have belonged to an older language, from which all these so-called Aryan languages were derived. It is not always easy to decide this question, but, generally speaking, the character of each of the Aryan dialects, as we may call them, is sufficiently marked to enable us to say at once that such and such a word in Latin is Greek, in German is Latin, in Celtic is German. With the exception of such foreign words, however, it is clear that all words, and all grammatical forms also, which the Aryan languages have in common, must have constituted the bulk of

a common inheritance from which the principal heirs carried away whatever seemed most useful and valuable to them.

This fact being once firmly established, scholars have rushed at a number of conclusions, which seemed very plausible at first, but have turned out quite untenable after more careful consideration.

Surely, it was said, if these languages are all derived from the same source, it ought to be possible to reconstruct that primitive Aryan language. Forthwith the attempt was made, but it proved a failure. If those who began to write fables in the Proto-Aryan speech had attempted to construct, first of all, a Proto-Latin speech out of the fragments scattered in Italian, Provençal, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Roumanian, and Roumansch, they would have seen that even this task,

which ought to have been much easier, was beyond their power. And why? Because it is a mistake to imagine that there ever was one uniform Proto-Aryan language—*tota, teres et rotunda*—from which Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, and all the rest were derived, as Italian was from Latin. Ancient languages, as I have tried to point out in my "Lectures on the Science of Language," live, move, and have their being in dialects, and it is out of a living mass of dialectic speech that literary languages slowly emerge. Dialect has two quite distinct meanings, which ought never to be confounded. It means the ancient feeders of a literary language; but it also means the later channels branching off from a literary language. We can see literary languages emerging before our very eyes, if we watch the less civilised races whose spoken dialects have not yet been centralised by literary cultivation. In the small Island of Mangaia, as its first missionary, the Rev. W. W. Gill, informed me, four dialects were spoken when he arrived there. After twenty years of teaching and preaching, and of washing and combing too, the dialect which he himself had learnt, with any peculiarities of grammar and pronunciation that might have been due to himself, has become the recognised language of the whole island. If there had been at the same time a French and a German missionary, we might probably have had three Mangaian grammars, and three Mangaian Catechisms and Bibles. But would it have been possible to construct out of them a uniform Proto-Mangaian language? Certainly not. We cannot reconstruct what never existed, and we cannot, therefore, build up a uniform original Proto-Aryan speech containing the type of every word and every grammatical form that meets us in Sanskrit, Zend, Armenian, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Slavonic, and Teutonic.

The second equally thoughtless endeavour was to fix the date at which the Aryan separation took place. How, in the world, was that to be done? It was thought that, as in geology we can count the years in which certain deposits have taken place within historical times, and argue from that to the years required for the formation of more ancient deposits, we might apply the same test to the growth of language. We see how many centuries it has taken for Anglo-Saxon to become English, for Latin to become French, for Zend to become Persian. Why should we not be able to discover, without minding a century or two, how long it would

have taken for Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, to branch off from a common stem and accumulate that amount of difference which separates them from each other? The answer is simple enough. There are two kinds of change in language—the one produced by internal, the other by external causes. The internal changes are due chiefly to economy of muscular energy and similar causes; the external changes, and these are the most palpable, are generally the results of political and social revolution, or foreign conquest. Anglo-Saxon would never have become what it has become in English, but for the ill-treatment it received from the Normans. Latin would never have become French, but for the brutality with which it was mangled by Franks and other barbarians. Persian is only the wreck of Zend, and bears clear traces of all the persecutions which Persia underwent from its Muhammedan conquerors. No one can measure the bearings of such events, any more than a geologist, in his calculations of the progress of stratification, can make allowance for earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or cataclysmal floods.

We do not even know how long Sanskrit had been Sanskrit, and Greek Greek before the time when we become aware of their existence. Literature, or, at all events, written literature, is a very late invention in most countries. In India we have no trace of books before the fifth century B.C. In Greece, we know indeed of inscriptions several centuries earlier; but of written books, in our sense of the word, I still doubt the existence before the sixth century B.C. It is true that oral tradition, before the invention of writing and printing, had proved itself a very safe guardian of poetry, and few would doubt that the earliest poetry which we know in India and Greece goes back at least to 1000 B.C. But it may go back, for all we know, to 2000 or 3000 B.C., and even at that time people who spoke Sanskrit and Greek would have been as unintelligible to each other as a Bengali and a modern Greek are at present.

When the attempt at fixing the date of the first Aryan separation was given up as hopeless, much time and ingenuity were wasted on the question whether we might not be able to find out how that separation took place, which races started first, and which remained together for some time after they had broken away from the rest. It is easy to start such problems, but it is far wiser to look before we leap. I was not aware, till I saw it stated by Professor

Schrader, in his excellent book called "Sprachvergleichung und Urgeschichte" (p. 70), that I was myself responsible for the first step in that direction, having been the first to point out that, at some time or other, the Aryan family separated and became divided into two distinct branches, the *South-Eastern*, comprising the languages of India, Persia, and Armenia; and the *North-Western*, comprising Greek, Latin, Celtic, Slavonic, and Teutonic. I do not mean, however, to shirk that amount of responsibility. When we find, as we do, in the most ancient languages of India and Persia, in the Vedic Sanskrit, and in Zend, identical words of decidedly secondary character, technical terms even, connected with a peculiar system of religion and sacrifice, and such words not borrowed, but modified according to the phonetic system of either Sanskrit or Zend, we are safe. These two languages must have continued together, after they had separated from the rest, in which no traces of these words occur. Thus we find in Sanskrit *hotar*, the name of a special priest, in Zend regularly changed into *zoatar*. We find another name for priest in Sanskrit, *atharvan*, in Zend, *átharvan*. The sacrificial plant, which in the Veda is called *soma*, occurs in Zend as *haoma*. While other Aryan languages have common numerals up to one hundred only, Sanskrit and Zend have the same word for thousand also, viz. *sahasra* in Sanskrit, changed regularly in Zend into *hazanra*. Such evidence is sufficient to prove that the people who spoke Sanskrit and Zend must have remained united for some time after they had left the common Aryan home, and after they had become separated from the speakers of the other Aryan dialects. Beyond this, however, all is uncertain and mere guess-work. It was my chief object in the inaugural lecture which I delivered at Strassburg, in 1872, to warn scholars against wasting their time on an impossible problem. I pointed out how certain peculiar similarities had been discovered:

1. Between Slavonic and German, by Bopp, Zeuss, Grimm, and Schleicher;
2. Between German and Celtic, by Ebel and Lottner;
3. Between Celtic and Latin, by Newman and Schleicher;
4. Between Latin and Greek, by Mommsen and Curtius;
5. Between Greek and Sanskrit, by Grassmann, Sonne, and Kern.

But all these similarities prove no more than that the Aryan languages are cognate

dialects. If some of them agree on certain points on which they differ from all the rest, this is no more than we should expect; if they differ, this is again exactly what we are prepared for. Nothing but coincidences in late, secondary, or technical terms, such as we find between Sanskrit and Zend, for instance, but certainly not between Greek and Latin, ought at all to disturb our equanimity. Such coincidences, however, as could in the least compare with the coincidences between Sanskrit and Zend, we find nowhere else, not even between Greek and Latin, and therefore the problem of the gradual separation of the Aryan languages, beyond the great split into a North-Western and a South-Eastern branch, is, from the nature of the case, insoluble, and must be abandoned. I do not deny that the ancestors of Greeks and Romans, of Romans and Celts, of Celts and Germans, of Germans and Slavs, may have remained together for some time before they became finally separated; all I maintain is that the linguistic evidence is too weak to support such conclusions. It may seem a kind of intellectual cowardice to withdraw from an undertaking which appeared so promising, but if there is no evidence for solving a problem the true scholar ought to have the courage to say so, and not to waste valuable time on mere guesswork which simply cumbereth the ground. About the same time when I had published my Strassburg lecture, Professor Schmidt made a bold attempt to save what could be saved of the shipwreck, but in the end his researches led to much the same conclusion. We both admit that there was from the beginning dialectic variety within certain spheres, but the cherished idea of a real pedigree of the Aryan languages had to be surrendered once for all. Let any Roman scholar attempt to fix the time when Italian, Provençal, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Roumanian and Roumansch, branched off respectively from Latin, or how long some of them remained united before assuming an independent existence, and he will be less surprised at the failure of all attempts to restore the *stemma genealogicum* of the ancient Aryan languages.

And now we come to the last question. Is it possible to fix the original home of Aryan speech, and to determine the migrations of the races who spoke Sanskrit, Persian, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Slavonic, and Teutonic, in their progress from their head-quarters?

It is generally taken for granted that in the beginning, whenever that may have been, there was a large Aryan population some-

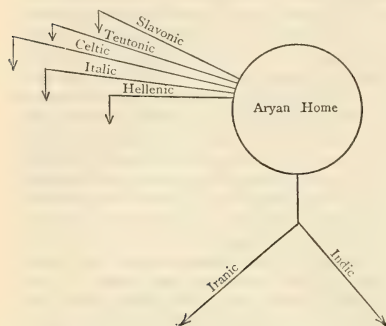
where, and that large swarms issued from a central bee-hive which contained untold millions of human beings. This may or may not have been so. But first of all we ought to remember that a common language is by no means a certain proof of a common bee-hive. We know from history how families, clans, and whole nations were conquered and led into captivity, learning the language of their conquerors; how tribes were exterminated, women and children carried off; and how even conquerors had sometimes to learn the language of the country which they had subdued. All this does not destroy the continuity of language, but it breaks the continuity of blood. If the indigenous races of India learnt Sanskrit, and dialects derived from Sanskrit, they became representatives of Aryan speech, whatever their blood may have been. Have not the Jews forgotten Hebrew, and learnt English, German, and French? Have not the Beauchamps and St. Legers broken their tongues to Saxon idiom and Saxon grammar in England? How then shall we tell what races had to learn the language of their Aryan conquerors or their Aryan slaves? There is no Aryan race in blood, but whoever, through the imposition of hands, whether of his parents or his foreign masters, received the Aryan blessing, belongs to that unbroken spiritual succession which began with the first apostles of that noble speech, and continues to the present day in every part of the globe.

And why should there have been in the beginning a vast number of Aryan men? Let us remember that one couple, having two children, would, if every successive marriage was blest with two children only, produce a population of 274,877,906,944 human beings in about 1200 years. Now the population of the whole earth at the present moment is vaguely estimated at 1,500 millions only. We are not driven, therefore, particularly if the first Aryan separation may be placed at least 2,000 years B.C., to the admission of a vast Aryan stock which was broken up into seven or more nationalities. That may be the more natural hypothesis, but whether more natural or not, it is not the only possible hypothesis. Granted two Aryan couples, each with seven children, and everything that has to be explained may be explained quite as well with this as with the bee-hive theory. Each of the seven children, by marrying children of the other family, might become, particularly if they settled in different forests or valleys, founders of dialects; and each of these dialects might, in twenty generations, or six hun-

dred years, be spoken by more than two millions of human beings. Two millions of human beings, however, are much more difficult to move from one country to another than two hundred; and it is, at all events, quite open for us to imagine that the Aryan migrations took place by hundreds instead of by millions. If one missionary is able, in twenty years, to impose his peculiar, and perhaps not quite grammatical, dialect on the population of a whole island, why should not one shepherd, with his servants and flocks, have transferred his peculiar Aryan dialect from one part of Asia or Europe to another? This may seem a very humble and modest view of what was formerly represented as the irresistible stream of mighty waves rolling forth from the Aryan centre and gradually overflowing the mountains and valleys of Asia and Europe, but it is, at all events, a possible view; nay, I should say a view far more in keeping with what we know of recent colonisation.

But the old question returns, Can we not discover the cradle of our race? I say, decidedly we cannot. We may guess, with more or less probability, but if our guesses are to be submitted to the tests of mathematical certainty, not one of them will stand the test. This ought to be understood; and is, in fact, understood among most scholars. Many opinions held with regard to periods of history which are beyond the reach of historical evidence can never be more than possible or plausible. To demand for them a different character does not show any critical sagacity, but rather ignorance of the limits of our knowledge. Thus, when we see the Celts driven to the western parts of Europe, pushed forward by Teutonic tribes, and these again pressed hard by Slavonic neighbours, we naturally conclude that the Celts were the first to arrive in Europe, the Germans the second, the Slaves the third. But there is no mathematical certainty for this. It is nothing but the result of an historical combination, and can never be more. Again, if we see Hellenic civilisation extending from Asia Minor to Greece, and from Greece to Italy, and if we find the Italians pressed by successive inroads from the north, we are inclined here too to admit a progress of Aryan speech and thought from the east to the west, and from the north to the south. If, on the contrary, we consider that the Aryan conquerors of India came clearly from the north along the rivers of the Punjab, while before that time they must have dwelt for a certain period together

with the people who spoke ancient Persian, and, before that time again, with people who became the founders of the first European dialects, we find it difficult to resist the conviction that some half-way point from which the North-Western and South-Eastern tribes could have diverged may mark the original home of the Aryans. This may be roughly represented by the following sketch.



But if we proceed to ask in what exact spot the Aryan centre has to be placed geographically, the answers will vary very considerably. "Somewhere in Asia," used to be the recognised answer, and I do not mean to say that it was far wrong; only we must not expect in a subject like this our much-vaunted mathematical certainty. The reasoning which we have to adopt is one that Mill recommends for other complicated and, at first sight, confused sets of appearances.* We have to begin by making any supposition, even a false one, to see what consequences will follow from it, and by observing how these differ from the real phenomena. The simplest supposition which accords with the more obvious facts is the best to begin with, because its consequences are the most easily traced. This rude hypothesis is then rudely corrected, and the operation repeated, and the comparison of the consequences deducible from the corrected hypothesis with the observed facts suggests still further correction, until the deductive results are at last made to tally with the phenomena.

Now the first rough hypothesis is that the cradle of the Aryans was somewhere in Asia, and the question is, do we know of any facts which make that rough hypothesis untenable?

* "Logic," iv. 14, 5.

The first fact that was supposed to militate against it was the absence of common Aryan names for animals, which ought to have been known to dwellers in Asia, such as the *lion*, the *elephant*, the *tiger*, and the *camel*. The dog, for instance, must have been known to the Aryans before their separation, because it has the same name in Sanskrit, *svan*, in Zend, *spá*, in Greek, *κύων*, in Latin, *canis*, in Irish, *cú*, in Lithuanian, *szù*, in Gothic, *hund*s. These are all dialectic modifications of one typical form *kuan*. But there are no common Aryan names for *lion*, *elephant*, *tiger*, and *camel*, and therefore, it is concluded, the Aryans could not, before their separation, have known these animals or lived in a country where they were known. This argument is *ben trovato*, but no more. First of all, if some perverse critic were to say that the Aryans may have possessed common names for these animals, but lost them, we might shrug our shoulders, but we could not prove the contrary. Ever so many Aryan words exist in one or two branches of the family only, and if they disappeared in some, they might have disappeared in all.

Secondly, and this is a more powerful argument, we find that the animals which have common Aryan names are mostly such as had become familiar and useful by being domesticated. The fact that the dog and the horse have common names in all Aryan languages seems to me the best proof that they had been tamed. Tigers and lions were simply wild beasts, and there was no necessity for distinguishing and naming them beyond classing them as *fera* or *Śīpa*, the objects of the chase (*Śīpa*). And suppose the camel had really been known and utilised as a beast of burden by the Aryans, when living in Asia, would it not have been most natural that, when transplanted to more northern regions, their children, who had never seen a camel, should have lost the name of it? We have no longer any *doits*, and the word would have been altogether lost but for such familiar phrases as "I care not a doit." The Americans have no *pence*, and in America *penny* is no longer an American, but only a foreign word.

The negative argument, therefore, which, from the absence of common Aryan words, tries to establish the absence of their objects during the Aryan period, breaks down. It is plausible, it appeals to scholars and historians, but it must not be subjected to a cross-examination in a court of law. Much stronger, however, is the positive argument. If the

North-Western and South-Eastern Aryans have the same word for bear, for instance, they must have known the bear before they separated, and have lived in a country where that animal was well known. The bear is no doubt a wild beast, but he is not so ferocious, and has never been so dreaded as the tiger and lion. He was often considered as a friend and patron of a village, and at an early time became quite a character in local traditions. Many families and tribes, such as the Arcadians and the Arsacidæ, were proud of their descent from the bear, and we need not be surprised, therefore, to find his name as *riksha* in Sanskrit, as *ἄρκτος* in Greek, and as *ursus* in Latin.

But because the Aryans, before they branched off into North-Westerns and South-Easterns, knew the bear, it does not follow that we must push their original home to the Arctic regions. Even the north of India may be called arctic in one sense, for the Great Bear is visible there; nor need we go to Arcadia or Germany in order to meet with bears. That the Aryans did not come from a very southern climate may indeed be gathered from their possessing common names for winter, such as Sanskrit *himā*, Greek *χειμῶν*, Latin *hiems*, Old Slav *zima*, Irish *gam*. Ice, too, is represented by *is* in Teutonic, by *isi* in Iranic; snow by *nix* in Latin, *νίφα* (acc) in Greek, *snais* in Gothic, *snęgŭ* in Old Slavonic, *snigis* in Old Irish, and *çniçh*, to snow, in Zend. There being a common name for the birch-tree, *bhūr̥ga* in Sanskrit, *bereza* in Russian, *birke* in German, likewise points to a more temperate climate. But none of these climatic indications drives us as yet out of Asia. I confess I was at first inclined ("Selected Essays," I. 187) to follow Benfey, when, on the strength of this and similar linguistic facts, he proposed to fix the original home of the Aryans on the very frontiers of Asia, "north of the Black Sea, from the mouth of the Danube to the Caspian Sea." Unfortunately, however, Benfey did not live to publish the fuller account of his researches which he had promised, and the arguments which other scholars have added, and by which they have tried to push the frontiers of the Aryan home as far as Germany, Scandinavia, and Siberia, seem to me to have rather weakened than strengthened his case. The reasons which induced Geiger to proclaim Germany as the original home of the Aryans have not stood the criticism of unprejudiced scholars, though the evidence with which we have to deal is so pliant that it is possible to make out a more

or less plausible case, as M. Piètrément has done for Siberia, and Dr. Penka for Scandinavia, as the true *officina gentium Aricarum*. Dr. Penka's arguments are extremely interesting. He tries to show that the picture which linguistic palæontology has drawn of Aryan life previous to the separation, coincides with the picture which archaeological palæontology constructs from the neolithic remains discovered in Scandinavia. But how would this prove that the Aryans were autochthonous in Scandinavia? Even the identity of the flora and fauna of Scandinavia with the fauna and flora attested by the common Aryan language would not decide the question, unless we could prove that no other country could put forward the same claim. And are we to suppose that the original Aryan type was Scandinavian, and that our forefathers had blue eyes and blonde hair? Blue eyes and blonde hair are in such a minority among the Aryans that Pöschke, in his book, "Die Arier," 1878, felt driven to place our ancestors near the Rokitno swamps in Russia, near the river Prypet, a branch of the Dniepr (Borysthenes), because in that locality depigmentation takes place most rapidly, not only with men but with plants and animals also.

On no subject have positive assertions been made with such assurance as on the home of the Aryans. If it is difficult to prove, it is equally difficult to disprove anything with regard to such distant times, and scientific imagination has therefore free scope to roam. Scholars, however, who know how thin the ice really is on which they have to skate, are not inclined to go beyond mere conjecture, and they tremble whenever they see their own fragile arguments handled so daringly by their muscular colleagues, the palæontologists and cranioscopists.

Dr. Penka, for instance, tells us that the Aryans had a common name for the sea, but he must know that this is one of the most contested points among scholars. I hold that *ἅλς* (fem.) meant, first, sea, afterwards, as a masc., salt. Others take the opposite view. I connect *ἅλς* and *sal* with *sal-ila*, water, in Sanskrit. Curtius objects to that derivation. I think that Benfey was right in assigning to Sanskrit *sara* the meaning of salt (see his last article in *Sitzungsberichte der Göttinger anthropologischen Gesellschaft*, 15 July, 1876), but I doubt whether this proves that sea-salt was known to the Aryans before they separated. If *ἅλς* meant salt, because it first meant the sea, no one can say that *sara* in

Sanskrit meant first the sea, and afterwards salt. The Aryans have no common name for the sea, for even if *mīra* did mean sea in Sanskrit, that word could never be identified with *mare*, Goth. *marei*, Irish *muir*, Old Slav. *morje*. I do not say that therefore the sea must have been unknown to the united Aryans; I only say, we cannot prove that they had reached the sea before they separated.

Over and over again we see palæontologists, in their eagerness to prove their point, taking for granted what scholars would either decline to grant, or grant only with every kind of caution. Dr. Penka tells us, for instance (p. 45), that the beech was known to the Aryans before they separated. But that is not so. There is no word in Sanskrit or Zend corresponding to *φηγός*, and *φηγός* in Greek is still the oak, not yet the beech. Dr. Penka (p. 23) tells us that we have evidence of Aryans in the names of the *Chatuarii*, *Atlu-arii*, *Ansu-arii*, *Ripu-arii*, *Chasu-arii*, *Bometu-arii*, *Cantu-arii*, *Vectu-arii*, *Teutono-arii*, and *Boio-arii*; but he ought at all events to have mentioned, if not refuted, Grimm's explanation of these names.

It seems always to be taken for granted that the Greeks borrowed their name for gold, *chrysos*, from their Semitic neighbours. But this has never been proved. *Chârûs* in Hebrew is only a poetic name for gold; as to *hurâsu* in Assyrian, I know not whether it is the common name for gold. But if it is, how did *hurâsu* or *harûdu* ever become *chrysos*?

The Greek name for lion is likewise supposed to be borrowed from Hebrew or some other Semitic tongue. Now I can understand how Greek *λῆς* might have been borrowed from Hebrew *laish*, but how can *λέων* be called an adaptation of *laish*, or even of *lâbi*, or old Semitic *labi'atu*? I do not maintain that we have a satisfactory etymology of *λέων* in Greek, but Leffmann's derivation from *ravant* (lavant), roaring, seems certainly more plausible than a corruption of *labi'atu*.

Again we are told that the Aryans borrowed their word for bull from Semitic nations. But why? If they knew cows, and no one denies that, why should the undivided Aryans not have known the bull? The Greek *ταῦρος*, Lat. *taurus*, Gothic *stiuur*, needs no foreign etymology. It is the Sanskrit *sthāra*, which means strong, like *sthavira* and *sthira*, and is actually explained by bull by

Sanskrit lexicographers. If the Semitic name for bull is *tauru*, that would never account for Goth. *stiuur*, or for Sk. *sthāra* or *sthāla*.

It is difficult to stop a ball after it has been set rolling, but considering what far-reaching conclusions are built on the probable etymology of any of these words, we cannot be too careful in distinguishing between what is certain and what is probable. The question as to the original home of those who spoke Aryan, before the Aryans separated, will never admit of a positive answer, unless some quite unexpected evidence or some very ingenious combination shall be forthcoming. We must learn to bear with our horizons. It is wonderful enough that we should have discovered that our own language, that Greek and Latin, that Slavonic and Celtic are closely connected with the languages now spoken in Armenia, Persia, and India. It is wonderful enough that out of the words which all these languages, or at all events, some members of its two primitive branches, the North-Western and South-Eastern, share in common, we should have been able to construct a kind of mosaic picture of the fauna and flora of the original home of the Aryans, of their cattle, their agriculture, their food and drink, their family life, their ideas of right and wrong, their political organization, their arts, their religion, and their mythology. The actual site of the Aryan paradise, however, will probably never be discovered, partly because it left no traces in the memory of the children of the Aryan emigrants, partly because imagination would readily supply whatever the memory had lost. Most of the Aryan nations in later times were proud to call themselves children of the soil, children of their mother earth, autochthones. Some thought of the East, others of the North, as the home of their fathers; none, so far as I know, of the South or the West. New theories, however, have their attractions, and I do not wonder that some scholars should be smitten with the idea of a German, Scandinavian, or Siberian cradle of Aryan life. I cannot bring myself to say more than *Non liquet*. But if an answer must be given as to the place where our Aryan ancestors dwelt before their separation, whether in large swarms of millions, or in a few scattered tents and huts, I should still say, as I said forty years ago, "Somewhere in Asia," and no more.

WALKS IN OLD PARIS.

By AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE.

IV.—LA CITÉ.

THE island in the Seine, which in early times bore the name of Lutèce, was the cradle of Paris. Caesar, who is the first to speak of it, calls it Lutecia. Strabo wrote Lucotocia; Ptolemy, Lucotecia; the Emperor Julian, who resided long in the ancient city, wrote of it as Louchetia, the different denominations probably all originating in the whiteness of the plaster used in its buildings.

Paris began to spread beyond the boundaries of Lutèce from Roman times onwards. The rays emerging from this centre have absorbed all the villages in the neighbourhood, and for many miles in every direction all is now one vast and crowded city. But the island, where the first palaces were grouped around the fishermen's huts, has ever been as it were the axis of the kingdom, the point whence the laws were disseminated, and where the metropolitan cathedral has existed for fifteen centuries. Its old houses, with its grey cathedral rising beyond them, and the arches of its great bridge, broken here and there by feathery green, still form the most striking scene in the capital. In early times two islets broke the force of the river beyond the point of the Ile de la Cité. These were the Ile de la Gourdainne and the Ile aux Javiaux, or the Ile aux Treilles. Upon

the latter, which was then opposite the end of the royal gardens (March 11, 1314), Jacques de Molay, grand master of the Tem-

plars, and Guy, dauphin d'Auvergne, prieure de Normandie, were burnt alive *apres salut et complices*, i.e. at 5 p.m. The Templars had been arrested all over France, Oct. 13, 1307, but it was only on May 12, 1310, after three years'

imprisonment, that fifty-four were burnt at the Porte St. Antoine, and four years more elapsed before their chiefs suffered, after protesting before Notre-Dame the innocence of their order and the falsehood of the accusations which had been made against it. Even to present times Templars dressed in mourning may be seen making a pilgrimage on March 11 to the scene of their chieftain's martyrdom.

The two islets were artificially united to the Ile de la Cité, when Androuet Du Cerceau was employed to build the Pont-Neuf, in the reign of Henri III. The king laid the first stone on the very day on which his favourite Quelus died of the wounds he received in the famous Com-

bat des Mignons, for which Henri was in such grief during the ceremony that it was said that the new bridge ought to be called *le Pont des Pleurs*. Owing to the emptiness of the treasury, a very long time elapsed



Le Pont-Neuf.



Palais de la Cité.

before the side of the bridge nearest the right bank was completed, and great was the lamentation over this delay amongst those who were proud of the beauties of the capital. "La fortune," says Montaigne, "m'a fait grand déplaisir d'interrompre la belle structure du Pont-Neuf de nostre grande ville, et m'oster l'espoir avant mourir d'en veoir en train de service." In 1604 the Pont-Neuf was finished by Guillaume Marchaud for Henri IV.: but up to his time the piles for the wider branch of the bridge only reached to the level of the water. Its noble and beautiful proportions have been sadly injured since then by lowering of the platform, and new arches being constructed at a lower level than the old ones.

Henri was not satisfied with completing the bridge itself; as soon as it was finished, he began to build the Place Dauphine where the bridge crossed the end of the island, and employed the Flemish Lintlaër to construct a pump on one of the piers of the bridge, with machinery to supply the Tuileries and Louvre with the water, in which they had been hitherto deficient. "L'eau de la pompe du Pont-Neuf est aux Tuileries," Malherbe wrote in triumph on Oct. 3, 1608. The little Château d'Eau, in which the machine was contained, was quite a feature in the river views, and on its façade toward the bridge it bore a sculptured group called *la Samaritaine*, of Jesus receiving water from the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, with a chiming clock which had great popularity.

After the bridge was finished, when Henri IV. was at the height of his popularity, it was decided to erect his statue on the central platform which was formed by the islets recently united to the mainland. Franqueville, first sculptor to the king, was employed to make a model to be sent to Florence for casting by John of Bologna; but when the great sculptor received the model he began by the horse, and died in 1608 before he had proceeded farther. Pietro Tacca, his favourite pupil, took up his work, but had finished nothing when Henri IV. was assassinated two years later, and though pressed hard by the Grand Duke, cousin of Marie de Medicis, who gave 30,000 crowns "de ses deniers propres" for the work, man and horse were only completed in 1613. Then *le colosse du grand roy Henry*, as it was called at the time, was brought by sea from Leghorn to Havre, and thence by the Seine to Paris, where it was raised to a temporary pedestal on August 23. The widowed queen was enchanted with the resemblance, "degnà

veramente de quello che rappresenta," as she gratefully wrote to Tacca, and the late king's subjects were of the same opinion. "La figure est une des plus ressemblantes que nous ayons d'Henri IV.," records Sauval, who had conversed with the king's contemporaries. The horse, however, was less admired, being thought too heavy for its rider and its legs too short. It was not till 1635 that the whole was placed on a magnificent pedestal guarded at the corners by four chained slaves, designed by the Florentine Luigi Civoli, and finished by his son-in-law, Bordoni. The blame of the long delay in completing the work was laid upon the Italian minister Concini, with the result that after his murder, when the people exhumed his body after his hasty burial at St. Germain l'Auxerrois, they dragged it through the mud to the Pont-Neuf, and hacked it to pieces at the foot of the statue which he had neglected.

The Revolution of 1792 melted down horse and rider alike, to make cannon. The existing statue, by Lemot, only dates from the Restoration in 1818, and is made from the bronze of the destroyed statues of Napoleon in the Place Vendôme and at Boulogne-sur-mer, together with that of General Desaix, which stood in the Place des Victoires. One of the inscriptions on the pedestal is a copy of that belonging to the original statue. The reliefs represent Henri IV. entering Paris, and his passing bread over the walls to the besieged citizens.

The Place Dauphine, which Henri IV. surrounded by the brick and stone houses characteristic of his time, occupies, with the Rue de Harlay, the site of the royal garden where St. Louis administered justice. Here, in the last days of the garden, Jean Robin, *arboriste et simplicité du roy*, cultivated the first acacia, or *robinier*, a tree which has since spread over the length and breadth of France.

We are now facing the back of the pile of buildings occupying the site of the palace inhabited by many of the early sovereigns of France. Even in Roman times there was a palace here, for it is evident from the allusions in his *Misopogon* that Julian the Apostate lived, not, as has been often stated, at the Palais des Thermes, but upon the Island in the Seine. Thence he must have seen the lumps of ice floating down the river, which he compared to huge blocks of Phrygian stone; there he tried to subdue the cold of his chamber by a stove and was nearly suffocated by its charcoal; and there the troops,

revolting against Constantius II., surrounded, at midnight, the palace where Julian was living with his wife Helena, and proclaimed him emperor. Relics of the strong wall which surrounded the Roman palace—the *basilica* as Ammianus and Zosimus call it—existed till recent times at the corner of the Rue de Jerusalem, and remains of columns belonging to an Ionic portico, facing the river, were exposed when the new police courts were built. Amongst the many other Roman memorials unearthed here we may notice a cippus adorned with figures of Mercury, his mother Maia, Apollo, and another god, which was discovered at the western end of the island.

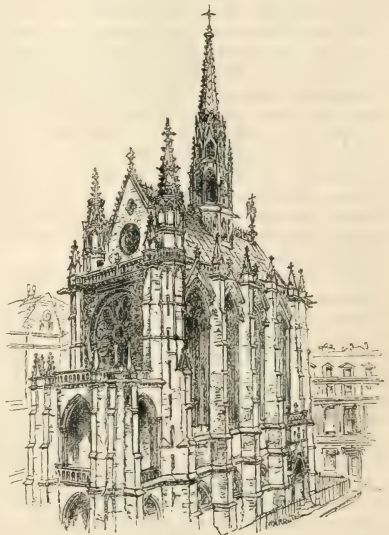
It is certain that several of the early kings of Paris, from the time of Dagobert, lived upon the island of La Cité. There the priest Heraclius visited Clotaire, and there his queen Ingoberge reproached him for his infidelities with the sisters Marcovèse and Mérofède, contemptuously pointing out to him their father, a common workman, who was busied in washing the palace linen in the Seine, at the bottom of the garden. It was in the island palace that Fredegonde shut herself up after the murder of Chilpéric, flying thence after a time, for greater security, to the church of Notre-Dame. The Roman building appears to have lasted till the time of Comte Eudes, who defended Paris from the Normans, and he rebuilt the palace as a square fortress, defended by lofty towers, and having a façade with four great round-headed arches flanked by two-story bastions, of which the remains were discovered when the Cour de Harlay was pulled down: this palace of Count Eudes was called the Palais Nouveau.

Louis le Gros and Louis le Jeune, who endowed respectively chapels of St. Nicolas and of Notre-Dame de l'Etoile in the palace, both died within its walls. Raoul Glaber describes how (1186) Philippe Auguste loved to lean from the window of the great hall and watch the Seine. In the palace vestibule, or in its garden under an oak, St. Louis administered justice in the *plaids de la porte*.

But the mention of St. Louis urges us to hasten on to the buildings of his time. The façade towards the Place Dauphine only dates from 1869, when it was designed by M. Duc. To gain the main entrance of the palace we can either turn to the right by the Quai des Orfèvres, which recalls St. Eloy, the goldsmith minister, who settled here in the primitive time of Dagobert, and which was afterwards entirely lined by jewellers'

shops; or we may turn to the left by the Quai de l'Horloge, named from what is still the chief external feature of the palace, the Tour de l'Horloge, which has been restored on its old lines, and is partially old. Its great clock, with decorations by Germain Pilon, commemorates the oldest clock in Paris, constructed by the German Henri Vic, and erected by Charles V. Only part of the adjoining buildings is ancient. Two round towers—de Cesar and de Montgomery—retain little that is really old, though they have been reconstructed in the style of the fourteenth century. The latter commemorates the tower, pulled down in 1776, where the Earl of Montgomery was imprisoned after fatally wounding Henri II. at a tournament and where Ravailiac, murderer of Henri IV., and Damiens, who attempted to murder Louis XV., spent their last days. A third tower, called Tour d'Argent, encloses the bell called Tocsin du Palais, which repeated the signal for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, given by St. Germain l'Auxerrois.

Reaching the eastern portion of the palace, we find ourselves at the grille of the Cour



La Sainte Chapelle.

d'Honneur or Cour du Mai. On the left, three vaulted passages lead to the Sainte Chapelle, which, in spite of a restoration

almost amounting to renewal, is still one of the most beautiful buildings in France. It was the reception of the crown of thorns from Jean de Brienne, Emperor of Constantinople, and a great portion of the true cross from his successor Baudouin, which made St. Louis determined to build a shrine worthy to contain them. Pierre de Montereau was employed as an architect, and the Sainte Chapelle, begun in 1242, was finished in 1247. The two stories of the building, forming two chapels, were consecrated April 25, 1248, the upper under the title of St. Couronne and St. Croix, the lower under that of St. Marie. Each is preceded by a wide porch, the sculptures of the lower referring to the Virgin, those of the upper to Christ. In the lozenges of the stylobate of the columns, the lilies of France alternate with the towers of Castile, in honour of Queen Blanche, mother of St. Louis. No external staircase led to the upper chapel, for it was the royal oratory, and its porch only communicated on the north with the galleries of the palace. We may still see the niches under the windows of the fourth bay on either side of the nave, containing the places of honour reserved for the king and queen, and one of the little tourelles at the sides of the shrine still contains the stair which was ascended by St. Louis, to take from its tabernacle the crown of thorns, which he alone was permitted to exhibit to the people waiting below, through a large pane of glass purposely inserted in the bottom of the window behind the altar. It is recorded that when St. Louis was in Paris, he would rise to pray three times in the night, always approaching the altar on his knees. As an old chronicler says of the Sainte Chapelle—"c'étoit son arsenal contre toutes les traverses du monde."

Very little of the ancient palace remains. The beautiful Gothic buildings of the sixteenth century, erected by Louis XII., which surrounded the Cour du Mai, after having long been much mutilated, totally perished in the three fires of 1618, 1737, and 1776. These fires also destroyed the halls of St. Louis; the Hôtel Isabeau, once occupied by the faithless wife of Charles VI.; the rooms in which the Burgundians (June 10, 1467) seized the Comte d'Armagnac, Constable of France, the Chancellor Henri de Masle, and others, and dragged them forth to murder them "bien inhumainement;" the "Grand Salle," which beheld the coronation banquet of Henri VI. of England as King of France; and the rooms in which Louis the XII. tried to imitate St. Louis, sleeping in the same chamber, and

administering justice in the same way. Most of the buildings erected after the fire of 1776 perished during the savage and ignorant furies of the Commune in 1871. The only important remnant of antiquity now remaining is a vaulted hall of the time of St. Louis with four large chimneys at its angles, which goes by the name of *les Cuisines de St. Louis*.

From the time of St. Louis, Parliament shared the palace with the king, and after the accession of Henri II., who lived entirely at the Hôtel des Tournelles, it was left in sole possession. But the Parliament perished with the Revolution, which it had contributed to bring about. Suspended by a law of Nov. 3, 1789, it was suppressed on the 29th of August following. Then the massacres in the prisons were organized in the former hôtel of its President, and the tribunal of executioners sat in the Cour de Mai, at the foot of the grand staircase, opposite what was then the principal entrance to the Conciergerie. M. de Montmorin, the former governor of Fontainebleau; Bachmann, the major of the Swiss guard, and seven of his officers, were the first victims, sentenced and executed here on the spot. Then, for twenty-four hours, the palace was given up to massacre, in the corridors, in the courts, in the cells. Most of the prisoners were killed without any examination. If thirty-six were allowed to escape, it was because they were known to be thieves, or assassins of the worst description. The women were spared, only one out of seventy being executed with the most refined tortures—the bouquetière of the Palais Royal, who had mutilated a French guard, her lover. From March, 1791, the revolutionary tribunal met in the Grand Chamber, which—much altered otherwise—still retained the vaulted roof of Louis XII. The president sat beneath a bust of Socrates, to which busts of Le Pelletier and Marat were added after their death. It was here that Charlotte Corday, Marie Antoinette, the Girondins, Madame Roland, and hundreds of others, were tried in turn, in sittings by day and night, whence Fouquier emerged so fatigued with his horrible task, that he could scarcely drag himself to his own rooms near the Conciergerie, which the secretaries of the *procureur général* occupy now. So dazed was he with the blood he poured out, that one day, passing the Pont-Neuf with Séran, he declared that instead of water he saw the Seine rolling blood. In the Conciergerie, which now occupies the lower story of the right wing of the building, we may

still see the cell where Marie Antoinette suffered her seventy-five days' agony. There also still exists the hall where the Girondins spent their last night, when, as Riouffe, him-

self in the prison at the time, says, "toute cette nuit affreuse retentit de leurs chants, et s'ils les interrompaient c'était pour s'entretenir de leur patrie."

(To be concluded next month.)

BIBLE CHARACTERS.

BY THE LATE CHARLES READE, D.C.L., AUTHOR OF "IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND," ETC.

IV.—NEHEMIAH'S WORK.

SINGLEHEART, BUILDER.

THEN this wise man strengthened zeal with method. Under his advice each powerful man took his own piece of the dilapidated wall, and repaired it with his people.

This may seem a small thing to hasty readers, but it was a master-stroke of genius. Not only was it a grand division of labour, but it animated the work with a noble emulation and a personal pride. "See how fast my work goes on!" "See how well my piece is done!" "Now, my sons, gird up your tunics, or Rephaiah the son of Hur will get ahead of us."

There were forty-six building parties, and leading women amongst them, the daughters of Shallum, a powerful man. I apprehend the individual builders were not less than three thousand; so the walls began to rise like an exhalation.

The good cannot monopolise foresight. Evil men soon see when their interests are threatened. The heathen leaders showed their teeth at once; but at first they underrated the power of zeal under a wise and earnest leader. Their weapon was scorn. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem inquired ironically whether Nehemiah meant to take the place of Artaxerxes. Nehemiah replied, "I am God's servant, and mind your own business; you have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem."

When the walls began to rise as if by magic, Sanballat got frightened, but still brazened out his anxiety with ridicule. "What are these feeble Jews up to? Will they fortify themselves? Will they set up their sacrifices again? Will they turn the rubbish back into stones to build with?"

"A stone wall," says Tobiah, "ay, the sort of wall a fox couldn't clamber over without knocking it down."

We writers get used to this sort of criticism after some great exhausting labour; and I should not have thought Nehemiah would have much minded such sneers.

But ridicule is wonderfully stinging to those who are not hardened to it by use, and he felt it bitterly; he appealed to God to judge these scorers, and went on building.

Then the heathen leaders dropped their sorry jests, and prepared to attack the builders with armed men, and so crush the work with violence and blood. So sure of the result were they that they let out their tactics. They said: "These builders shall not see us, nor know at what part to expect us; in a moment we will be in the midst of them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease."

SINGLEHEART, CAPTAIN.

Fore-warned fore-armed. Nehemiah instantly withdrew a number of men from the works, and armed them to the teeth, and disposed them in stations as for the defence of a city. He also girt a sword on every builder, and put a javelin into one of his hands. Then he took a lofty station, with a band of warriors round him, and a trumpet by his side. He circulated an order that wherever the trumpet should sound, thither all his men should run, with their weapons, from every side.

So wrought they, trowel in one hand, javelin in another, swords by their side, and a great leader's eye over all; and one-half their force paraded with shield and spear "from the rising of the morn till the stars appeared at eve." At night they all watched under arms, and no man put off his clothes except to wash them. Night and day were one to these gallant men till the mighty work was done: so can the spirit of a great leader animate a host, and make each pawn a knight, each mason a hero.

The heathen leaders swallowed their boast, and never made a single attack. By that means they saved their skins, for if they had attacked a weak part of the walls, Nehemiah would have seen them from his elevation, and run to meet them with his picked men,

sounding the trumpet as he ran. Then his soldiers and armed builders would have run in upon the foe from every side, and cut them to pieces in a moment. So the heathen leaders did not fight, but tried assassination.

SINGLEHEART, POLITICIAN.

Sanballat and Geshem sent a friendly message to decoy Nehemiah to his death. "Come," said they, "why should we quarrel over the matter? No doubt we can come to some friendly arrangement. Meet us in the plains of Ono; there are several villages there; choose which you like for this amicable meeting."

Sorry schemers! Fancy these shallow traitors sending this to an Oriental statesman!—a bare hook without a bait. He did not condescend to be angry, or show them he saw through them. He parried the proposal with cool contempt. "I am doing a great work; why should I leave it and interrupt it to come to you?"

They sent a similar message four times. Then Nehemiah did a first-rate thing. Instead of varying his reply in the least, he sent the same formula four times, and I am all admiration at this; for, after all, when you have given a good answer, why admit even a shadow of imperfection in that answer by altering a word or two. And then how like a rock it makes a man seem, to give the waves but one answer: immovability, whether they surge up or ripple up, come at him smiling or foaming.

Irritated by this granite contempt, Sanballat deviated from the Oriental into the ruffian; he did what corresponds in our day to sending an abusive post card. He actually sent a letter, wide open, for everybody to read before it reached Nehemiah, and thus ran this ill-bred pagan's lines:

"It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu confirms it, that you and the Jews mean to rebel against Artaxerxes, and that you have built the wall with this object, and to be king yourself; and that you have bribed prophets to say there is a king in Jerusalem. We shall report all this to Artaxerxes unless you meet us as invited, and come to terms with us."

This open letter was well calculated to alarm. Lies of the sort sent from Jerusalem had ere now poisoned the monarch's mind in Persia, and arrested a good work in Judea for many a long day.

Nehemiah sent him back an open letter in return. "There are no such things done as

you pretend; you are feigning them all out of your own heart."

From that hour the enemy resigned all direct attacks on him, but still endeavoured to detach a few friends from him, and here they had some success, having intermarried with Jewish families.

HIS CHIVALROUS SPIRIT.

The worst trap of all was now laid for him: a singularly wicked one, to catch him by means of his piety, and his desire to know God's will in all things. The prophet Shemaiah and the prophetess Noadiah foretold a great danger, and that he could escape it only by shutting himself up in the Temple and closing the doors. This time, with all his sagacity, he did not divine treachery. Not his wisdom, but his high spirit, saved Singleheart from this trap.

"What!" said he, "shall such a man as I am flee? And what man, intrusted with God's work, would skulk into the Temple merely to *save his life*?"

"I WILL NOT GO IN."

Talk of lines like the sound of a trumpet: why, this was to speak thunder-bolts and act lightning. Here we see in action what the heathen poet taught in noblest song,

*"Summum crede nefas animam præferre pudori
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas."*

After Singleheart had escaped this trap by his courage and his fidelity to a single purpose, he found that these prophecies came from lying prophets suborned by Tobiah and Sanballat.

Then in the spirit of his dispensation he invoked on their heads the curse of that God they had blasphemed.

After a feeble attempt to work upon the Jews they had intermarried with, Tobiah and Sanballat disappear from the narrative.

The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt in fifty-two days, and Singleheart gave the glory to God. Taking the work and the time together, is there a parallel to this achievement? The Chinese Wall and the great Pacific Railway are far greater works, and much of the latter was built the pick in one hand and the revolver in the other. But then these vast works took years to complete.

Looking at the size of the city, the great height and breadth of the walls, it was an enormous work, much greater than the London Law Courts that have taken a dozen years to build—greater than the cathedral of Cologne, which has been centuries in hand. And when you consider that these

walls were built in the teeth of an armed and implacable foe, built with the trowel in one hand, the javelin in the other, and that the sleep of the workmen was broken with watching, and their clothes never taken off except to wash them, and flung on again half dry, it was an unrivalled feat of labour, zeal, judgment, courage and piety, and will so remain to the end of time.

NEHEMIAH, REFORMER.

Ezra came to Jerusalem fourteen years before Nehemiah; he left the holy seed of Judah pure at Babylon, but found it at Jerusalem mingled with that of idolaters.

When he discovered this he rent his garment and mantle, and plucked off the hair of his head and beard, and sat down astonished until the evening sacrifice.

But during that solemnity he rose and threw himself down at the gate of the Temple, and prayed and wept and confessed the sins of his people.

His sorrow and his eloquence touched many hearts, and led to a public confession and to solemn pledges of reformation, especially from such of the offenders as belonged to Levi, Ezra's own tribe.

But it is clear from Nehemiah's own account that intermarriage with heathen and other abuses proved too strong for Ezra in the long run. Nehemiah found this malpractice and many others at Jerusalem. Indeed, his great enemy, the heathen Tobiah, owed much of his power to having married a Jewess of good family. Nehemiah set himself to reform this, but not this alone. He was not a better, but a greater, man than Ezra, and made wiser reforms, and kept them alive, which Ezra failed to do.

One thing that shocked him much was the usurious practices of the wealthier Jews, and their cruelty in selling their poor debtors into bondage. "What!" said he, "we have redeemed our brethren that were sold unto the heathen, and will ye sell your brethren?" and they found nothing to answer.

Then he reminded them he had power to levy large exactions upon *them*, and besought them to imitate his moderation.

Such was the power of his example and his remonstrances that he actually induced the creditors to restore to the ruined debtors their houses, vineyards, and olive yards, and a little of the forfeited produce to keep them alive through the famine.

When the relenting creditors had bound themselves to this by oath, he took his tunic in both hands and shook it, and said, "May

God so shake out every man from his house and from his labour who performeth not this promise."

This was a master-stroke, and shows the man of genius. Such appeals to the senses as well as to the conscience take the whole mind by assault, and fix the matter forever in the memory. His hearers cried "Amen!" and praised the Lord, and—kept their promise.

All preceding governors of Jerusalem had acted on their powers and bled the people themselves, and even let their servants oppress and pillage them. Not so Nehemiah; with him it was more blessed to give than to receive. He kept a noble table, and entertained one hundred and fifty Jews every day from the city, besides hungry souls from the villages; but all this at his own expense; the governor's allowance he never touched, because, as he said, the people were burdened enough without that. His mind runs forward, and he relates this a little out of place—chapter v. 13—19. I have but placed it in its true sequence. It is a noble trait, and every generous heart goes with him, when with honest simplicity he bursts out, "Think on me, my God, for good, according to all I have done for this people."

Though he was nominal governor of Jerusalem for twelve years from the date of his first visit, it would seem, on a careful comparison of all his statements, that Hanani and Hananiah acted for him by his own appointment during a portion of that time as well as after it had expired. But as Ezra, both before and after Nehemiah's arrival, was unable to cope persistently with the abuses of the day, so Nehemiah's own lieutenants failed to withstand them.

Probably Nehemiah himself felt there was no one in whom he could place a blind confidence; for, twelve years after his first visit, he came back to Jerusalem with enlarged powers, and this time he showed priests as well as laymen he was not a man to be trifled with.

Eliashib the priest had given his kinsman, Tobiah the heathen, an apartment in the Temple, and Tobiah had furnished it.

Nehemiah bundled out all his furniture and effects, and had the rooms purified after him.

He found a priest, grandson of this very Eliashib, married to a heathen. He chased him out of the Temple.

On the other hand, he found that certain lay rulers, whose business it was to see the tithes paid to the priests and Levites, had

so neglected them that many of that sacred tribe were working in the fields for a bare subsistence.

Nehemiah rebuked these negligent officials, and established storehouses for the tithes of corn, new wine, and oil; and to secure the Levites against any future neglect in the distribution of these stores, he selected Shemiah, a priest, Zadok, a scribe, and Pedaiiah, a Levite, as almoners or distributors of these stores, and associated with them one Hanan, a man of approved fidelity.

Both priests and laymen had become loose in observing the Sabbath day. He found Jews treading the wine-presses, gathering in the harvests, and trading on the Sabbath day, and men of Tyre bringing fish and other wares into the markets of the city.

He treated natives and aliens alike, stopped the home trade, and closed the gates of the city against the Tyrians.

But the Tyrians were hard to deal with; they lodged outside the wall, and offered their wares outside. "Do that again," said Nehemiah, "and I will lay hands on you." This frightened them away for good.

Then came his worst trouble, the persistent intermarriage with heathen.

Ezra had withstood this for years in vain. Nehemiah had combated it with partial success; yet now Nehemiah found Jews who had married wives of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab, and their children could not speak Hebrew, but naturally spoke their mother-tongue.

Then he came out in a new character. He contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God not to give their daughters to heathen husbands nor their sons to heathen wives again.

After this outburst of impassioned zeal, which at first takes the student of his mind a little by surprise, he returned to his grave character, and reasoned the matter with those he had terrified into submission.

"What Jew," said he, "was ever so wise, so great, so beloved of God, as King Solomon? Yet outlandish women could make even him sin against God and commit idolatry."

Nehemiah prevailed, and there is reason to believe that idolatry received its death-blow under his rule.

He ends his brief but noble record with his favourite prayer, "Remember me, O my God, for good." That prayer has long been granted. But the children of God on earth have not seen all his value. Do but enume-

rate the various parts he played, the distinct virtues he showed, the strokes of genius he extemporised—and all to serve, not himself, but his country and his God. Faithful courtier, yet true patriot; child of luxury, yet patient of hardship; inventive builder, impromptu general, astute politician, high-spirited gentleman, inspired orator, resolute reformer—born leader of men, yet humble before God.

He rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem; he restored the law of Moses. Tradition says he lived fifty years after the events he records; he probably returned to Persia; but if he did, he was not the man to stay there half a century and leave the city and the law to take care of themselves.

Character is a key to facts; and it was not in Nehemiah's character to live and desert the two great works of his life for fifty years or so.

When, after two centuries of small events, small men, and no history, big events and the big men they generate came again to Judea, and raised history from the dead, we find the stamp of Nehemiah and his pupils marked on the Jewish mind so plainly that the story of the Maccabees seems but a natural sequence of Nehemiah's chronicle.

Nehemiah fought tooth and nail for all the law of Moses, and especially the Sabbath day. Nehemiah tore the holy seed out of the embraces of the heathen, and ended the moral influences of idolatry.

This was sure to drive the idolater, sooner or later, from the bloodless weapons that alone can conquer the mind, to persecution and brute force; and accordingly in the next Hebrew record, behold those weapons levelled against constant souls, and the sword of heroic Judas.

Nehemiah, then, is not what hasty judges have called him, "one of the lesser lights." He is a gigantic figure that stalked across the page of history luminous, then glided into the dark abyss of time, but scattered sparks of historic light, and left, not one, but two immortal works behind him.

As to the character of his piety, he relies on God, seeks His glory, and is unceasing in good works for his nation. But then he despised lucre, and sought not the praise of men for those works.

It is no small matter to look to God alone, with much light or little. He lived under a covenant of works, and thought accordingly; yet methinks he needed but a word or two from Christ's own lips to be a Christian saint.



IN THE CORN-FIELDS.
AN AUGUST PICTURE. BY WALTER POTLAND.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

BY WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—A SMART MOVE.

AT the office of the *Helvetic News*, as at most newspaper offices, salaries were paid weekly. Every Saturday morning Gibson went down-stairs, drew enough money to pay himself and his staff, and then handed to each man his due. On the Saturday succeeding Harman's suspension he returned from this usually pleasant mission with a very long face.

"You will have to put up with short commons this week, gentlemen," he said. "Mayo has not yet succeeded in making fresh banking arrangements, and can only give us half-pay; the balance must stand over until next week. The clerks below are being treated in the same fashion; only the compositors are getting paid in full."

"Let us be thankful for small mercies," said Milnthorpe, pocketing his money. "This is twice as much as I expected."

On the following Saturday Gibson returned from his wonted interview with the cashier with a longer face than ever.

"I have nothing at all for you to-day," he exclaimed dolefully. "It has been a hard struggle to pay the compositors; there is not a centime for anybody else. I am very sorry; but what can I do? And I don't know what will be the end of it, either."

Balmaine felt glad that he had sold his claim on Harman's estate, but Gibson felt far from glad that he had bought it. The prospect of a favourable dividend was decidedly worsening. At the first meeting of creditors some very damaging disclosures had been made. Mr. Rickarby A. Little turned out to be a big creditor, fully secured. He had been lending the defunct firm money at usurious interest. Corfe made a violent speech against both him and the debtors, and threatened to have Harman prosecuted as a fraudulent bankrupt. All this put the editor very much about. He felt that he should never be able to forgive himself for not accepting Little's offer on the nail; and when on the next pay-day there was again no money in the big safe—not even for the compositors—he quite lost his temper, fell out with Mayo, and gave that astute gentleman the opening for which he had long been looking.

"You say you won't stand it," said the manager sneeringly. "Leave it then. You can go whenever you like."

"Pay me my arrears of salary, then, and an indemnity of ten thousand francs for breaking my contract, and I will go at once," replied Gibson hotly.

"No, Mr. Gibson, I shall not pay you a centime for breaking your contract. I said just now that you might go whenever you liked. I say now you must go when I like, and that is to-day. You cease from this moment to be editor of the *Helvetic News*, Mr. Gibson."

"You forget, I think, that my engagement does not terminate for eighteen months," replied the editor, with forced calmness. "I will go, certainly, if you wish it; but as you put it in that way I demand seventy-five weeks' salary at 300 francs a week. That makes—let me see—22,500 francs. Are you prepared to give me 22,500 francs?"

"No; nor 22,500 centimes. You shall have the arrears of your salary—I will send you a cheque next week—and that is all you will get."

"Then I shall sue you," returned Gibson, turning pale. "I will make you pay."

"Try, by all means, if you think you can get anything," returned Mayo coolly. "All the same, you will make a great mistake. It does not seem to occur to you that you have broken your contract pretty nearly every week for the last five or six months, and that you have not a leg to stand on."

"What do you mean?"

"What I say. You undertook to edit this paper and write the leaders, didn't you?"

"Certainly."

"Have you done so?"

"Of course I have."

"Not you. You have left it all to your assistants. You rarely appear at the office before 6 P.M.—generally not until seven—and you often leave before nine. There are weeks (referring to a diary) when you have written but one leader—one week you wrote none; for the last three months your average has been two."

"I never undertook to write every leader. It is quite sufficient if I give instructions and see them written, and, in short, take the entire responsibility of the *rédaction*."

"I don't think so. You surely don't suppose that it ever entered into our calculations to pay a man like you 300 francs a week merely to give instructions? We can do that ourselves, Mr. Gibson. However, as

you say you are going to sue us, and the affair in that case will have to be discussed in another place, I don't see that anything is to be gained by bandying words; and, with your leave, I will go up-stairs and tell Balmaine and the others what has happened."

"I shall go with you, and take away my private papers," said Gibson, bottling up his indignation, though with difficulty.

"As you will. If we have to fight, we may as well fight like gentlemen. I shall say no more than is necessary, and nothing that need give you offence."

They found all the sub-editors in their room, waiting to be paid.

"You will be surprised at what I have to tell you," said Mayo quietly. "Mr. Gibson and I have had a slight difference of opinion, and he has dissolved his connection with the paper."

"It is quite true," added the ex-editor, with assumed indifference, "although it would perhaps be more correct to say, my connection with the paper has been dissolved. However, it comes to the same thing. I am going, and I confess that I am very sorry to part with you, gentlemen. We have always got along very well together, and though our official relations have ceased, I trust our friendship will continue."

"I am very sorry," said Balmaine, taking his proffered hand, "and very much surprised. So far as it depends on me, our friendship will not be in the least diminished."

The others expressed themselves to the same effect, for all liked Gibson. Even his besetting sin of indolence, though not without drawbacks, had left them far more liberty than they would have enjoyed under a less easy-going chief.

"I am glad to hear you say so," returned Gibson with feeling. "I suppose we shall see each other now and then, and I should not be surprised if we were all to meet in London on some not very distant day. If we do, I will ask you to dine with me at the Savage. *Au revoir.*"

"I know what that means," said Mayo, with rather a forced laugh; "it's a parting kick. He thinks the paper is going to pot, and that in a week or two you will all be in London looking for berths. But he was never more mistaken in his life. Will you step this way a moment, Balmaine (going towards the editor's room)? I want to speak to you."

When they were alone the manager explained to Alfred that Gibson, having resigned his post for reasons to which it was

not necessary "further to allude," he should be glad if Balmaine would take his place. He had watched him, read his articles (which were always excellent) and felt certain that he would make a most efficient editor-in-chief. For the present he could not offer him more than 150 francs a week; but when they had succeeded in reorganizing the finances of the paper they would "make it two hundred."

To such a proposal there could, of course, be only one answer, for though the editorship might add somewhat to Balmaine's responsibilities it would add little to his work, much to his power, and the increased salary would be highly acceptable.

The next thing was to tell Delane and Milnthorpe. This Mayo did in a very few words; and, after expressing a hope that they would pull well together, was making off in a hurry, when an observation from Milnthorpe, though not ostensibly addressed to him, "pulled him up sharp."

"Had you not better go down-stairs for our salaries, Mr. Balmaine?" said the junior sub with the gravest of faces. "I don't suppose Mr. Gibson got the money, or he would have paid us."

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen," said Mayo, wheeling round and turning red, "I ought to have told you. The fact is—the fact is—there is nothing in the safe; but I have paid the compositors in full and last week's arrears, so the paper is safe. But I am in treaty for a new banking account, and Mr. Leyland has gone to London to see what he can do there; and I have no doubt that next week I shall be able to pay you in full. I can sympathise with you, for I am as hard up as anybody. I have not drawn a centime since Harman's stopped."

"It's all very fine," grumbled Delane when the manager had disappeared, which he did without pausing for a reply, "but if Mayo has drawn nothing since the suspension, he took deuced good care to feather his nest before. I vote we do as the compositors have done."

"What have they done?" inquired Milnthorpe.

"They threatened to strike if they were not paid up, and, as you hear, he has paid them."

"And makes a virtue of it. Mr. Mayo is certainly a very clever man. I do believe he will keep the ship off the breakers after all. It's a very smart move too, getting rid of Gibson. How much are you to have, Balmaine, if it's a fair question?"

Balmaine told him.

"The arrangement does the manager infinite credit. He saves half Gibson's salary and all yours, 225 francs a week in all. But what I cannot understand is how he has managed to get rid of Gibson. However, I offer you my sincere congratulations on your promotion, Balmaine—I beg your pardon, Mr. Balmaine."

"No, no," exclaimed Balmaine, "Alfred, an you love me!"

"By all means," said Delane; "but are we not going to celebrate your promotion in some way? I should like to drink your health, though the times are so hard and we so hard up."

"Certainly," answered Balmaine, "we will have a *déjeuner à la fourchette* at the Café du Roi. *Allons*."

"With all my heart," said the Irishman gleefully. "I am awfully peckish, also very thirsty. You will stand a bottle of cham, won't you, old man?"

"That requires some consideration, Delane. Champagne is expensive, and money scarce; and Mayo's promises, I fear, are not much to be depended upon. What do you think, Milnthorpe?"

"Mayo is a gentleman of infinite resources and few scruples; and until he and Leyland succeed in hitting on some new device for raising the wind you may be sure they will not pay a centime more than they can help."

"In that case," said Balmaine ruefully, "I do not think it would be prudent to go beyond a bottle of Swiss. Will that do, Delane?"

"Do? Of course it will. I always go in for *vin du pays* on principle. It is more likely to be genuine than the imported article, to say nothing of its being so much cheaper. Besides, Swiss champagne is really very good."

So to the Café du Roi they went, and Balmaine ordered a modest *déjeuner* of three courses—*bouillon, vol au vent, and baignées de pommes*—rounded off with the *champagne Suisse* so much desired by Delane.

The café consisted of a large room and a small one, each with plate glass windows, looking towards the lake; and though the day was yet young several groups of card players were already at work, and the click of billiard balls could be heard in the next apartment.

"By Jove! look there!" exclaimed Delane excitedly; "that's Count Solferino. He gambles here all day long, and sometimes all night. They say he eats his cigars, and I do believe he is at it now."

The man pointed out by Delane was a stout, white-faced, black-haired personage, with a bit of red ribbon in one of his button-holes. He sat at a side table with three other men, all deeply interested in a game of baccarat. At the moment when the Irishman called attention to him, Count Solferino was in the act of putting in his mouth a cigar of the sort known as a "Vevey," about the thickness of a little finger and some six inches long. He then made as if he would light it, but did not. A minute afterwards the cigar began to grow perceptibly shorter.

"He is eating it," whispered Delane.

And so he was; the cigar grew shorter and shorter, and finally disappeared.

"Horrible!" said Balmaine. "It looks like a snake creeping down his throat. Does he always consume his cigars that way?"

"No; I believe he sometimes smokes 'em. But they say he eats 'em without knowing it; gets so absorbed in the game that he forgets everything else, and cannot even taste strong tobacco like that."

"I can well believe it. I mean there is no stupidity, or folly, or crime of which a gambler is not capable," said Milnthorpe gravely. "I could tell——"

"Hullo! here you are, all together; the top of the morning to you."

The speaker was Corfe. They had been so intent upon watching Count Solferino eat his strange meal that they had not seen their *confrère* enter the café.

"You are feasting," he went on after they had answered his greeting. "That means there is money at the office, I suppose? Very glad to hear it. When I have had a drop of absinthe—*pour m'éclaircir*, you know—I shall just see what they can do for me."

"You may save yourself the trouble," laughed Delane.

"You don't mean to say they have not paid you?" said Corfe, with a significant glance at the bottle of champagne.

"I mean nothing else; but that is no reason, you know, why Balmaine should not pay his footing, and we rejoice in his promotion."

"How—what promotion?"

"*Rédacteur-en-chef*, vice Gibson resigned."

"Nonsense, you are joking."

"We were never more serious in our lives, were we, Milnthorpe?"

Whereupon the latter confirmed the statement, and told in more detail what had come to pass.

"I congratulate you, Balmaine," said

Corfe; "and if you will allow me I shall drink your health."

This was done; and a few minutes afterwards Corfe, muttering something about an engagement elsewhere, left the café.

"He does not seem to like it much," said Delane; "you saw the scowl that passed over his face when I told him?"

"Why?" asked Balmaine; "he and I have always been good friends. He can have nothing against me."

"That has nothing to do with it," said Milnthorpe. "There are people in the world who are never more vexed than when they hear of a friend's good fortune. Perhaps Corfe is one of them."

Milnthorpe was right. It was not in Corfe's nature to regard another's advancement with satisfaction, and as he had always counted on being Gibson's successor, he looked upon Balmaine's promotion as a personal wrong done to himself.

"It's just like my rotten luck," he thought as he walked over the bridge. "The idea of making a greenhorn like Balmaine editor of a paper! He wants the shine taking out of him, and if he does not mind what he is about I'll make Geneva too hot to hold him."

CHAPTER XL.—TEMPTER AND TEMPTED.

GABRIELLE COURBET was in a fair way to recovery from the shock occasioned by Corfe's unwelcome visit, and had almost persuaded herself that her alarms were imaginary, when she received a letter thus couched:—

"The gentleman who had the pleasure of calling upon Madame Courbet a short time ago, for the purpose of making inquiries about Mademoiselle Leonino (otherwise Hardy), will be at the entrance to the Gorge des Châtaigniers on Thursday next, at three o'clock in the afternoon, where he hopes to have the advantage of seeing Madame Courbet a second time, with the object of making a communication of great importance, closely affecting her interest and the happiness of her ward."

This missive brought back the *bonne's* fears in full force, and she spent the interval between its receipt and the time appointed for the interview in an agony of suspense and apprehension. What could it mean? How much did the man know? It was in vain she argued that her secret was confined to herself and to the packet which, as she had only the day before convinced herself, was

still, with seal unbroken, where she had laid it ten years before. Facts were against her. This stranger did know something, knew a good deal, or he could not have spoken and written as he had done. How he had got to know was a detail of trifling importance. She felt that she was in his power, and that her peasant's wit was no match for his trained intelligence. Had she dared she would fain have shirked the meeting.

Gabrielle reached the rendezvous several minutes before the appointed time, and punctually, at three o'clock, she was joined by Corfe.

"*Bon soir*, Madame Courbet," he said, "I presume my letter surprised you somewhat?"

Gabrielle, it is hardly necessary to say, was unmarried, but it is a Swiss custom to address women of a certain age as "*Madame*," in token of respect.

"It did, indeed, Monsieur, and I still feel quite at a loss to know why——"

"I asked you to do me the favour of coming here. I will tell you. It is about your charming ward, Mademoiselle Vera Leonino, otherwise Hardy."

"Yes, sir; what about her?" said Gabrielle, almost faint with apprehension, although Corfe's manner was affable in the extreme. He had made up his mind that mildness of speech would suit his purpose better than the reverse—unless she should prove restive, and then he would have to try rougher methods.

"I love Vera! I have loved her ever since I first set eyes on her at the fête. I want to marry her."

"Marry her!" interrupted Gabrielle, hardly able to believe the evidence of her senses. "Marry her!"

It seemed scarcely credible that this man whom her imagination had invested with so many terrors should after all be only a wooer.

"Yes, marry her; why not? Is there anything wonderful in the fact that an English gentleman of means and position should desire to marry a beautiful, well-educated girl whose father was also an English gentleman? Yes, I want to marry her, and I mean to marry her, with your kind aid, Madame Gabrielle, and then" (lowering his voice to a significant whisper) "I will keep silence about—that money you took."

"Oh, Monsieur, you do me wrong!" exclaimed the *bonne* in great agitation. "The money—I took it—I mean I took it not, it is intact. I can account for every centime.

The capital is in the hands of my father, and the interest, it has been spent on Vera."

"All the same, you took it, Madame Gabrielle, you took your master's money, and that is what the law calls by a very ugly name. However, I am sure you meant well, and have done your best for Vera. You may trust fully to my discretion, and as for money, I have ample means of my own. Let your father keep Vera's. If it is quite convenient he may pay some small acknowledgment in the shape of interest. But if you give me Vera I care for little else, I am dying for love of her."

"Ah, Monsieur!" said the *bonne* in a voice trembling with emotion, "when you ask for Vera you ask for my life. I have brought her up; she is to me as my own child."

Notwithstanding her emotion Gabrielle felt greatly relieved. This monsieur, so much dreaded, was not wicked, after all. He had the air of a well-bred gentleman, and with his means and position might make Vera a most suitable husband; but the idea of the child being taken away from her—probably to a foreign land—was more than she could bear.

"And she shall remain your child. Do you think I could have the cruelty to separate you? You shall live with us, and be her *femme de chambre*."

"I am very grateful, Monsieur, for your kindness," said Gabrielle joyfully, "and I think I may say I will do my best to forward Monsieur's views. But there is one consideration Monsieur is forgetting."

"What is that, *mon amie*?" asked Corfe with a pleasant smile.

"Suppose Vera is not willing?"

"A well-educated young girl does as she is told in these matters, and you and your father, who desire only her happiness, will tell her that Vernon Corfe, who has served in the English army, who is one of the editors of the *Helvetic News* of Geneva and the correspondent of a great journal of London, is in every respect an unexceptionable *parti*."

"But, Monsieur, Vera has not been educated like a young girl of the *bourgeoisie*. She has had much more liberty, she has read English books, she knows that English girls choose themselves their own husbands, and my father and I, we have not over her the authority of parents."

"That is nothing at all, my dear Madame Gabrielle," said Corfe with an air of easy assurance. "Support my suit, speak in my

favour, let me see her; that is all I ask; I will answer for the rest. May I depend on you?"

"Perfectly, Monsieur," answered the *bonne*, now completely reassured.

It was then arranged that Corfe should follow her to the chalet and introduce himself as a friend of Vera's father, and that so soon after his departure as Gabrielle might deem it expedient she should inform the girl of the object of his visit, and urge her to accept his offer.

This scheme was duly carried into effect, and, as it happened, Corfe arrived at the chalet before Vera's return from Territet, whither she went two or three times a week. This so far served his purpose that when Vera appeared on the scene the *bonne* was able to spare him the awkwardness of introducing himself.

"This is M. Corfe, my dear," she said in answer to the girl's look of surprise, "the gentleman you met the other day. He was slightly acquainted with your dear father, and knew also the family of your mother."

In point of fact he knew neither the one nor the other; but being aware that when her father died she was no more than seven years old, and having gathered from Gabrielle that Vera only just remembered her mother, and some other particulars, he played his cards so adroitly that the *bonne* doubted nothing, and her ward fully believed all he said. He also took care to say more about places than persons, and as he knew Italy well he could do this without difficulty. Corfe, having so much at stake, naturally exerted his power of pleasing to the utmost, and interested Vera so greatly that she set him down in her mind as being—next to M. Senarclens—the cleverest man she had ever met. He knew so many languages, could tell so many amusing stories, and seemed to have travelled nearly all over the world. Even the brag and bounce in which he could not help indulging answered his purpose, for the *bonne*, besides being as credulous as the average of her sex, had an interest in believing him, and it had not occurred to Vera that an English gentleman could possibly speak anything but the truth. The impression he made, as he could not fail to see, was decidedly favourable, and he went away fully satisfied with himself, and more confident of success than ever.

"I am staying at the Hôtel de la Forêt," he said on taking his leave, "and shall do myself the pleasure of calling again—perhaps to-morrow, or, at any rate, the day after."

"We shall be happy to see Monsieur at any time," returned Gabrielle, "and I am sure my father, who has gone into Canton Valais to buy cattle, would be glad to make his acquaintance."

"And I am sure I should be equally delighted, Madame Gabrielle. *Bon soir*, Mademoiselle Leonino."

Vera returned his salutation and proffered him her hand, which Corfe held for a moment and eyed her with a furtive yet bold look of admiration; a mistake that went far to undo the effect of his entertaining conversation, for his eyes were his worst feature, and the glance, besides annoying her, re-kindled that vague feeling of mistrust and aversion with which their first interview had inspired her.

"A very nice gentleman, is he not?" said Gabrielle, as soon as he was gone.

"Yes," acquiesced Vera, but in a tone which implied that she was not quite sure about it, "and very clever. He must have seen a great deal. But I don't like his eyes, Gabrielle, nor the way he uses them."

"What is the matter with his eyes? I saw nothing wrong about them."

"That is because you are not an artist, Gabrielle. I study eyes; they are the windows of the soul. An otherwise good face may be spoiled by bad eyes, but with beautiful eyes no countenance can be ugly. Look at those fine pictures of Glaire in the Musée of Lausanne and you will understand what I mean. This gentleman—M. Corfe, does he not call himself?—has a good profile and what I should call a strong face, but his eyes have a sinister expression and in my opinion quite spoil him. Compare them with the eyes of M. Senarcles or of that other Englishman."

"What other Englishman?"

"The one with whom I danced at the fête—M. Balmaine. Yes; his eyes are not only bright and intelligent, they inspire confidence, and M. Corfe's do not."

"You are unjust, Vera. M. Corfe is a true English gentleman," protested the *bonne* with some warmth.

"I dare say he is, Gabrielle, and I am sure he is very clever, but he is not to be compared with my father, who besides M. Balmaine, is the only Englishman to whom, until I met M. Corfe, I ever spoke."

"There are very few like your father, Vera, yet I believe that M. Corfe is an honourable gentleman, and also very rich and distinguished."

To this remark Vera made no response, she seemed buried in the thoughts which

the mention of her father had suggested, and Gabrielle concluded, perhaps wisely, that the moment was not propitious for broaching the subject of Corfe's intentions; but she made no secret of them with her father, and when he returned in the evening told him all that had come to pass.

The old man was greatly pleased.

"Take her without a *dot* will he, and accept any interest for the money I may find it convenient to pay! He must be a fool. However, that is no affair of mine. Let him have her by all means. You said so of course."

"Naturally; but I have not yet spoken to Vera."

"What does that matter," said Père Courbet, with a brutal laugh, "girls must do as they are told. I won't have any *bêtises*, Gabrielle."

"You forget, father, that we are not Vera's parents and cannot force her into a marriage against her will, and to try to do so would make a scandal. What would M. Senarcles say? What would M. Lacroix say? You must leave it in my hands, father. I will arrange it. If you meddle you will do harm."

The *bonne* spoke firmly, for she was conscious that her father's advocacy would be fatal to Corfe's pretensions.

"Very well, do as you will," he growled. "Only it must be done, mind. I will have no *bêtises*."

Corfe came again next day and had a friendly chat with the old man, who received him with great effusion and treated him with the utmost respect. He had also another talk with Vera and Gabrielle, and though he found no opportunity of speaking to the latter privately a significant side look told him that she had not yet spoken to Mademoiselle Leonino of the matter he had most at heart. But it did not suit him to remain long in suspense, and as he took his leave he mentioned, with a glance at Gabrielle which she quite understood, that he should do himself the pleasure of calling again on the morrow.

"He will come again to-morrow!" said Vera, when she and the *bonne* were alone. "He seems very fond of La Boissière. Why will he call again to-morrow?"

"Cannot you guess?"

"No; I am at a loss to understand why a man of the world like this M. Corfe should care for our society, and his reminiscences of my parents do not seem to amount to much, after all."

"It is not for our society he cares, Vera ; it is for yours."

"Mine ! What do you mean, Gabrielle ?"

"What I say. Do you think M. Corfe comes here to see a middle-aged woman like me, or an old man like my father ? Not he, indeed. You are the attraction. He comes to see you, child, and I really think you ought to be proud of the conquest you have made."

"Impossible, Gabrielle ; I don't believe it," exclaimed Vera passionately, after a long pause. "You are mistaken."

"No, I am not ; and to speak frankly he has asked our permission to pay you his court, and my father and I, we both think you would do well to accept him."

"It was all a pretence then, his coming here to talk about my parents. I do not want to marry—but (bitterly), perhaps you want to get rid of me, Gabrielle. I know your father does."

"Get rid of you, my darling !" exclaimed the *bonne* vehemently. "It is because I do not want to lose you that I am anxious for you to marry this M. Corfe. He is rich, he is distinguished, he is good. He would let me be always with you. I should still be your *bonne* and your *femme de chambre*. And consider, *ma fille chérie*, you are now nearly a woman. In a few days you will be eighteen. You cannot always remain here. La Boissière is no place for a *démouille* like you. And my father—well, since my poor mother died he has not been the same. He had never a very good temper, and now he is sometimes almost insufferable. It is very unpleasant for you ; for me it is more than unpleasant, because I know that you are patient under great provocation only for my sake. Now if you marry M. Corfe all will be for the best. You will have a beautiful house. You will travel, you will see the world. You will visit Italy, Rome, Florence and other famous cities, and the picture galleries you want so much to see. And he loves you so much, *ce pauvre monsieur*. It is for your own happiness that I ask you to give him a favourable answer. It will be favourable, will it not, *ma chère* ?"

"I do not want to marry, Gabrielle—and—and I do not care for this man. He is old and he has bad eyes."

"Old ! Why he is quite young for a man. Not more than thirty I should say, while as for his eyes, I see nothing bad in them. And if they are not so beautiful as you would like, that does not make him a bad man. We cannot all have eyes like M.

Senarclens or this M. Balmaine. Let me tell him that he may hope, *ma petite*."

Again Vera answered in the negative, but her "No" was a shade less resolute than before, and it was easy to see that Gabrielle's arguments had not been altogether in vain. The prospect of being her own mistress, of escaping from old Courbet, and, above all, of seeing Italy once more and revisiting scenes hallowed by the memory of her father and mother, were contending in her mind with her indisposition to marry, and her indifference to the man who wanted to make her his wife.

If she could have got over her dislike of Corfe's eyes she might have inclined a favourable ear to his suit, but when Gabrielle put the question to her again on the following day she again refused.

"Will you let me speak to M. Senarclens then, and be guided by his advice ?" proposed the *bonne* as a last resource.

"If you like. I am not sure about following his advice ; but I should certainly be greatly influenced by it." Vera thought by this answer to spare herself further importunity. She knew M. Senarclens' ideas about marriage and felt sure that he would not urge her to accept a man whom she could not like. Gabrielle, on the other hand, looked upon it as a virtual consent, for the girl had an immense respect for M. Senarclens, and she had no more doubt that the great historian—being a sensible man—would take her view of the matter, than that her ward would do as he advised. In this sense she spoke to Corfe when he called again on the following day. Vera having gone to Territet they could converse freely. Corfe seemed annoyed.

"Why is she not here ?" he asked. "Why will you not let me see her *en tête-à-tête* ?"

"So I would, with pleasure, but she will not ; and really, you know, it would not be quite *comme il faut*."

"Hang *comme il faut* ! What is to be done then ?"

"We must see M. Senarclens. I will meet you at his house to-morrow."

"I really do not see what he has to do with the matter. But if there is nothing else for it, I suppose it must be as you say," said Corfe discontentedly. He was not at all satisfied with the turn things were taking. The historian might not be so easy to talk over as the *bonne*. "How did she become acquainted with M. Senarclens ?"

"My father lets him one of the chalets, and he and his family spend part of the

summer there. He thinks all the world of Vera. She takes painting lessons with his own daughters; he says that she is a born artist, and with proper instruction might make herself a name."

"He says so, does he? My wife, Madame Gabrielle, will not need to paint pictures for her living. Ah, that reminds me. You have surely papers about Vera, papers that you found among her father's effects or that he gave you? Where are they?"

This was spoken suddenly and sternly, and Corfe saw by the *bonne's* hesitation and confusion that his surmise—for it was no more than a surmise—was well founded.

"Now look here, Madame Gabrielle, my silence and your good name, your freedom even, depend upon your unquestioning obedience to my orders. Fetch me those papers at once."

The *bonne* not only felt that she was in this man's power; but that her will was weaker than his. She dared not disobey him; and though fully conscious that this further betrayal of her trust was an aggravation of her original offence, she fetched the packet confided to her by Philip Hardy and handed it to Corfe.

"Is this all?" he asked, putting it in his pocket.

"It is all," she answered in a troubled voice.

"Good. It is a thing agreed then, that we meet to-morrow at M. Senardens'. At what hour?"

"Eleven o'clock."

"I shall be there;" and without another word he stalked out of the *châlet*.

"Addressed to his father," he muttered, looking at the packet as he walked down the path. "Unless I'm mistaken there is matter here that will prove useful to me in any event, besides strengthening my hold over Madame Gabrielle."

This time at least Corfe was not mistaken, except in the sense that he had drawn a bigger prize than he yet knew.

CHAPTER XLII.—NEWS AT LAST.

"At last!" exclaimed Balmaine, as he saw lying on his desk at the office of the *Helvetic News*, a letter bearing an Italian post-mark and addressed in the handwriting of Colonel Bevis. "News about Martino it must be. Bevis can have nothing else to write to me about."

Balmaine was quite right. The letter did bring news about Martino. He was back from Algeria. Bevis had seen him. "As I

expected," wrote the old soldier, "*Martino knew your friend quite well, and seemed much distressed when I told him the child was missing. He is coming with me to Geneva, and will give you all particulars. Till then adieu. Yours to command, Mark Bevis.*"

"Confound his brevity," thought Alfred. "Why couldn't he have given me some particulars? He is as sparing of words as if they were gold pieces. And when is he coming? I must find out."

On this he shouted down the spout into the office below and asked the clerk who answered him to inquire of Mr. Mayo when Colonel Bevis was expected.

"Very soon," was the reply. "He is already *en route*; but the Colonel's movements are always uncertain, and it is impossible to say exactly when he will be here."

Mayo did not add that Bevis would have been at Geneva already if he could have sent him sooner the thousand francs, which the Colonel always insisted on having before starting on a professional journey. For the long-promised financial reorganization of the paper was still unaccomplished and the big safe as empty as ever. But it had the excellent quality of stability, it was always there, and no creditor could contemplate its imposing bulk, its brazen adornments and many locks, without feeling reassured as to the solvency of his debtors and the ultimate liquidation of his claim, even though he might court an interview with the cashier in vain. There were creditors who had come to the conclusion that the important functionary in question possessed the gift of rendering himself invisible at will, as, though his existence was a notorious fact, he was never to be seen by duns. Call when they would he was always out, and however long they waited he failed to return. They knew not that the ingenious Mr. Mayo had organized a service of three small, yet sharp-eyed and quick-witted boys, who watched in the street, and whenever they saw anyone approaching that looked like a creditor, whistled the information to the guardian of the big safe, whereupon that gentleman made himself incontinently scarce and came not back until the coast was clear.

Nobody proceeded to extremities, because the manager being plausible in speech and profuse in promises, generally succeeded in persuading unfortunate creditors that if they would only have patience all would be well. When they threatened, he just shrugged his shoulders and told them plainly that if they proceeded to extremities, they would stop

the paper, and so destroy the sole asset, except the types and the printing machine, which would not cover the costs of liquidation—and get nothing at all.

As for the editorial staff, beyond a few trifling sums on account, they had received no pay since the bank broke; and had it not been for Alfred's contributions to the *Day* he would have had to go on short commons. It was all he could do to keep straight with his landlady, and he was running behind with his remittances to Cora and his mother. Delane's pockets were as empty as the big safe, and Milnthorpe's balance at the Banque Populaire had sunk almost to zero. They lived like anchorites; not one of them had been in a café for a month or more, and they were reduced to smoking short *grandsons* at five a penny. But though hard up they were by no means low-spirited. There is a humorous side to everything, and this Delane was always quick to seize and make the most of; while the very uncertainty of the paper's future and their own increased the piquancy of their position and added to the interest of their lives, for the dull monotony of prosperous times is often as irksome to youth as it is always welcome to age.

But to return to Balmaine. His first proceeding, after reading Bevis's curt epistle, was to write to Warton; the lawyer's clerk was growing very importunate for news—he had even hinted that Alfred was not using due diligence in his quest, and this gleam of light, so long waited for, might serve both to encourage him and, may be, to diminish the frequency of his letters, which were beginning to be rather a bore. This done, he took up some copy of Corfe's, and was going through it "with a wet pen" when after a knock at the door (Alfred now occupied the room vacated by Gibson), Delane popped his head into the room and inquired if he would receive M. Senarclens.

"Certainly; show him in," said Alfred, wondering what could have procured him the honour of a call from so distinguished a visitor.

The historian, though a great man, was short of stature and of insignificant bodily presence. But he had something better than long legs or stalwart arms—a superb head and an intellectual face. The long hair of sable silver was brushed back from a forehead both broad and high; his bright and somewhat dreamy blue eyes fully justified Vera's admiration of their beauty, and though he wore a moustache and his chin was covered with a pointed beard, you could see that his shapely

Grecian nose was matched by a firm and well-formed mouth, and his smile, as he advanced to greet Balmaine, was gracious and winning.

"I am sorry to intrude upon you," he says, taking the chair offered him by Alfred, "since editors are always busy men; but I shall not take many minutes of your time. My object is to ask you, in confidence, a few questions about M. Corfe—not, I assure you, out of idle curiosity, but for a motive that concerns closely one in whose welfare I take a deep interest. He occupies a position on the *Helvetic News*, I believe?"

"He contributes a weekly article, if you can call that occupying a position."

"It certainly can be called a position," said M. Senarclens, smiling, "although I imagined it was a much more important one. Do you know, are you at liberty to say, whether he has any other sources of income? The question is a somewhat delicate one, but I feel myself bound to put it."

"He does something for a London paper, I believe, and gives lessons."

"Has he property?"

"That I am unable to tell you."

"But he is the son of a military officer, and has himself served in the English army?"

"I believe so; but you should know that my acquaintance with M. Corfe is very short. I have been only a short time in Geneva, and can really tell you very little about him."

"But so far as your knowledge goes, he is an honourable man, whose statements about himself may be trusted?"

"Certainly," said Alfred; "for if I know little about him, I know nothing against him, and he is undoubtedly a very able man."

"Thank you, M. Balmaine. That is all, I think. I dare say you are wondering why I have come to ask these questions about your *confrère*?"

It was true; Alfred was wondering very much.

"Well, I will tell you," continued M. Senarclens, after a short pause. "It is only right you should know. M. Corfe has made an offer of marriage to a young girl who is hardly less dear to me than one of my own daughters."

Alfred gave a start of surprise.

"Her friends, who are very simple, unsophisticated people, have consulted me about it, and I thought it my duty, before giving an opinion, to make some inquiry touching M. Corfe's character and antecedents."

"And the young lady?"

"She protests that she does not want to marry; but that, you know (smiling), we must take *cum grano*; and her *tutrice* is strongly of opinion—and I am disposed to agree with her—that, seeing how she is circumstanced, it would be well for her to have the protection of a husband. *Parbleu*, now I think of it, you know her! You danced with her at the *fête*."

"Mademoiselle Leonino?"

"Yes; Mademoiselle Leonino."

For a moment Alfred felt as if the room were going round with him. He had just said that he *knew* nothing against Corfe; but he had never liked him; and when he called to mind the strange incident of Mrs. Corfe's arrival at Geneva, her dreadful death, and his (as it would now seem) hypocritical sorrow, and many other circumstances, the idea of his marrying that sweet girl, who had made so strong an impression on Alfred's imagination, if not on his heart, stirred him as he had never been stirred before. And it was he who had been the means of making known her existence to Corfe! What a treacherous knave the fellow must be! He could scarcely contain himself for rage.

"You seem surprised," said M. Senarcles after pausing several minutes for a reply.

"I am. I admit it," said Alfred, recovering himself with an effort. "It seems only the other day that M. Corfe's wife died, and now he is seeking another!"

"You don't mean that he is a widower?"

"Certainly he is. Did you not hear of a lady being killed on the *mer de glace* at Chamouni a few months ago?"

"Yes, I read an account of it in the *Gazette de Lausanne*. She was German, was she not?"

"No, English, and M. Corfe's wife."

"How terrible!" exclaimed the historian, surprised in his turn. "The *Gazette* gave the name as Dorf, that is why I thought she was German. Strange that M. Corfe did not tell us this!"

"Very strange. Perhaps he feared that if made known to Mademoiselle Leonino it might prejudice him in her opinion."

"Probably. And, so far as I can judge, he is really very much in love with her. Well, I don't know of any law against a man marrying a second time; but it would certainly have looked better if he had mentioned the fact when he made his proposals. But he may have reasons for his reticence we know nothing of. I never condemn a man until he has been heard in his defence.

I am also bound to say that M. Corfe spoke very nicely, and he really seems very much in love with Vera. And when a man does something of which we are unable to approve we cannot deal too tenderly with him, M. Balmaine. Our impulses, when left to themselves, are all good; the bad are made vicious solely by unrighteous laws and an imperfect social organization. If there were no moral codes there would be no sinners; and if the possession of private property were made a penal offence dishonesty would disappear, and thieves cease to exist."

Balmaine, who was too much troubled with what he had just heard to enter on the discussion to which M. Senarcles invited him, made a somewhat vague reply, and the historian, after observing that he would communicate the result of his inquiries to Mademoiselle Leonino, and confer with her *tutrice* as to the answer to be given to M. Corfe, took his leave, not, however, before he had thanked Alfred for his courtesy, and asked him to pay him a visit at Territet.

"He thinks we cannot deal too tenderly with Corfe," mused Balmaine. "Why, hanging is too good for the fellow! He must have taken a fancy to Mademoiselle Leonino when we went to the Rousseau together, at the very time he was posing as a bachelor, and his wife was in England. There is a mystery about that too—the affair was never properly cleared up—and now I think of it, his explanations were singularly evasive. And how sorry he pretended to be when she died! I am afraid Corfe is a very bad fellow—no fit husband for a sweet girl like Mademoiselle Leonino, and I'll take good care he does not marry her!"

But when Balmaine grew cooler, and thought the matter out, he had to confess that he saw no practicable way of hindering the execution of Corfe's design—provided all the parties concerned were willing. If, after what he had told Senarcles, Corfe did not receive his *congé*, what could he do more? But surely no good girl would consent to marry a man she did not love, who had wooed her on the very morrow of the terrible event which bereft him of a wife to whom he had pretended to be passionately devoted. And her reluctance to marry showed that she did not love him. She was just being pushed into it by her friends. He must do something, that was quite clear; but what?

After cogitating a long time, without coming to any satisfactory conclusion, Balmaine lighted a *grandson*, went into the sub-editors' room and told them of Corfe's

intended marriage. They were very much surprised, but took the affair much more coolly than he had done.

"I knew Corfe was an unaccountable sort of chap, but I had no idea he was so fond of the sex as to marry at the rate of two wives a year," said Delane. "Poor Mrs. Corfe! It does seem an awful shame for him to be after marrying another woman so soon after her death, and such a death!"

"Has this girl money?" asked Milnthorpe.

"I don't know; but I should think not."

"You may depend upon it she has, or Corfe would not be in such a hurry to marry her."

"I am not so sure about that," put in Delane thoughtfully. "When a fellow is in love, you know, he does not think much about anything else."

"The person Corfe is most in love with is himself," said Milnthorpe, "and I am sure that if he marries it is because marriage will somehow or other advance his interests, for, largely as he talks, you may depend upon it that he is very hard up."

"Still, I don't see," returned Balmaine doubtfully, "I don't see how Mademoiselle Leonino can have money. She lives up in the mountains, and I gathered from Senarcels that her people were of humble rank. As for Corfe——"

If Balmaine had completed the sentence—which he did not—he would have said that any man might well want to marry Mademoiselle Leonino, even if she had not a penny.

"As for Corfe," you were saying," observed Delane, seeing that Alfred did not go on.

"Was I?" said Alfred with a look of surprise. "Oh, yes; I was going to say that we have seen very little of him lately."

"You have riled him; that's the reason why."

"By editing his articles, I suppose."

"Exactly. I met him the other day in the Place Neuve, and he asked me who had been playing old gooseberry with his copy again. I told him nobody touched it but you. He did not say much; but you should have seen his look! I am afraid you have made an enemy of him, Balmaine."

"Never mind," answered Alfred carelessly.

"I am not afraid of Vernon Corfe. Let him do his worst."

CHAPTER XLII.—RAISING THE WIND.

A WEEK later came Bevis.

"How do you do, M. Balmaine?" he

said, as he entered the editor's private room. "I congratulate you on becoming *rédauteur-en-chef*, and on the great improvement you have effected in the paper. It is just what it ought to be, lively and interesting, and full of Swiss news, and your leaders are crisp and short."

Alfred thanked him for his compliments.

"You got my letter?"

"I did; and——"

"You mean Martino," said the Colonel, with a look of importance. "It is all right. I have got him with me. But I thought it better not to bring him here: private business, you know; and the others might be wondering what it was all about. Nothing like keeping these things quiet. When will you see him? Can you be at liberty about six o'clock?"

"Yes; say from six to eight."

"Good. Then we will dine at the Croix. A table apart, you know, so that we can talk freely. Will that suit you?"

"Exactly."

"Good; we shall be there. Six o'clock sharp, remember. And now I must just run round the town to pick up a few renewals. I have done very well so far; just given M. Mayo orders for six thousand. *A bientôt*, M. Balmaine."

And the Colonel (who, though he spoke no language well but his own, always said "Monsieur," never "Mister"), bustled out of the room.

Punctually at the time appointed Alfred entered the *salle-à-manger* of the Hôtel de la Croix. Bevis and Martino were sitting at a little table well out of earshot of the great body of diners. The Colonel introduced the strangers with a good deal of ceremony; and Balmaine and the Italian, after bowing profoundly, assured each other how delighted they were to make each other's acquaintance.

"You knew Mr. Philip Hardy, I believe?" said Alfred, taking the third seat at the little table.

"I knew him well," answered Martino gravely; "we were engaged in the same cause, and he died in my house. He was a noble fellow."

"He is dead, then?"

"Too surely. I saw him laid in the ground. You will find a tombstone inscribed with his name in the cemetery of Locarno."

"And the daughter. What became of her?"

"What became of her? Why, she went to England with her Swiss *bonne*, Gabrielle Courbet."

"Went to England! But she never reached England. At any rate she has never been heard of since, and nobody knows where she is."

"Then they must have been robbed and murdered on the way," said Martino, turning pale. "I know Gabrielle had a large sum of money in her possession, though she did not tell me how much. Poor Vera! she was a dear, sweet child."

"In that case," said Balmaine, "the mystery is solved and my task completed. But do you really think it is so, M. Martino—that this poor child has perished?"

"I do not see how it can be otherwise. I myself saw Gabrielle and the little girl leave Locarno. I myself put them in the Fluelin diligence, *en route* for Lucerne and London, which they counted on reaching the third day. Unless they are murdered where are they? Can you tell me that, M. Balmaine?" said the Italian excitedly.

"Indeed I cannot. I wish I could."

"And Gabrielle never wrote to me as she promised. That is another sign of evil."

"Was she honest, this woman? You say she had a large sum of money. Where did she get it?"

"From the patron. Yes, she was a very honest woman, and she was devoted to the patron and the little girl, and I know that Leonino charged her to go at once to his father in London."

"Leonino! Who is Leonino?"

"Ah! you don't know. Leonino was Vera's father. We always called him Leonino—it was the name of his wife—to conceal his nationality from the Austrians, who had threatened to hang without trial any foreign Garibaldian who might fall into their hands; partly, I think, because he had the idea that taking an Italian name would more completely identify him with the Italian cause."

"And was the daughter—was Vera generally known by that name?" asked Balmaine eagerly.

"Of course. It was the name M. Hardy adopted. But I must tell you this, that I had him buried as Philip Hardy, and I recommended Gabrielle always to call the child Miss Hardy after leaving Locarno."

"And what was she like, Miss Hardy? You said just now she was pretty. Can you tell me the colour of her hair and her eyes?"

"Certainly," returned Martino, with a look of surprise. "I remember very well. Her hair it was light, a little red or chestnut, like her father's; her eyes—yes, they were bright and dark—like her mother's,

very expressive; and her skin, it had a rich olive tint."

"And she would now be about eighteen?"

"It is so; she would now be about eighteen if she were living, *la précieuse!*"

"She is living, M. Martino. I believe I know where she is. I have seen Vera Hardy, and you shall see her, M. Martino," exclaimed Alfred, in suppressed excitement.

"Where? when? how? why—what do you mean?" asked the Italian, quite taken aback by this sudden and unexpected revelation.

"It must be so," said Balmaine, more quietly; "no other theory fits in with the facts."

And then he told Martino and Bevis (who had been an eager though rather puzzled listener to the conversation) of his meeting with Mademoiselle Leonino at the Hôtel Rousseau; of her correspondence with Martino's description, both as respected age and appearance; and of M. Senarcens' visit and its object. Jealousy had sharpened Alfred's wits; he felt sure that Corfe had somehow discovered that Vera was an heiress, and for that reason was seeking her in marriage.

"I believe," he said, "that the Swiss *bonne* stole the money entrusted to her by Mr. Hardy, and instead of going to London, went to her own people in Canton Vaud."

"I shall be glad if Leonino's child—it is difficult for me to call him anything else—be still alive," said Martino. "But Basta! I shall also be very sorry if Gabrielle has done as you say. I thought her an honest woman."

"I suppose you would know her?"

"Know her! Of course I should. I think I should know Vera also—if she has not much altered."

"You shall have the opportunity very soon, M. Martino. This is Thursday. To-morrow, or on Saturday morning, we will see M. Senarcens and, I hope, Miss Leonino and her *bonne*."

Before they separated it was arranged that Martino and Balmaine should proceed to Territet on the following day, and, after seeing M. Senarcens, hunt up Vera and the *bonne*, for as yet they did not know, except generally, where the latter lived.

"Then it is a thing agreed that you two meet at the station to-morrow at eleven," said Bevis, putting on, as he sometimes did, his commanding officer manner; "let us have no misunderstandings, and then we shall have no disappointments. Better make a mem. in your note-book. There! that is all

right. Another thing—I strongly advise you, M. Balmaine, to keep this matter as quiet as you can. It will get out quickly enough, and when it does, this young lady—if she really be as you say, and I am disposed to think, Leonino's daughter—will be pestered to death with beggars and suitors, some of them dangerous, like this M. Corfe. I need not say anything to you, Martino. As an old conspirator you know the value of a silent tongue."

"You speak of Corfe as if you knew something about him, Colonel," said Balmaine eagerly; "do you?"

"I know something about a good many people, M. Balmaine," answered the old soldier mysteriously, "and I can put two and two together; but it is not always wise to say everything you know and think."

This closed the conversation, and Balmaine returned to the office to finish his leader, read his proofs, and think over a little difficulty in which he found himself. He would have to pay both Martino's expenses and his own, and his pocket was almost as empty as the big safe. For railway fares—it would be quicker to go by rail, and he was burning with impatience to see Senarclens and Vera and circumvent Corfe—and other expenses he might require a couple of hundred francs.

"Is the balance at the Banque Populaire quite exhausted?" he asked Milnthorpe, just as they were about to separate for the night.

"Practically it is, I am sorry to say," answered the sub-editor with a sigh, "all but about twenty francs which I have left in, just to keep the account open, you know. Why, are you in need?"

"Which I am," said Alfred, and then he told his colleagues of the proposed journey to Territet on business, of which he was not at liberty just then to disclose the particulars. But he promised them that they should know all about it later on.

"That sounds mysterious," observed Milnthorpe, "and is just the sort of thing to pique one's curiosity; but we must try to possess our souls in patience until you come back. The main point now, as it generally is, is money. No use applying to Mayo I am afraid. Well, we must fly a kite, that's all."

"Raise money on a bill, you mean?"

"The accuracy with which you have guessed my meaning does credit to your intelligence, Balmaine. I know the manager of the Banque Populaire pretty well; he is a very good fellow, and I have little doubt that

he will advance money on a piece of stamped paper, bearing our joint signatures."

"I don't much like that, though, Milnthorpe. Wouldn't it be an accommodation bill?"

"Of course it would, and why not? Don't you know that the *raison d'être* of the Banque Populaire is the discounting of accommodation bills, *billets de complaisance* they call 'em? If the signatures are satisfactory, that's all they care about. If they consider two not strong enough for the amount required they ask for a third, sometimes a fourth and a fifth. The Banque Populaire, let me tell you, is a very valuable institution; it gives small people who cannot go to the big banks, and who would otherwise have to go to the Jews—eventually to the dogs—facilities for obtaining temporary loans on personal security and reasonable terms."

"A valuable institution, indeed," laughed Delane, "by all means let us turn it to account. I should rather like to be mixed up in a bill transaction. It will be a new sensation. I had no idea there was such an admirable system of raising the wind in Geneva, or I should have been tempted to try it before."

"I know of but one objection to the system, Delane," said Milnthorpe gravely.

"What is that, old man?"

"These bills become due. If you want to know how fast time can fly put your name to an acceptance. A reason for not doing so now, you may say. But needs must, you know, when a certain person drives; and this journey of Balmaine's seems important."

CHAPTER XLIII.—M. SENARCLENS IS SURPRISED.

THE bill was drawn, signed, and handed to Milnthorpe, who declared it to be in perfect order, and promised to be at the office early next morning with the proceeds. All the same, Balmaine had his doubts as to the success of the expedient, and when ten o'clock came and the sub-editor did not show up, he began to feel very uneasy. To be unable to go to Territet for lack of funds and have to make some lame excuse to Martino, would be both a disappointment and a humiliation. Rather than that, he would take his watch—the sole memento of his father which he possessed—to the Mont de Piété. Time pressed, Milnthorpe did not come, and at 10.15 he set off on his unpleasant errand—so unpleasant, that if he had been on his way to penal servitude he could not have felt much worse.

"There is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous," he soliloquised. "Here am I, forced to pawn my watch in order that I may inform a charming girl that she is the greatest heiress in Europe!"

But at the last moment he was spared the painful necessity. As he crossed the Island Bridge he met Milnthonpe.

"Well?" he said anxiously.

"I have succeeded—in a measure," returned the other.

"How, in a measure?"

"We made the bill for five hundred, you know. The Banque Populaire goes as low as forty francs; but it looks more respectable to borrow twenty pounds than five or ten, and it is better to have too much than too little. But the manager looks upon five hundred as a large transaction—too large to be completed without the sanction of the Conseil d'Administration—and he would not do more than advance two hundred and fifty, pending their next meeting."

"That will do," said Alfred, with a sigh of relief; "less will do. Thank you very much."

"I am glad to hear you say so, for I could do with a trifle myself, and I am sure Delane could. We are both *à sec*, as the folks here say."

"All right. Keep a hundred francs. I daresay I can make shift with one-fifty. I don't think the Rousseau will charge me unreasonably."

"They won't charge you anything if you speak a word to the manager, and tell him you are the *rédacteur-en-chef* of the *Helvetic News*."

"I don't think I shall do that, Milnthonpe. I am not going on the business of the paper, and I am not one of your cadging journalists."

"Cadging, do you call it? You are too proud, Balmaine. It does not pay."

"I do not think it is pride, Milnthonpe. But be that as it may, I would rather be poor and proud than rich and a lickspittle. I did not feel comfortable not to pay when I was at the Rousseau with Corfe, though I did go by the manager's express invitation. To ask for free quarters merely because I am a journalist would be a piece of shameless impudence—as much so as if I were to demand a suit of clothes from a tailor for the same reason."

"Perhaps you are right, Balmaine. It is a mean sort of thing when you come to think of it. And I fear there is a great deal too much of what you call cadging about continental journalism."

"You might give it another name—black-mailing. Mayo breakfasts two or three times a week at the Croix in a style that would cost anybody else ten francs a time, yet never thinks of paying a centime. But here we are at our office. You had better get your bag and hurry up, or you will be too late for the train. Delane and I will keep things straight until you get back."

Balmaine did not miss the train, though he had to run for it, and four hours later he and Martino were knocking at M. Senarclens's door. They found the historian in his study, a large and lofty room lined with bookcases and maps. Two French windows looked into a garden rich with rare shrubs and choice flowers, and commanding a glorious view of lake, mountain, and forest. In the middle of the room stood a big square table, littered with books, manuscripts, and proofs. At a smaller table sat the historian's private secretary.

"I am afraid we are hindering work," observed Alfred, after introducing Martino, "but the business on which I come admits of no delay. It concerns Mademoiselle Leonino."

He thought it best to plunge in *medias res*. "Mademoiselle Leonino!" exclaimed M. Senarclens, looking all the surprise he felt. "What about her? nothing unpleasant, I hope? Poor Vera!"

"She is called Vera, then," said Alfred, with a significant glance at Martino, who had been very doubtful as to the issue of their journey.

"Certainly she is called Vera," returned M. Senarclens, looking more surprised than ever.

"And do you know if her father was English?"

"I believe her father was your compatriot; but she was born in Italy, and her mother was also of that country."

"I told you so," exclaimed Balmaine, turning to Martino in great exultation. "I told you so. Mademoiselle Leonino is the long-lost daughter of Philip Hardy. Hurrah!"

"It must be so. It must," shouted Martino, who seemed even more excited than Alfred. "You are right, M. Balmaine. I doubt no longer. Where is the little Vera? She will remember me; I am sure she will. Many a time have I danced round my corridor at Locarno, with the child on my back singing."

And suiting the action to the word, Martino pranced round the big table, singing an Italian rhyme:—

"Bimbo non piangere;
Nascesti trito
No se desiderì
Morir vestito."

The historian stared at his visitors with a look of such utter bewilderment and comic surprise that Balmaine could hardly keep from laughing outright. M. SenarcLens evidently thought—and no wonder—that his visitors had gone mad.

"It is time we explained, I think," said Alfred. "If you will stop your singing and sit down, M. Martino, I will tell M. SenarcLens our errand."

Martino took the hint and a chair, whereupon Alfred, while omitting irrelevant and non-essential details, told Vera's story from beginning to end. But he made no imputation against Gabrielle, deeming it better to let M. SenarcLens draw his own inferences from Martino's statement.

The historian listened with the deepest attention, asking an occasional question. His countenance expressed at first surprise, then concern, and at last something like dismay.

"But you surely don't mean," he said, after a pause which seemed to be spent in painful thought, "you surely don't mean that Vera is sole heiress to this immense fortune—two millions sterling? Why that is fifty million francs!"

"I think there can be no doubt of it, M. SenarcLens.

"Poor child, what a calamity!"

"A calamity?"

"Yes, 'tis a calamity, M. Balmaine—nothing less. What can be more unfortunate than for any young girl, but, above all, for a young girl without father or mother, or other natural protectors, to become possessed of wealth that might well dazzle the strongest mind, corrupt the purest nature? Surely you have noticed that the rich are always the most selfish, the most egotistic, and the most self-indulgent of mankind. This is a truth that has been recognised for ages, and nowhere more emphatically than in the sacred books of Christians in which many of the *bourgeoisie* still profess to believe. I would ten thousand times rather have heard that Vera was reduced to poverty, and had no other resource than that genius for art with which nature has so richly gifted her."

Alfred was startled. This was a view of the matter which had not occurred to him—he had thought he was doing Vera a great service. Yet he could not help admitting that there might be some truth in what the historian said. But even though it were

altogether true his duty was clear, he must carry out his mission and inform Vera of all that had come to pass.

"I hope," he said, "that Miss Hardy will make a good use of her fortune, and that it will not prove the calamity you fear."

"I do not share your confidence," returned M. SenarcLens gloomily, "unless she disembarass herself of the burden quickly—and that will be difficult—without doing more harm than good. I cannot conceive anybody possessing so many millions without being the worse for them. The right of bequest is one of those rights to do wrong which ought to be abolished; it is bad for all that there should be whole classes who neither toil nor spin and who live on the labour of others. All accumulations should go to the community, and the community in its turn should undertake the upbringing of orphans and the support of the aged and the helpless. As for Vera, it is some slight satisfaction to know that she is as well prepared to withstand the corrupting influence of wealth as any young girl could be. She is of a noble, unselfish nature; she has not been kept under a glass case, like the *jeunes filles de la bourgeoisie*; she has had the same liberty as my own daughters, and has studied with them many of the best books in my library. She loves literature and art for their own sake. You will find her well instructed, M. Balmaine, and she has much sympathy with the poor."

"Is she likely to become Madame Corfe?" asked Alfred, to whom this question seemed far more important than the character of Vera's recent reading.

"No, and she has suffered much in consequence, poor girl."

"How?"

"Well, after what I heard from you I could not advise her to marry this M. Corfe, the more especially as when I came to question her closely, I found that she has neither a vocation for marriage nor a liking for this gentleman, and I would not for the world constrain a girl's choice. We are all for liberty here, M. Balmaine. But Madame Gabrielle and her father are very wishful she should marry him. The one has entreated, the other has threatened her, and when he likes, M. Courbet can be very brutal. She was here in great distress yesterday, and I pressed her to come and stay with us until the storm had blown over. It is one advantage of your revelation, M. Balmaine, that Vera becomes her own mistress. The Courbets have no legal authority over

her, and she is no way dependent on them."

"Not at all."

"I understand now why Gabrielle brought her here instead of taking the child to her grandfather. Another instance of the demoralising influence of money. I am sorry for Gabrielle, it will be a terrible blow to her, this discovery of her dishonesty. Yet she is not a bad woman, and I am sure it is better for Vera—physically as well as morally—to have been brought up in this mountain land as a child of the people, than in the corrupt atmosphere of London as the heiress of millions. But (smiling) this is not business. I suppose you would like to see her?"

Both Alfred and Martino said they should like to see her very much.

"I thought so. Well, Madame Senarclens and my daughter Georgette shall fetch Vera. They shall take a carriage. The journey to La Boissière occupies two hours, but one can descend the mountain in one hour. So we may expect them here about eight o'clock, and on the way my wife can break the news to Vera. She will be very much overcome, poor child. Will you then do me the favour, Messieurs, to make me another visit in three or four hours. If it were not that I must absolutely despatch these proofs (glancing at the table) to Paris by the next mail, I would ask you to dine with me. But we will have tea *à l'Anglaise* instead, let us say at eight o'clock. Will you join us?"

To this proposal Balmaine and Martino gladly assented, and at the request of the latter (who was wishful to know whether Vera would recognise him) it was agreed that she should not be informed of his arrival.

CHAPTER XLIV.—A RECOGNITION.

PUNCTUALLY at eight o'clock the two men were again at the villa. Madame Senarclens had not returned, and they were shown into the salon. Though dignified with that name the room was simply furnished and evidently used more for work than show. Books were lying about. There was an easel with a half-finished sketch; an open piano stood in one corner, a harp in another; on the walls hung paintings of Alpine landscapes; on the mantelpiece were two or three exquisite statuettes; in the window recesses vases filled with flowers.

In a few minutes they were joined by M. Senarclens.

"They are not come yet," he said, "but

they cannot be long. Hark! don't you hear the sound of bells and ring of hoofs on the hard road? It must be they. I will run and see. I will bring Vera in and then you can tell this strange story yourself, M. Balmaine. I am anxious— The girl is very dear to me and this is a supreme crisis in her life. Did I not say so? The carriage stops at the door. I will go—pray excuse me."

"He seems nervous," observed Martino.

"As much as we are," answered Alfred, who was himself so nervous that he could hardly speak. For the second time in his life he was going to see this girl whom he had sought so long, and of whom he had thought so much. What would be the issue? He had a foreboding that the meeting and its consequences would influence his destiny—that a crisis in his life was also approaching.

The next moment the door opened and M. Senarclens entered the saloon leading Miss Hardy by the hand.

"This is the gentleman, Vera, who has brought the news—M. Balmaine."

Alfred bowed and devoured the girl with his eyes. It was a sweet face, as sweet as he had thought it at the *fête*, and, strange to say, it seemed to him that it bore a certain resemblance to that of M. Senarclens—not in contour or complexion, but in those subtler and less definable features which denote character and help to spiritualise expression. There were the same dreaminess in the eyes, the same loftiness, yet benevolence of look, even the same fashion of slightly throwing back the head when speaking. But just then she was pale and agitated and her lips trembled with emotion.

"I have had the pleasure of seeing Mademoiselle before," said Alfred, as quietly as he could; "perhaps she has forgotten me."

"Oh, no, I have not, I remember you quite well," she answered hurriedly. "But do tell me—is this true—this that you have been telling my dear friends? You are not deceiving us, M. Balmaine?"

"Why should I deceive you, Mademoiselle? If you are Philip Hardy's daughter you are the heiress to an immense fortune—one of the finest in Europe."

"It seems impossible. I must have time—I cannot— What shall I do, M. Senarclens? I have heard you say often how evil a thing is wealth. I feel already what a terrible responsibility the care of this fortune will bring on me. Shall I renounce it? If you bid me I will.

"I am afraid that is too great a responsi-

bility for me to take, *ma chère*. You must decide for yourself. And I do not think you can renounce it—can she, M. Balmaine?"

"You mean she is a minor. That is so. Miss Hardy cannot renounce what she does not possess; and she will not enter into possession of her property until she is of age."

"*Tant mieux*, I am grateful for the respite. It will give me time to think, to get accustomed to the idea of my inheritance, and decide how I shall dispose of it. But I do not understand how all this has come about so suddenly, and why I was not told sooner. Is my grandfather only just dead?"

"M. Balmaine will tell us all about it while we are at tea. Let us go into the *salle à manger*. But you do not observe that another gentleman is present. Have you met him also before, do you think?"

"I do not think so." And Vera looked earnestly at Martino, but no look of recognition came into her eyes.

"Don't you know me, Vera?" said the Italian. "Don't you remember the time when I rode you on my back:"

"Bimbo non piangere;
Nasesti trito
No si desideri
Morir vestito.

"Ecco lo maximo
Che mai non falla
E come un sughero
Ti spenge a galla."

"Martino! Martino!" cried the girl, running to him and kissing him on both cheeks. "I do remember, oh! so well. And how my father laughed when you danced round the table! It is like old times to see you, CARO AMICO. And how have you been; and why did you not write to us?"

"For a very good reason; I did not know your address, but I know you . . . I know you, and how well you look" (she was quite flushed now), "and how handsome you have grown! I shall never be able to thank M. Balmaine enough for discovering you. But we must go into the *salle à manger*; they are all waiting for us."

Vera put her hand into that of the old innkeeper, and they went in together and sat side by side, Balmaine being their *vis-à-vis*.

The "tea *à l'Anglaise*" was tea and little else, and poor at that, as an American would have said, which was so far fortunate that eating did not much interfere with the retelling of the story. Though Alfred hesitated a little at first—French not being quite as familiar to him as his mother-tongue—he told his tale very well, when he warmed to his work, and at greater length than the first time—perhaps because he had in Vera an eager and charming listener. She never once took her eyes off him, and hung on his words as if he were a very Othello.

"You took much trouble about me, M. Balmaine," she said, when he had finished, "and I shall never forget your kindness. But there is one thing I do not understand—why Martino did not know where I was. Did not Gabrielle tell you where we were going, dear friend?"

"She said you were going to London, according to your father's instructions."

"Why did we not go then?"

"That you had better ask Gabrielle herself," said M. Senarclens; "she will be here to-morrow. I have asked her to come. I think it is desirable for her to give an explanation in the presence of these gentlemen."

"It is very strange! Gabrielle has been very good; she has been like a mother to me; and until the last year or two I was very happy at La Boissière; but if my father told her to take me to London she ought to have taken me, ought she not?"

"There can be no question of that. But let us hear what Gabrielle says before we draw any conclusions. Yet in any case, even if she may not have acted altogether as she ought to have done, you will deal gently with her."

"How could I do otherwise? Gabrielle will always be very dear to me, M. Senarclens."

The person in question was meanwhile having a very bad time of it. Worried on the one side by her father, who insisted that she should make Vera marry Corfe, and by fear of Corfe on the other, tortured by prickings of conscience and dread of discovery, she was about as unhappy as well could be. Corfe had been at La Boissière a few days before, and albeit Vera's refusal put him in a rage, he would not take it as final, attributing it altogether to the shock produced by her being told of Esther's death. "She will get over that in a little while," he thought, "and though it is a great bore and awfully inconvenient, I must just wait; and if it comes to a push I have got a pull over her she little suspects. Without me she can never get her fortune—unless I am very much mistaken."

He asked Gabrielle how Vera had come to know of Madame Corfe's death.

"I think M. Senarclens heard of it at the bureau of the *Helvetic News*," said the *bonne*.

"Oh, then it's Balmaine! I thought as much!" exclaimed Corfe, in English. "Who can tell what he said about me? Confound the fellow! I'll stop him spoiling my copy and telling lies about me to my friends! *Dites donc*, Madame Gabrielle! I shall not be here again for a month or so; but you will let

me know if anything particular occurs, and continue to use your influence with Vera in my favour. I rely upon you. And look here! silence about that packet. If you tell anybody that you have given it me—that it ever existed even—*par dieu*, I will cut your throat!"

Then he went away, leaving the *bonne* in a state of mortal terror, for there was murder in his look, and she really believed he would be as good as his word. And this was the man she had undertaken to persuade Vera to

marry! How much more reason there had been in the girl's mistrust than in her confidence!

The fetching of Vera by Madame Senarclens and her daughter made the *bonne*, if possible, still more uneasy. Such a thing had never happened before; and the cause assigned—to meet a gentleman who had known her father—did not tend to allay her fears. Who was this gentleman? and how did he know that Vera was at La Boissière? Was he another Corfe?

"MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS."

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR AUGUST.

BY THE REV. W. PAGE ROBERTS, M.A.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Proverbs xxxi. 10 to 31.

TO every serious unprejudiced mind the mother of our Lord must be an object of reverent regard. But the only time she is referred to in the Epistles which were circulated for the edification of the churches, supplies no satisfaction to pious curiosity. "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." There is very little told of her in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles her name is once mentioned, "Mary, the mother of Jesus," and that is all. Most prominent in the history and worship of the Church, the centre of a brilliant, rapturous, almost sentimental worship, a being to whom painter and poet pour forth the best treasures of their genius, whose nature and mysterious office engage the profoundest thought of the theologian, in the New Testament her life seems to be one of studied retirement, of shy reserve, according with those early works of Christian art in which the Virgin is always veiled. But there are occasions when the Mother of our Lord comes for a passing moment from the reserve and seclusion in which Scripture enshrines her; and there are words spoken by her which good men and women must hold precious.

If, to-day, we look into the lives of men and women; if we look at their dress or want of it, their looks and gestures and employments, to find out what god or goddess they worship, we should certainly not say that the Madonna of the Bible had chief place and power. We might be disposed to think Paganism and not Mariolatry is the *culte* of the present. We might find that the ideals of Paganism, Aphrodite and

Dionysus, are our ideals; and that we are practically bearing the symbols and insignia of heathenism: that our culture is humanistic and our worship that of the flesh. We need a new Mariolatry, and voices again to cry to a sensual age, Hail, Mary! for it will mean, when reason uses it, Hail, Modesty! Hail, Purity! Hail, watchful Motherhood! Hail, patient, heroic endurance! Of this worship we are sadly deficient, who interest ourselves in the annals of other courts than those of the temple, and who almost think that lewdness is not lewd when "swathed" in sentimental French.

Nothing is told us in the Bible of the parentage of the Virgin Mary. We hear of a sister and of a cousin. That cousin, Elizabeth, belonged to the tribe of Levi. The Church has always maintained that the Virgin was of the tribe of Judah, and a descendant of David. The New Testament gives two pedigrees, which are traced through David, one in St. Matthew and one in St. Luke; but both these pedigrees are the pedigrees of Joseph, and Mary has no place in them. Although she was connected with a priestly family, the social position to which the Virgin belonged appears to have been humble. Her espousal to an artificer whose children had no birthright to high education: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" . . . "Is not this the carpenter?" seems to show that she belonged to the "masses," and not to the "classes." It is a common belief that great men have always had uncommon mothers. It may be a true belief. But how little we know of the mothers of many of the greatest men! What do we know of the mothers of Moses and Isaiah, St. Paul and St. John? What do we

know of the mothers of Homer, of the great Greek poets, orators, philosophers, and artists; of Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton? Woman was had in honour, and place was made for women of great character in the early periods of Jewish history. In this respect Judaism is honourably distinguished from ordinary Orientalism. Woman commanded deep respect, especially woman as mother, in the great, simple days of republican Rome. But in the country which reached in a short time an intellectual eminence which has never had a rival summit—in Hellas—woman disappears from sight, as if hidden by the closed lattices of the harem, or, if she appears before men, it is with the effrontery of the hetaera. The great difference between the Greek women of Homer and the tragedians and the women of a later historical period has often been pointed out. But the philosopher Lotze says, Greece “never produced a conception which, in seriousness and human worth, is comparable to the noble ideal of the Roman matron.”

When we begin to study Christian history, we find the memories of the mothers of her great saints and doctors studiously and lovingly preserved. We recall to mind Lois, the grandmother of Timothy, and Eunice his mother; Macrina, the grandmother of Basil the Great, and his great brother, Gregory of Nyssa; Nonna the mother of Gregory Nazianzen, Anthusa the mother of Chrysostom, Monica the mother of Augustine; above all, “Mary, the mother of Jesus.” Of all mothers her honour was greatest in the Son she bore. Even unbelievers will admit this. They must say she was the mother of the man who has been the most powerful the world has yet seen, of the man whose influence (even if it be as they say, waning), has been the most enduring, the most elevating, and the most inspiring known to history. If once it was asked, “What manner of child shall this be?” surely we may with deepest interest ask, “What manner of woman shall this be?”

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read 1 Sam. ii. 1 to 11, and St. Luke i. 46 to 55.

Almost the very first word which Scripture records of the Mother of our Lord is a word of piety, a word of sweet maiden piety. It is a reverent assent to a divine revelation, and complete submission to a conviction which has entered her soul as a message from heaven, setting her apart to a consecrated life. “Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy word.”

The spirit of this noble expression of piety is not too powerful at the present day. By many it is thought that reverence is departing from our midst, and that in the general spirit of irreverence towards parents and age and venerable institutions and manners, we may see the promise of general irreligiosity. Strong-minded men and strong-minded women also, are what every community needs. But strong manners and strong voices and strong words are not proof that there is a strong mind behind them. Hysteria is often more noisy than health, and quacks more audacious than sages. We do not advocate feminine fusibility, nor that quality of character which, like the modeller's clay, can be shaped and altered by artist or menial, by intention or accident. Surely not such characterless character as that which may be moulded to-day into a Grace, and to-morrow into a Fury or a cruel Fate, is what the world needs. Nor yet the woman without heart, as every woman is who is without religion. A new species of woman appears to be arising, but not a product of natural selection, a species of which we have as yet, thank God, but a few specimens. It is the woman who tries to be a man and succeeds in being neither, like the mixed races which so often possess the faults of both, without possessing the virtues of either. What is needed is the spirit which is capable of reverence and tenderness and intelligent recognition of law, and of brave submission to the inevitable, the will of heaven.

But when women are frivolous, when they turn away with repulsion from the care of home and children to toy in the meaningless badinage of fashion, or the dangerous familiarities of wanton coquetry, “too lavish of themselves”—then, indeed, Paganism is once more set up, and the decay which it starts begins to operate. Shakespeare tells us that the man who has no music in his soul—

“Nor is not moved by concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.
Let no such man be trusted.”

But the woman who has no motherhood in her soul, who will say what she is fit for? It happens at times that those who are childless are often more motherly than some who have sons and daughters. But the woman whose soul is untouched with motherhood is like a bit of dry-rot in a community. If only the great spirit of religion which takes hold of the mightiest realities inspires the souls of women; if only, whether married or unmarried, childless or circled about with

offspring, they keep in mind that they have a Father in heaven whose daughters they are, then will dignity and sweet reverence, and readiness for duty, and brave resignation be ever seen in them. Let theirs be the practical worship of the Virgin as they take her words as a sacred guide, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy word."

The recorded words of the Virgin are few. That she was thoughtful, serious, and given to deep reflection we know. She was not one to tell in every captured ear, of course in *strictest confidence*, the wonderful secret of her life. She had one, the holy cousin, Elizabeth, in whom she could confide, and to her, with the burden of her solemn expectations, she fled for sacred sympathy. "Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart." She did not claim consideration for herself on account of the great things which were spoken of her by venerable piety; she was no easy chatterer on solemn religious subjects. There is a garrulity in religion which seldom springs from the depths of piety. We are not ashamed of our religion, because we keep it, like our deepest human love, from common sight. "Enter into thy closet," is the command of the heart filled with solemn emotions of religion. The day may come when we must stand forth from our shy, brooding devotion, as it comes sometimes when bashful tenderness rushes forth to confession and fears not proudly to tell its shielded secret, even if tears fill the eyes because it has been compelled to do violence to its reserve. But the brook-babblers of religion, whose piety is no deeper than the skin of their tongue, and whose heartless, worldly conversation is embroidered with the *passementerie* of pious expression; who think themselves so good, and who also think that you think them so good—these are the degraders and destroyers of true religion.

The mother of our Lord was a poet. The beautiful hymn which still has a frequent place in Christian worship is by her, and is another illustration of the meditative, reverential, mystical spirit whose steady fire burned within her. The "Magnificat" is the first Christian hymn—it is a hymn in the exact sense of the word; for a hymn originally means a poem sung in praise of the gods or of heroes. St. Augustine's definition of a hymn is "praise to God with a song." A hymn is something which may be used by all sorts of people—by ignorant people, and people with no subtlety of in-

telleet, who have not learned the introspective habit of to-day, with its self-engaged, and self-tormenting melancholy—a hymn is something for everybody, and nothing is fit for public worship which is not fit for everybody. Dilettantism has no rights in the Church. The raptures or regrets of æsthetic piety, the songs of esoteric illumination must seek a private chantry. Too often, however, our hymns are merely prayers. People sometimes say that it is unnatural to sing prayers; they say that no one would go to a monarch, a master, a parent, or a friend, and, singing, ask for a favour; but the people who say this seem to forget that they are always doing it themselves. They sing psalms and they sing hymns; but these psalms, these hymns, nearly always contain prayers, and sometimes are nothing but prayers. Take any version of the Psalms which is sung in churches or chapels, and has it been possible to eliminate from it the prayers of the original? Can the 51st Psalm be sung without the choir or congregation singing a prayer? Can Toplady's hymn, "Rock of Ages," and the line, "Wash me, Saviour, or I die," or Watts's words, "Pardon my sins before I die, and blot them from Thy book," can these words be sung, and yet the singer not sing prayers? We may freely admit into our service of song whatever will help to create or strengthen religious feelings and intentions, be they penitential or prayerful; but if we do not find a place for hymns in the proper sense of the word—that is, songs in honour of God and delight in His gracious majesty—there is a positive and damaging imperfection in our service. The "Magnificat" is a type and model of what our hymns in church should be; its form is the old Hebrew form, then passing away; its spirit is that of youth, of freshness of vision, of abounding bright-eyed energy. There is no pessimism in this morning hymn of Christianity: it is like that hymn of the world's young day, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. If it be asked,

"What this strong music in the soul may be;
What and wherein it doth exist;
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
The beautiful and beauty-making power!"

the answer is—

"Joy, joy, that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour."

And such was she, who sang the "Magnificat," and in it taught the Church for evermore the way to sing.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Luke ii. 42—52, and 1 Tim. iv. 1—5.

Such natures as that of the blessed Virgin are not exempt from sorrow. Indeed, the capability of great spiritual exaltation is often mated with one of equal spiritual depression.

"But as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no farther go,
As high as we have mounted in delight,
In our dejection do we sink as low."

The noblest spirits, to whom have been committed the gravest responsibilities, must often be weighed down with a sense of their own insufficiency for their work. It may carry them away with delight when first the place and office are given them. But all its burthen and all its terrible responsibilities begin to press heavily, like a weight of lead. It has often been so with parents. What keen, pure joy it was when a child was given them! How near to heaven its infancy was! Love never tired in fond admiration of that helpless innocence. But the days have come when unforeseeing gladness has given place to solicitude. Fear and suspicion and alarm have taken up their dwelling in the heart which once held for worship an infant's form, and all joy has gone, and life has become like one who listens and ever listens for some dread alarm. That most beautiful of Wordsworth's poems, "The Affliction of Margaret," comes home to many a soul:—

"My apprehensions come in crowds;
I dread the rustling of the grass,
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass.
I question things, and do not find
One that will answer to my mind,
And all the world appears unkind."

The time has come to some, so far off from the day they brooded over dimpled innocence, when they have envied what has looked like the happy calm of those from whom Providence has withheld a child. Widely different from this as was the lot of the Virgin mother, we dare not doubt that a burden of heavy responsibility must have filled her mind. Even if she but partially and imperfectly knew all that was contained in that life which Heaven had committed to her charge, she yet knew that He was to be great, the Son of the Highest; and humble as was the home in which He was bred, He was to gain at length the throne of His father David. It was said that a sword was to pierce through her soul. And it is significant that the first saying of the Virgin which is given to us after the mysterious exaltation and inspiration of the "Magnificat" has in it the word 'sorrow.' "Son, why

hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

Let every mother whose joy in childhood has long gone by, who sees the ruin of all the bright hopes of the past, whose son or daughter is a deep regret, learn this lesson, never to give up pursuit of the lost one until it be saved. And if it have passed away from this human scene, still let them follow on with loving hope, knowing that the great Shepherd can accomplish the work which was too much for them—can save the lost.

For thirty years it seems that the Lord abode in the home of His mother. Joseph is never named again after Christ was twelve years old, and we can scarcely help believing that Mary had been long a widow when He began His ministry. More than once brothers of our Lord are spoken of. The fellow townspeople speak of well-known brothers and of sisters also. But the Church has been incapable of believing that our Lord had real brothers and sisters, as though the holy Mother would have been less holy if there had been given to her more sons than one. He who cherishes a living mother's love, or the memory-love of one departed, image to him of stainless sweetness, like the lily of the valley, will not understand what is meant by such a thought. It cannot be denied that a low view of marriage has seldom been absent from the Church. Marriage has been regarded as a concession to human weakness, and not as a realisation of Divine purpose; not as the perfect but as the allowable condition. Next to the prerogatives of bodily suffering or martyrdom came, in the estimation of the early Church, the prerogatives of the single life. "The first reward," says St. Cyprian, to the virgins, "is for the martyrs an hundredfold; the second sixtyfold is for yourselves." The tendency of the Church has ever been to put marriage as second at least to singleness. But we must not follow the Church in this. Marriage or singleness have no more of themselves to do with saintliness than height or complexion. Even Keble, a married presbyter, seems to regard marriage as only second to singleness, for he teaches that if the married are true and good, God will take them to Himself as if they had never been wedded.

"And there are souls that seem to dwell
Above this earth—so rich a spell
Floats round their steps where'er they move
From hopes fulfilled and mutual love.
Such if on high their thoughts are set,
Nor in the stream the source forget:
If prompt to quit the bliss they know,
Following the Lamb where'er they go;
By purest pleasures unbegulled,
To idolize, or wife or child.

Such wedded souls our God shall own,
For faultless virgins round His throne."

God will own the faultless for His whether wedded or virgin. But it would be just as true to turn Keble's verse the other way round, and say,

"Such faultless virgins God will own,
For wedded saints around His throne."

Different lots are apportioned to men, and one chooses the unaccompanied path and another clasps a kindred hand. But it is not true that of itself singleness is purer or holier than marriage. Each may carry out a noble ministry of good, and each is bad when it is selfish.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read St. John ii. 1-5, and St. Matthew xii. 46-50.

The last word of the Virgin we ever hear was spoken at a wedding in Cana. The story we need not recount. It is simply domestic, and shows the mother of our Lord in her care for the comfort of those about her. It shows that she had suspicions, it may be convictions, that her Son, now leaving His home for the first time, and taking an independent attitude, was possessed of mysterious powers. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." We cannot help wondering what real perception she had of the calling and true greatness of her mysterious Son. We can fairly tell what the women of Israel thought the great deliverer of their nation should be. We have no reason to conclude that the revelations made to the Virgin were understood in any other way than the great revelations of the Old Testament were generally understood. We know from her hymn, the "Magnificat," that her mind was filled with the old religious poetry of her race, which ever sang of a great Deliverer and Ruler one day to appear. But that she expected that the Son of the Highest, who was to sit on the throne of His Father David, would remain a poor man without office of State or sword of State; that He should go wandering about followed by a crowd of poor people, talking in parables and words which at times baffled comprehension; that He should irritate and alarm the heads of Church and State; that He should be executed as a heretic and blasphemer; and that after a time He should be regarded as One with God and an object of worship, is inconceivable. God gives His revelations, even to His most highly favoured servants, gradually. We have no reason to believe that the Virgin received Divine revelations in any other way or order than the way and order in which apostles like

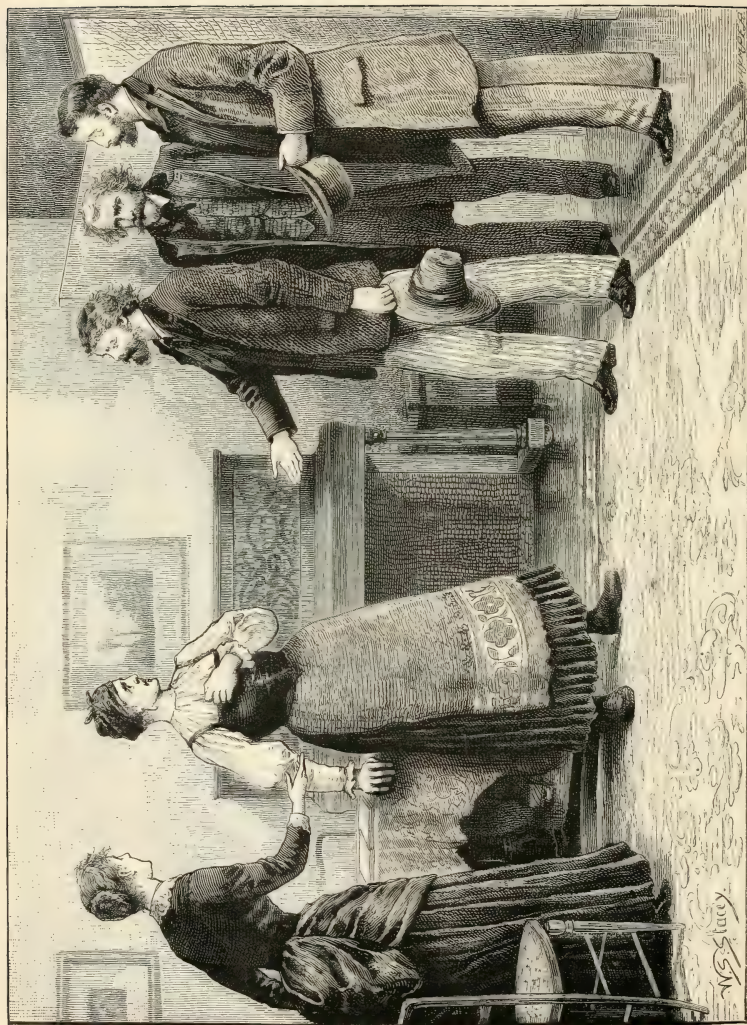
Peter and John received them. The Virgin was not an attendant upon her Son in His Divine ministry. She was present at its commencement, but at the marriage the Lord intimates that she does not understand Him, that there is nothing in common between them as to the modes of His procedure, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." Romanists and Protestants have wrangled over these words, one trying to prove that there was a want of respect and reverence in the manner of address, and the other advocating its perfect propriety. We may say at once there was no disrespect in the title "Woman." We cannot conceive that He who was so tender to women, and soothed their sorrows, and was gentle to their faults, and was grateful for their loving ministry, could be harsh to His own mother.

Of all the great masters of the world there is not one who can compare with Christ in His attitude to women. Socrates is the name which men often place as though it were an equal by the side of Christ, but the story which Xenophon tells of Theodota we read with repulsion. Mohammed is the founder of a great religion and of enduring influence; but after the death of Kadiyah, his marriages are blots. And as for the prophet of the new dispensation with its "Service of man" and its "Worship of woman," his example does not command our reverence, and the blindest Catholic may well prefer the worship of the Virgin to the *culte* of Madame Clotilde de Vaux. If ever the rights of women were practically acknowledged, it was by Him who never seemed to condescend as to an inferior being in dealing with them. To Him they were equals. Some have treated them as the tool and others as the slave of man; He treated them as faithful friends. There is nothing like it in history. There are no sentimentalities, nothing at all like the intercourse which some religious leaders and guides have held with women. There are none of the erotics of maudlin mysticism; none of that pious, caressing effusion which is so often offensive in ecclesiastics. It is something unique in the history of the world. Christ surrounded by faithful women is something alone, it has no parallel. Too lofty for artist to depict, it is not too austere to be revered. But when Christ said to His mother, "What have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come," He did intimate that the principles which were to rule Him were unknown to her. We must not be surprised

therefore, that at a later time the family of our Lord became disturbed by what they must have regarded as His dangerous enthusiasm, for we are told by St. John that His brethren did not believe in Him, and that the people said He was mad. We are told by St. Mark that His kinsmen tried to get possession of Him, for they said, He is beside Himself; and that when they approached Him for this purpose, His mother and His brethren were together. It was on this occasion, and one other, that the Lord seemed to dissociate Himself from the mere ties of kindred, at least seemed to treat them as subordinate to those of spiritual relationship. When told that His mother and His brethren were seeking Him, He said, "Who is My mother and who are My brethren? And He looked round about on them which sat around Him, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother." And yet, again, "A certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee and the paps which Thou hast sucked. But He said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." And He ever taught that for conscience' sake father and mother and all must, if necessary, be forsaken. Now it is quite certain that when the Lord said that he who did the will of God was brother and sister and mother to Him, and that it was more blessed to do God's will than to have been His earthly parent, He did not mean to disown His mother. His last thoughts, when dying, were upon her, His last earthly solicitude was for her. The duties of children to parents can never be relaxed; no change can lessen them, no corban relieve from them. But our Lord did seem to say that no earthly relationship could be allowed to interfere with a call of God, or with duty to Him. He did seem to say that nearer than blood relationship is mental and spiritual kinship. He did seem to imply, that at that time, into this innermost partnership of His spirit in the election of God, His mother and His brethren had not fully entered, for He says, "Rather are they blessed who do the will of God even than she is who bore Me." At times, many sensitive spirits have suffered distress, because they have not been always able to feel to brothers or sisters or other relations as warm, as tender, as confiding and admiring a regard as they have given spontaneously to some one not kindred in flesh but kindred in

spirit. But why should they be so distressed? The duties of blood are that parents should provide for children in body and mind and soul, and the everlasting duty of children is honour and care and service of duty to parents. It is likely, and it is natural and probable, that those born of the same parents, reared in the same home, with memories and traditions which are the same, should be more than usually attached to each other. But it need not be so. There is no sin if it should not be so. We cannot love that which is unlovely; and no one maintains that everybody's relations are all delightful and lovable. It is possible to have dull relations—even stupid relations. There may be the same oppositions in character and temper between relations which make friendship close and tender impossible between those who are not akin. If we cannot be drawn to a certain temper and make of character, when that temper is the temper of one who is not a relation, we shall be no more drawn to it when it is that of a relation. The truest relationship is mental and spiritual relationship.

Once again is the Virgin seen, and now at the Cross of Jesus. That is a scene too sacred, too profound either for description or analysis. It has been painted in colour a thousand times. But who that has looked upon the deluge of anguish drowning the mother, and the tortured frame sunk down in death upon the cross, has not felt it was something which ought not to be painted, and which the mightiest art could not but degrade? If we must have pictures of the Virgin at all, let them be the motherhood in the beautiful forms of Madonna and Child; let them be spotless womanhood held up to worship in the Assumptions of the Virgin. Some great fathers allege, St. Basil and St. Chrysostom, to wit, that the sword which Simeon said should pierce her soul, was doubt in the divine calling of her Son in the hour when even that Son Himself seemed overwhelmed, the hour when He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It is not for us to tell. One more glimpse of the Virgin mother is granted us, and then the veil falls and hides her from our sight for ever. It is one, however, which may draw to it alike pure matron and maid; nay, may draw to it those whose garments have caught a stain. There they may kneel down in the hour of sorrow, of guilt, or of patient waiting for a better day, kneel by the side of the Mother of Christ, the last glimpse of whom is that of a Mother praying.



"Don't you know me, Mademoiselle Gabrielle?"

HER TWO MILLIONS.

By WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RAYINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER XLV.—GABRIELLE'S CONFESSION.

ALFRED was too much excited to sleep very soundly, and, rising betimes, he wrote to Artful and Higginbottom, as well as to Cora and to Warton, telling them of all that had come to pass. He asked the lawyers for instructions, as Vera, being the ward of her grandfather's trustees, would have to be guided by their instructions, and their instructions were necessary, for at present, as it seemed to him, the girl had no home. She was simply M. SenarcLens's guest, and it was out of the question for her to return to La Boissière. This done, he and Martino went to Mon Repos, whither they had been invited to breakfast. Madame SenarcLens, her daughters and Vera were in the garden. The historian was in his study, and it was the habit of the house not to disturb him until the ringing of the bell for second breakfast.

Vera received the two visitors with evident pleasure, kissed Martino, and offered Balmaine her hand.

"Do you still think it a misfortune to be a great heiress, Miss Hardy?" asked Alfred, after the ice had been broken by some remarks about the fineness of the weather and the grandeur of the scenery.

"How strange it sounds to be called 'Mees Hardy!'" she said laughingly. "'Hardy' I like; it was the name of my father; but 'Mees' is very droll, and not very nice. You must admit that 'Mademoiselle' has a much better effect."

"Especially 'Mademoiselle Leonino.' It is a name which, though you may cease to bear it, I shall never forget. Would you like me to address you as 'Mademoiselle?'"

"Not at all. I am an English girl, you know, and must accustom myself to English ways. You ask if I still think it a misfortune to be a great heiress. I am afraid it is. M. SenarcLens thinks so, and he is the wisest and best man I know."

"With all due deference to M. SenarcLens, it seems to me that he pushes his theories a little too far. There can be no question that great wealth is a great danger. But rightly used it is a great power for good, and you might easily, by throwing your fortune away, do more harm than by keeping it, while, by refusing to accept it—if that were possible—

you would deprive yourself of the means of doing an immensity of good."

"You mean that I might help the poor, better the lot of the disinherited?"

"Exactly."

"That is what I should like to do. It is a noble aim. Here in Canton Vaud there are not many poor. There is not a family in our commune that has not at least a bit of land and a cow, or some goats. But in the great towns, which I have not seen, they say the poverty is something frightful—that people even perish of hunger. And it does seem wrong, does it not, that while so many have more than enough, the lives of thousands of our fellow-creatures should be cut short by hardship and want?"

"It does. But you must admit, at the same time, that it is much easier to point out the wrong than to suggest a remedy. Among the indigent, for instance, are many whose misfortunes arise solely from their own idleness and intemperance. Would it be right, do you think, to tax the thrifty and industrious for the support of these ne'er-do-weels? Few, moreover, work for the love of work, and if you could—if it were possible to do away with the fear of want—the world's work would not be done; we should relapse into barbarism."

"Still, M. Balmaine, I think it must be possible to distinguish the criminal from the unfortunate, and see that the latter do not want. I know it is difficult, for I was reading in a book the other day that, even with the best intentions, rich people may do more harm than good. I pointed this out to M. SenarcLens. He said it was quite true, and gave it as an additional reason why there should be no rich people. If the rich who would do good cannot, he said, what harm must be done by the rich who think of nothing but their own enjoyment?"

"Let me answer you by saying what I read in a book the other day—that every good work, everything worth doing, is difficult, and that difficult does not mean impossible."

"You really think, then, that if I accept this fortune I may do good with it?"

"I am quite sure you may, Miss Hardy."

"And would you give me your advice, M. Balmaine—would you help me to turn to good this great trust?"

A strange request; but, as Balmaine could see, it was made in perfect innocence and good faith.

"With all my heart," he said. "I am not sure that I could help you much, though, and you will find far wiser counsellors than I."

"But I know you, and as you discovered me" (smiling), "as Martino said last night, and have therefore found me the fortune, it is only right that you should share the responsibility of its disposal. However" (gaily), "that is three years off. I wish it were thirteen. I can easily live during that time on the sale of my sketches—Georgette is quite sure they would find customers in London or Paris—and the interest Père Courbet will pay me."

"That will not be necessary," said Alfred, not a little amused at the idea of the heiress getting her living by selling sketches. "Though you cannot come into possession of your property until you are of age, your grandfather's trustees will certainly make you an allowance suitable to your position."

"Oh, I thought I should get nothing at all for three years. How much do you think they will give me?"

"Anything you like in reason, I should say."

"Then I could buy poor Madame Wartmann another cow. The only one she had died a few days ago. It was not insured, and she is in great trouble. I know where I could get a good milker with a calf at foot, for about 470 francs—perhaps 450—do you think I might?"

"I have no doubt the trustees will be delighted to place that sum, and a great deal more, at your disposal, Miss Hardy."

"Oh, I am very happy! Madame Wartmann shall have a cow better than the one she lost. You do not think I shall be doing more harm than good?" said Vera demurely, but with a mischievous twinkle in her dark eyes.

"Certainly not. You are beginning to find out what a fine thing it is to be rich. I could not buy Madame Wartmann a cow."

"You have no fortune then?"

"Yes, I have. My head, my hands, some energy, and a great deal of hope."

"Add cleverness, for if you were not clever you could not be editor of a newspaper. Were I a man I should ask for nothing more than you possess. And if you want money, when I receive my inheritance, you have only to say how much and it is

yours, for without you it would never have been mine."

"You are really too good, Miss Hardy," said Balmaine, smiling at her *naïveté*, "but I trust you will not think me ungracious if I am unable to take advantage of your too-generous offer."

"You mean you cannot take money from me?"

Alfred made a gesture of assent.

"You are not consistent. You advised me just now not to refuse this fortune; and yet you refuse a part of it. Why?"

"The circumstances are very different. Your fortune comes by bequest from your grandfather."

"You puzzle me, M. Balmaine. Why should it be right to receive money as the gift of a dead man, and wrong to receive money as the gift of a living person?"

"It is a matter of feeling and difficult to explain, as matters of feeling always are. When you are three years older you will perhaps be better able to understand my motives. And you are mistaken in giving me all the credit of finding you out. It was Warton, the lawyer's clerk at Calder, who first suggested that you had strayed or been stolen, and induced me to look for you. But for him I should never have had the slightest inkling of your existence, and as he went into the matter professionally, and is a poor man with a wife and family, I think he well deserves, and would willingly accept, some payment for the service he has rendered."

"He shall have it, M. Balmaine, and you yourself shall fix the amount. We will talk of this another time. We must go in now, the bell rang a few minutes ago; and M. Senarcles, as he often tells us, is too busy a man not to be punctual. *Allons.*"

Alfred thought that Philip Hardy's daughter was the most singular girl he had ever met. Her manner was entirely *sans gêne*; she showed as much *aplomb* and self-possession as a woman of the world, yet neither overstepped the limits of modesty nor betrayed the faintest symptom of self-consciousness. It did not seem to occur to her that there was anything unusual in the conversation they had just held, or in any of the remarks she had made. She evidently saw no impropriety in treating Balmaine with the frankness of an old friend, any more than a child sees in letting itself be fondled by anybody whose face wins its confidence. Alfred's face had won her confidence, just as Corfe's had roused her distrust. She knew next to nothing either of the conventionali-

ties of society or the inequalities of rank. In the mountains they did not exist, at Mon Repos they were either ignored or denounced. At the same time, there was nothing about her either ungirlish or pedantic. She would discuss a question of social ethics or a point in history with M. Senarcens one moment, and be running round the garden with Georgette the next. Painting and reading were her favourite occupations; but she made her own dresses, was a good cook and a keen hand at small bargains, and could have earned her living as a dairy-maid. As M. Senarcens said, Vera was a well-instructed girl; he might have added that in some things she was as ignorant as an infant.

In the afternoon Gabrielle came, and was shown into the salon, where, in a few minutes, she was joined by Vera, whose kindly greeting reassured her, and she began to think that her fears were premature. Then the door opened a second time and M. Senarcens, followed by Balmaine and Martino, entered the room.

"I think there is somebody here you ought to know," observed Vera, pointing to Martino.

"Don't you know me, Mademoiselle Gabrielle?" said the Italian, coming forward with outstretched hand.

"Signor Martino!" exclaimed the *bonne*, in a low intense voice, her face turning deadly pale. "I did not expect to see you here."

"I dare say not; but why did you not write to me as you promised?"

"Because—because—" (desperately). "It is no use trying to deceive you. I will tell the truth—I will tell everything." (Here she sank into a chair and wiped the perspiration from her face.) "Yes, I will tell the truth."

"By all means," put in M. Senarcens soothingly, "as well for Vera's sake as for your own peace of mind. We guess much, but we want to know all."

So the *bonne* made a clean breast of it; and though she did not try to justify herself she laid great stress on the temptation to which she had been exposed, and pleaded further in extenuation of her offence that she feared M. Hardy *père* might deprive her of the care of Vera, "who was dearer to her than her life." One thing only she kept back—that she had received a packet of papers from her master and given it to Corfe. She had persuaded herself that it was of no importance and she feared Corfe's vengeance.

"I know I have done you a great wrong,"

said Gabrielle, when her confession was finished—turning to Vera with streaming eyes—"and that you can never, never forgive me; but I was sorely tried, my darling, and your money is safe; my father will pay it all back."

"Never forgive you?" said Vera tenderly, putting her arms round Gabrielle's neck and kissing her. "Never forgive you! Why, you are my benefactor. You have been to me as a mother. My grandfather died almost at the same time as my father. If you had taken me to London I should have been brought up by strangers, my life would have been wretched, whereas here, in this mountain land, I have been very happy."

"But my father has been so cross, Vera, he has used you very ill."

"Only since your mother died, and I have been so much with my dear friends here that it was not much, after all. Do not let that trouble you, Gabrielle."

"It is like you, Vera, to make little of your *bonne's* fault," said M. Senarcens gravely, "and I am quite of your opinion that her bringing you to Canton Vaud has been for your good; but it might have been just the reverse, and Gabrielle did very wrong, and exposed you to serious risk, by forgetting her promise to your father. I do not think the end in this cases justifies the means. But it is not for me to sit in judgment on you, Gabrielle, for after all you are more sinned against than sinning. If there were no such institution as property your father would not have got into trouble, and you would have been under no temptation to lend him M. Hardy's money."

"In that case," observed Balmaine, with a covert smile, "it is just possible that there would have been none of Mr. Hardy's money to lend."

The historian made as if he was going to reply, but seeing that Vera had something to say he refrained.

"Can I dispose of this money?" she asked. "I shall not want it, and I should like to give it—not to Père Courbet, who has enough already and is very avaricious—but to Gabrielle, who, although she has done so much for me, has taken nothing for herself."

"At present I do not think you can, Vera," said M. Senarcens.

"And I would not take it from you if you could," said Gabrielle. "I shall never feel happy until it is repaid. And we have plenty without it; there is only my father and me."

"We will see," returned Vera with a smile, and (whispering) "keep up your courage; if I go to England you shall go with me."

The *bonne* went back to La Boissière happier than she had been for many a day, so happy that she forgot for a while the bad quarter of an hour she would have to pass with her father, and the packet which she had so unfortunately given to Corfe.

CHAPTER XLVI.—BALMAINE'S DEFEAT.

AFTER Gabrielle was gone—and her visit did not last more than half an hour—M. Senarclens went, as usual, into his study, and Balmaine and Martino betook themselves to the garden, where they smoked, contemplated the scenery and talked with the ladies. As before, Alfred fell into conversation with Vera. He told her that he should be obliged to leave for Geneva by the next morning's steamer; but Martino liked the neighbourhood so well that he proposed to stay there a few days longer, returning to Geneva on his way to Italy.

"I am sorry you are obliged to return so soon," said Vera, "for though I have known you so short a time you have taken so kind an interest in me and my affairs that I look upon you rather as an old friend than a new acquaintance."

"I am glad to hear you say so," answered Alfred gaily, "and you may be sure that I shall do my best to prove myself as true a friend as if I were really an old one. And I do not suppose it will be long before we meet again. I shall be hearing from Artful and Higginbottom in the course of a post or two."

"The lawyers?"

"Yes."

"Does my destiny depend upon them?"

"In a great measure. The trustees will doubtless be a good deal guided by their advice."

"Shall I have to go to England very soon, do you think?"

"Probably. Yes; I dare say they will want you to go to England. Why, don't you want to go?"

"I should like to see England very much, but I think I would rather first go to Italy. Will you be there?"

"In Italy or England?"

"In England."

"Why do you ask?"

"Because I know nobody there. I shall be a stranger in a strange land, and I am so ignorant of the world and its ways. My life, since I was seven years old, has been spent

here. For all that time I have never once been out of sight of the lake and these mountains, and a country without mountains I can hardly imagine. To meet in London somebody whom I have known here would be like a gleam of sunshine during a black *bise*."

"Don't compare London to a black *bise*, if you please, Miss Hardy. It is not quite so bad as that. And there are other places in England besides London; and some very beautiful places. And you will very soon make friends—troops of them."

"But you have not answered my question."

"About England?"

"Yes."

"I am afraid there is very little chance of my being in England for a long time, Miss Hardy."

He was afraid; yet three days before he would have regarded return to England as little less than a calamity!

"I suppose you will stay here for the present?" asked Balmaine, by way of changing the subject.

"I do not know what else I can do. After the last scene with Père Courbet, it would be too painful to return to La Boissière."

"The old ragamuffin! He was very rude, then."

"Very," said the girl, reddening at the recollection of the old man's threats of what he would do if she persisted in her refusal of Corfe. "But never mind that now; it is past. Let us talk about something more agreeable—the Senarclens, for instance. M. Senarclens is a noble character, and he has the courage of his principles. He would rather die than do anything which he deems incompatible with his dignity and his honour. The Emperor has made him the most splendid offers. If he would only go to Paris and accept the empire, he might be a senator, member of the Academy—anything he liked—have both honours and money. But he treats them all with disdain and lives here in voluntary exile. As you see, the family live very simply and he gives much—chiefly, I think, to brother exiles who are less fortunate than himself."

"Yes, as you say, M. Senarclens is a man of noble nature. But though I admire his courage, his constancy, and his learning, I cannot say as much for his opinions. Some of them are awfully wild."

"If you mean by wild that they are not well thought out, you are wrong. For every one of his opinions M. Senarclens can give very excellent reasons. I have heard several

people try to confute him, but they always retire discomfited."

"You are a partial judge, I fear, Miss Hardy. But did you notice the singular remark he made a little while ago in reference to Madame Gabrielle—that it was not one of those cases in which the end justifies the means?"

"Well."

"Can there be such a case?"

Vera smiled. "Of course there can."

"You really think there are circumstances in which we are justified in doing evil that good may come."

"I did not say so, M. Balmaine, and I might retort by asking you to define good and evil. I do not think you would find it very easy. But I will meet you on your own ground and use the words in their ordinary acceptance. I presume you would consider war an evil?"

"Certainly," said the unsophisticated youth, falling headlong into the trap which this ingenious maiden had set for him.

"I was not aware you were a Quaker, M. Balmaine," returned Vera with an amused smile.

"I am not a Quaker, Miss Hardy. How could you conceive so absurd an idea?" said Balmaine, with some warmth.

"Then you are of opinion that war in certain eventualities may be justifiable?"

"Decidedly."

"So war is a justifiable evil. The end—say of a people struggling to be free—sanctifies the means. I do not think you could confute M. Senarclens, M. Balmaine," said Vera, bursting into a merry laugh.

"I acknowledge my defeat," answered Alfred good-humouredly, though he felt very much sold. "I am thoroughly beaten; I made an initial mistake. I should have said that war is not always an evil."

"But it always is an evil. It must be bad for men to kill and maim each other, and the doing so can only be defended on the ground that still greater evils are thereby avoided. When nations go to war they do evil that good may come; but very often, unfortunately, the expectation is not fulfilled. Slavery is an evil, but society enslaves its malefactors for their greater good. If the principle that the end does not justify the means were insisted upon there would be an end not alone to government but to every sort of authority."

"Who taught you to argue, may I ask, Miss Hardy?"

"M. Senarclens. We often have discus-

sions—he and I and Georgette—generally on some subject suggested by what we have been reading. We take whichever side we prefer, and he takes the other."

"And always beats you, I suppose?"

"Nearly; but once or twice the cause we have espoused has been too strong for him, and victory has declared for us."

"I should like to be present at one of your discussions."

"Well, when you come again, you perhaps may. We are reading Herbert Spencer's 'Sociology,' and that promises to be very suggestive of topics. But" (here her countenance fell) "if I go away we can have no more discussions, no more sails by moonlight to La Meillerie, no more pleasant excursions to Les Avants and the Rochers de Naye. Ah, M. Balmaine, I almost wish you had not discovered me!"

"I am sorry to hear you say that, Miss Hardy——"

"But" (eagerly) "perhaps they will let me come back. Do you think they will?"

"I have not a doubt of it; and nobody will be more pleased to see you back than I, for in all probability I shall remain in Switzerland several years."

"I beg pardon for interrupting you, M. Balmaine, but don't you think it is time we set out on our proposed walk to Chillon?"

The speaker was Martino, he had been describing Algeria to Madame Senarclens and Georgette.

"Quite time," said Alfred with feigned alacrity, and looking at his watch; "I had no idea how late it was. I am sure these ladies must be getting tired of us."

"Quite the contrary," said Madame Senarclens graciously. "M. Martino has interested us very much with his account of Algeria, and Vera does not look as if she were tired of your conversation, M. Balmaine. We generally take a walk about this time ourselves, and if you have no objection, we will accompany you to Chillon. I daresay, too, that my husband would be glad to make one of the party."

Balmaine and Martino declared that nothing would please them better, and they had a most enjoyable walk to the old castle. On the way thither, M. Senarclens entertained them with an account of its history, and told some legends about the castle which are not found in ordinary chronicles.

CHAPTER XLVII.—MAYO'S PROPOSAL.

ON arriving at Geneva Balmaine went straight to the office of the *Helvetic News*.

He had written the greater part of his leader at the Rousseau, and it required only a few retouches and rounding off with a sentence or two in conclusion to be ready for the printer.

He found the two subs at their post. They hoped he had enjoyed his journey, and he asked if anything particular had happened during his absence.

"Rather," said Delane, "something very particular. Mayo sent us each fifty francs yesterday, and said there would be a hundred for you on Monday. But as I have not much confidence in that safe, big as it is, I said I was sure it would be a great convenience for you to have the money to-day, and that if he would give it to me I would hand it to you. Here it is; a nice crisp hundred franc note."

"Thank you very much, old fellow. What do you suppose has happened, where has the money come from?"

"He has opened a new banking account," said Milnthorpe, "and drawn bills against the orders Bevis brought the other day. It seems that you can discount unaccepted drafts in this country, and it is not the custom to present them for acceptance before they fall due, a mighty convenience for financial dodgers like Mr. Mayo. And he will let these bankers—I don't know who they are—have as many as they can digest, Ill warrant."

"There's a private letter and a telegram for you at the pension, Balmaine," put in Delane. "I thought you would be calling there before you came here, so I did not bring them."

"A telegram! When did it come?"

"Yesterday. I would have sent it on to you, but I was not quite sure whether you meant to leave the Rousseau last night or this morning."

"Curious," said Alfred. "I cannot think who in this country is likely to send me a private telegram. It must be about the paper. You should have opened it, Delane."

"It was marked *personnel*."

"Ah, that makes it more curious still. However, I shall see what it is when I get home, and that won't be long. Whistle for the boy, Delane, and tell Jan to let me have a pull of the leader as soon as possible. Here is the first part of it."

When the work on hand was finished, Balmaine told his friends what had taken him to the other end of the lake. He did not see any reason why Vera's story should be kept

secret, even if it could, and it was better that they should have the facts from him than a garbled version of them from somebody else.

"You see, I was right," observed Milnthorpe; "I knew Corfe was after money. Catch him marrying a portionless girl!"

"I hope he did not chuck his wife down that hole in order to qualify himself for taking another," said Delane lightly.

"I should not be at all surprised if he did," returned Milnthorpe seriously; "many things more unlikely have happened."

"What a suspicious fellow you are, Milnthorpe!" said Balmaine.

"So I am, of people I don't like, and I don't like Corfe a bit."

Alfred made no reply, but when he recalled his conversation with Corfe on their way to the Rousseau *fête*, and remembered how possible it was, despite his disclaimer, for him to have heard something of the Hardys in Italy, or from some of his Italian friends in Geneva, he had his thoughts. And then there occurred to him—strange that it had not occurred to him before—the remarkable discussion about murder just before the journey to Chamouni, and he asked himself if it was possible that Delane's jest expressed a truth, and that Corfe had killed his wife in order that he might marry Vera Hardy. He could hardly think so—it would be really too atrocious. Yet the circumstances, look at them as he might, were undeniably suspicious, and true or false they were an additional reason for watching over Vera's safety and standing between her and harm. Dangers might threaten her he knew not of.

Delane and Milnthorpe were going to sup at the Café du Roi; but Alfred, curious about his telegram, went straight home. It was from Cora, and as follows:—

"Your mother grew suddenly worse this morning and died at four this afternoon. Shall bury her on Tuesday."

He read the fateful words a second and a third time, to make sure that he had gathered their purport aright, and then, sinking into a chair, covered his face with his hands. His poor mother! He thought of her, not as the querulous invalid which she had lately become, but as the genial, easy-tempered woman she had been in the happy days at their old home; how indulgently she had treated him in his boyhood, how tenderly nursed him in his long illness! Days gone

beyond recall, the home broken up, the members of the household dispersed and dead. His father and mother dead, George in India, Cora in Calder, himself in Geneva. All this had come to pass in little more than two years, and as Alfred mentally rehearsed these incidents of a painful past his heart was heavy within him. It seemed as if his misfortunes would never cease. And this last stroke was so sudden. In a letter received from Cora only the week before, she said that his mother, though still ailing, was no worse than usual.

Then he opened his letters. One was from his cousin, written the Thursday before. It told him that his mother's illness had begun to assume a graver character; that they had called in a doctor, who did not think there was any immediate danger, and that if Mrs. Balmaine's symptoms became serious (which Cora did not apprehend) she would telegraph to him at once.

It was evident that the symptoms had become so much more serious that his mother had died within the following twenty-four hours. What should he do? That was the question. To receive his mother's blessing, or to see her laid in the ground, he would have gone to Calder, cost what it might—even his situation. But now it was too late for either. If he were to leave the following afternoon—and he could not leave before—he would not be able to reach Calder until Wednesday night or Thursday morning. But he might perhaps be of use to Cora. He would telegraph and ask the question, and act accordingly. It was satisfactory to think that at his instance his mother had made a will, leaving the furniture at the cottage, and anything else she might have, to her niece.

So the telegram was dispatched, and in the course of the following day came the answer: "*You must not think of coming; it is not at all necessary. I write.*"

Cora's letter (which followed the telegram), besides giving full particulars of his mother's last illness, informed him that, so soon as she had administered the will and disposed of the furniture, his cousin would leave Calder for good. An old friend of her father's living in London had invited her to stay with him and his wife for an indefinite time, and she meant for the future to make London her home, and literature her profession. She had received an offer for the serial copyright of her novel, and though it was very disappointing, being a mere trifle, she should accept it, and hope

for better luck another time. And perhaps she should esteem herself fortunate in getting the story accepted on any terms. The sale of the furniture and other effects might bring in some two hundred pounds—quite enough to keep her, especially as her board for the present would cost her nothing—until she could earn her living by her pen. Anticipating an offer of help from Alfred, she told him that she was resolved to be independent of everybody—even of him. "I consider myself," she wrote, "quite as able to earn my own living as you are to earn yours. At any rate I mean to try. If I fail I will ask you for help with as little hesitation as I am sure in similar circumstances you would ask me."

Balmaine sorrowed for his mother, but he had too many occupations and distractions to brood over his sorrow. Two days after his return from Territet he received a letter from Artful and Higginbottom, thanking him warmly, on behalf of the trustees, for his exertions in seeking Miss Hardy, and congratulating him on his success. Mr. Artful would leave London for Switzerland towards the end of the week, for the double purpose of escorting Vera to England and putting into proper shape the evidence of Martino and Gabrielle Courbet, with a view to establishing the young lady's identity. Mr. Artful proposed to travel by way of Geneva, and, being ignorant of the French language, said that he should esteem it a favour if Mr. Balmaine could accompany him to Territet.

Alfred had nothing to say against this proposal. He would only be too glad to make another visit to Territet; but he thought it might be as well to mention the matter to Mayo, and obtain leave of absence beforehand. So he went down-stairs, demanded an interview with the manager, and told his story. It raised him, as he could easily perceive, immensely in Mayo's estimation.

"By Jove!" exclaimed the latter, "I never knew anything like it. Highly romantic, isn't it? And how close you have kept it all this time! I had no idea, when you went to Italy there, what you were after. And the fortune is a large one, you say. How much do you suppose she will have?"

"I don't know exactly; but it is said about two millions."

"Whew! By the Lord Harry! two millions! Now look here, Balmaine, don't you think you could turn Miss Hardy to account for the paper somehow? We

would stand you a thumping commission if you could."

"Would you like me to ask her for an advertisement?" said Alfred, outwardly grave though inwardly much amused.

"An advertisement!" returned the manager, who had evidently made the proposal in all seriousness. "Something very much better than that, I hope. Money, Balmaine, money! that's what the *Helvetic* wants! You might ask Miss Hardy to advance us some, or make the paper her organ and subsidise it, or help us to turn the concern into a company by taking a lot of shares. Look here, Balmaine (confidentially), you have quite as much interest in this thing as I have. We are all living out of the paper, and I tell you frankly that unless something is done I cannot carry it on much longer. Now the season has begun, and Bevis has got to work, and with the discount account I have succeeded in opening with the *Banque de la Confederation Suisse* I dare say we may weather through the summer; but when the winter comes we shall burst, to a dead certainty, unless, as I say, we can reorganize our finances. For my part, I have not left a stone unturned. I have even tried, through a friend at Rome, to get a subsidy from Cardinal Antonelli."

"From whom?" interrupted Balmaine. He thought Mayo had got hold of the wrong name.

"Cardinal Antonelli, the Pope's head bottle-washer, you know. I heard that the Curia wanted to have an Ultramontane organ at Geneva, so I offered to write up the Roman Catholic religion, and print any articles not actionable they might send, for a subvention of 25,000 francs a year. No go, though! I expect the Papal treasury is something like our safe—not too well filled just now. Now, I am in treaty with the French Government—the Bureau Secret de la Presse, you know. I have offered to insert articles advocating the imperial policy, and that in consideration of a monthly payment. I am not very sanguine about the result though. They want too many particulars about the circulation, and how many copies we sell in London; and *entre nous* the circulation is nothing to boast of, either in London or anywhere else. Leyland has also been hard at work, and is yet. He has gone to London again. Not long since he was on the point of concluding an arrangement with Sir Haverstock Hill, the Radical member for Putney, you know. His views are very advanced, and he wanted an organ, but it fell through at the last moment.

Somebody offered him a society paper, and he preferred that. At present Leyland is negotiating with the Society for Promoting Family Worship. They have a fancy for starting an evangelical organ on the Continent. He thinks they will bite; but after so many disappointments I am not disposed to be over-confident. Anyhow, I would much rather enter into an arrangement with Miss Hardy. If you can work it, Balmaine, you may name your own salary, and put in the paper whatever you like."

"I am very much obliged to you," said Alfred quickly, "but there is an obstacle in the way, which I fear may not easily be overcome. Miss Hardy is a minor."

"The deuce! I did not know that. No go, then. She could not enter into a contract. But look here, Balmaine: a girl in her position can have as much money as she likes. She has only to ask and have. And it is money we want, you know. Anyhow, you will see; and if there is a chance bear us in mind."

"Yes," said Alfred drily, "I will bear you in mind."

"As for going to Territet for a few days," the manager went on, "of course you can—for a fortnight, if you like. Delane and Milnthorpe can do all but the leaders, and if you will send us one or two on Swiss subjects we can manage the rest amongst us, I have no doubt."

"I was not aware you did anything in that line, Mr. Mayo," said Balmaine in some surprise.

"Well, as far as that goes, I could not write a leader to save my life, but I can fake one up when needs must. Before Gibson came we had an interregnum—no editor for several weeks—and Delane and I had to step into the breach; and I flatter myself we did very well. We took one of the least read of the London dailies—the *Morning Mail*, for instance. It is a paper hardly ever seen on the *Continent*. Knocked the head and tail off the leader we most fancied—just to tone it down, you know—altered a word here and there to give it local colour, gave it a name, and had it set up."

"And were you never found out?"

"I don't think so. And the chances were very much against our being found out. To begin with, we have not a very wide circle of readers, I am sorry to say; and I do not think that one in ten of them reads even your leaders, admirable as they are. Then, if you consider that the *Morning Mail's* subscribers are relatively as few as ours, and that

not one man in a thousand remembers anything about a leading article ten minutes after he has read it, you will see how very remote was the chance of detection."

"You don't think leaders are of much use then?" observed Balmaine, rather disgusted by this disparagement of a calling in which he was beginning to consider himself somewhat of an adept.

"To be frank with you I don't, especially those in the London dailies, which look as if they were ground out of a machine at so much a yard—always the same length, and always divided into three pars."

"Why do you continue them in the *Helvetic*, then?"

"Because they are the fashion, look well in the paper, please the Philistines, impose on the weak-minded, and help us to advertisements. If we dispensed with leaders Continental advertisers might not look upon us as a *grand journal Anglais*."

"Then I'm not quite so useless as I was beginning to fear," said Balmaine smiling. "*Au revoir*, Mr. Mayo."

CHAPTER XLVIII.—CORFE GETS HIS CONGÉ.

TWO or three days later the manager came into Alfred's room, bringing a letter which he asked him to read. It was from Corfe, complaining of the editor's "so-called corrections" of his copy, but which, as he alleged, were so far from being improvements that they often made him say the very reverse of what he had written and ruined his articles utterly—"which is perhaps what Mr. Balmaine desires." He had stood this treatment patiently for some time, but endurance had its limits, and he should for the future send his copy to Mr. Mayo, whose corrections, if he thought it necessary to make any, Corfe would gladly accept.

"Well?" said the manager.

"I have made only such alterations in Corfe's copy as I thought necessary," said Alfred, "and I should not be doing my duty if I did otherwise."

"I quite agree with you. There can be no appeal from an editor's decision in these matters. Could you dispense with Corfe's articles?"

"I dare say we could. They are often weak, though good sometimes. But nobody's articles should be indispensable. However, they do very well on the whole, and are, I think, worth quite what they cost."

"Never mind that, if you think you can do without them. I mean to save twenty-

five francs a week. Corfe has never given me the chance before."

So Mayo sat down and wrote a letter in which, after thanking Corfe cordially for his services to the paper, and deploring his difference with the editor, observed that, as it would be impossible for him (Mayo) to look over his communications, there was no alternative but to discontinue them, and he had instructed the cashier to remit Mr. Corfe a cheque for the balance due to him up to the end of the current month. (It was a long time before Corfe got it, though.)

"There," said the manager, "I think that is rather neatly done. I thought Corfe was more wide-awake than to give me such an opening. But I suppose he lost his temper, and he has a fearful conceit of himself."

"It is your doing, remember," returned Balmaine. "I am sorry you are dismissing him—though I cannot say his articles are particularly useful—if it is only because he is sure to visit his displeasure on me."

"Never you mind; I'll back you up," said Mayo. "Besides, what harm can he do you?"

Almost at the same time that this came to pass, stories—all, of course, more or less distorted or exaggerated—about the Hardy inheritance and the finding of Vera began to be bruited about, and Corfe received a letter from Gabrielle Courbet, telling him of Balmaine and Martino's visit to Mon Repos and all that had befallen there. She was in hopes that this news might settle him, and that he would now cease from troubling her. But he answered by the very next post in a fiery letter, bidding her at her peril not to omit acquainting him with all that occurred, and everything concerning Vera which might come to her knowledge. Then in his anger—for the proceeding was scarcely politic—he wrote two other letters, one to Balmaine, the other to Miss Hardy.

Corfe told Alfred in very strong language that he knew particularly well to whom he was indebted for the loss of his post on the *Helvetic News*, and that, as Balmaine would soon find, it was about the worst day's work he had ever done. "So you have discovered Miss Hardy," he went on, "or rather Bevis has, for you are too stupid and conceited to discover anybody. I suppose you mean to marry her. You have impudence enough for anything. But you will save us both some trouble by dismissing the idea from your mind. I am watching you, and shall take good care that you neither get her nor her money."

If Alfred had been older and wiser he might have treated this effusion with contempt, but being young and impetuous, Corfe's insults put him in such a rage, that if the latter gentleman had happened to be on the premises there would have been hats on the green, unless, as was not very probable, he had taken his beating quietly. But as Balmaine cooled down and thought the matter over, he saw how unwise it would be to enter on a quarrel with Corfe, in which Vera's name would almost necessarily be mixed up, and he resolved to take no notice of the letter, for the present. The sting of it—that which most aggravated him—was the imputation, so brutally put, that he had sought Miss Hardy all this time only that he might marry her for her money. Corfe, moreover, was not likely to be alone in making these insinuations; what he said other people would think, and he himself be set down as that most odious of characters, an intriguing heiress-hunter. It was even conceivable that the tale might reach the ears of Vera. The thought drove him nearly wild, for he could not conceal from himself that the admiration which he had at first conceived for her was fast ripening into something much more serious. Yet he could not desert her. It was not merely that he found a great pleasure in her company, a pleasure which, though he was now becoming alive to its danger, he could not bring himself to forego. She had few friends, and would evidently be exposed to many dangers, dangers of which he might warn her, and from which he might, perchance, even unknown to herself, guard her. M. Senarclens was not so far wrong after all; a large fortune was by no means an unalloyed blessing; and the Hardy heritage seemed likely to bring Vera more care than happiness.

Vera herself was beginning to be very much of the same opinion, for she, too, had received a letter from Corfe, which gave her great concern. He had heard, he said, of her accession of fortune, and offered her thereon his warmest felicitations, but she must remember that she had not yet come into possession, and though the statement might appear strange, he could assure her that without his help she never would come into possession of the Hardy inheritance. He still loved her as much as ever, and if she would favour him with an interview and accept his hand, he would explain his meaning and prove his words. "Balmaine pretends to have found you," he went on, "and brought you the first news of your fortune,

and he does not mean to go unrewarded. He means to have both you and your money—if you let him—as he has openly avowed since his return to Geneva. I shall call at Mon Repos in the course of a few days to pay my respects and receive my answer."

Vera's first proceeding after reading this effusion, was to inform Josephine, the servant who attended to the door, that if a gentleman of the name of Corfe called she declined to see him. She was to use these very words: "Mademoiselle Hardy declines to see you."

Then she went into the garden to think. Corfe's mysterious threat hardly affected her at all. If obtaining her fortune depended on his help—which she did not believe—she would rather be without it. She was beginning to hate this man. How dared he insinuate that Balmaine was as base as himself! Balmaine, who had behaved so well—so nobly even—and of whom M. Senarclens thought so highly, of whom she too thought so highly. And yet the accusation was very specific. He had openly avowed that he meant to have both her and her money! No, it was impossible; she could not believe that this young man, who spoke so frankly and seemed so unselfish, was a sordid fortune-seeker; if she could she would never see him again. Her faith in human nature would be gone for ever, and she should know that, save M. Senarclens, all men were base. Again she said impossible. Corfe was false, Balmaine disinterested and sincere; and yet deep down in her mind there was a feeling that if his loyalty could be proved before all the world and beyond dispute, she would willingly forfeit the fortune which he was said to covet.

And this, though the greatest, was not the only trouble that this fortunate maiden's inheritance brought her. The Senarclens were just the same as before; but the domestics treated her with marked deference; when she went out people stared at her and pointed her out to each other. Every day the post brought her more and more letters, until M. Senarclens laughingly declared she would require at least two private secretaries. All contained requests for money, and Vera's heart was torn with the tales of distress which some of them revealed; but as she had no money, and it was physically impossible for her to answer them all, she answered only a few and destroyed the rest. Visitors innumerable came almost every day, and as Madame Senarclens could not keep a domestic to do nothing in the world but open the

door, a notice was posted on the garden gate to the effect that Mademoiselle Hardy received no strangers with whom she had not previously made an appointment. But this did not prevent them from waiting in the road, and whenever poor Vera showed her face outside the garden, she was beset by a crowd of promiscuous beggars, from villainous-looking mendicants on the tramp who demanded alms, to painfully polite secretaries of charitable institutions, who doffed their hats and offered their cards. Things came at last to such a pass, that when she wanted to take the air she had to steal out by stratagem, and travel by boat to parts of the country where she was unknown.

CHAPTER XLIX.—A GIRL OF CHARACTER.

"If this continues, Vera," said M. Senarcles one day, "and M. Artful does not come and take you away, we shall have to hide you up in the mountains, or keep you *au secret* on the other side of the lake."

But a few days later the lawyer put in an appearance—a full fortnight after the time he had fixed—and with him came Balmaine, for whom he had called at Geneva. The little French which Mr. Artful was supposed to speak turned out to be none at all, so that Vera had to make shift to express herself in her mother-tongue—if English can be called the mother-tongue of one whose mother was an Italian. She read and wrote the language with comparative ease, the habit of speaking it she had almost lost. However, with Balmaine's help, she did pretty well. She had no difficulty in understanding Mr. Artful, who spoke slowly and with lawyer-like precision, and it was not long before she made him understand her.

He told her and Balmaine—who was always present when business was discussed—that the trustees had placed at his disposal a sufficient sum of money for all expenses, and whatever moderate amount she might need for her own purposes he was authorised to let her have. He used the word "moderate" designedly, for as the executors might have to request the Court of Chancery to administer the trusts of the will, it behoved him to act with great circumspection, and to take no step which they would not be able to justify. Yet with the depositions of Martino and Gabrielle Courbet in his possession, he entertained no doubt whatever that Vera was the long-sought heiress, and that the Court would sanction all he proposed to do. He had already paid Martino his travelling expenses and a *douceur* for his services, and

he now asked Balmaine if there were any other claims of a like character "which equity required him to satisfy."

Alfred mentioned Bevis.

"Yes, I think he has a claim," said Artful; "what do you think I ought to give him?"

Alfred thought that a thousand francs lodged to his credit with the Genevan bankers, Gex & Co., would be satisfactory, for though the old soldier was not the man to refuse money, however tendered, it would probably be more acceptable if paid in this way than placed in his hand or sent through the post.

"It shall be done," said the lawyer. "I will give you the money and you can pay it to his credit when you go back to Geneva. Is there anybody else?"

Balmaine then spoke about Warton and urged his claim to a substantial recompense, as it was to him more than to anybody else that the solution of the mystery was due.

"I am afraid though, we can do nothing for Mr. Warton at present, Mr. Balmaine," said the lawyer thoughtfully. "Martino has performed a specific service, so has Colonel Bevis, so have you, but Mr. Warton has performed none which we can recognise. I do not think payment for a suggestion made to somebody else would be passed by the Court."

"It was a very valuable suggestion though."

"That may be. But you must remember that the trustees are not dealing with their own money and that all their payments are likely to be strictly scrutinised. When Miss Hardy comes of age she can of course do as she pleases."

"And I have already said," put in Vera, "that whatever M. Balmaine thinks Mr. Warton ought to have that will I give him."

"I am sure Miss Hardy will only be too generous," returned Alfred. "But she will have no power for three years, and a present payment would not alone please Warton, it would be a great help to him, for he has a large family and a very modest income. However, if it cannot be done it must remain undone. He must just wait."

"And now about yourself, Mr. Balmaine," said Artful; "whatever Mr. Warton may have suggested, you have acted. It is to your energy and yours alone that Miss Vera will be indebted for the recovery of her fortune. You have spent both time and money on the investigation, and I shall feel myself quite justified in giving you—say a hundred pounds and all your expenses out of pocket."

"Thank you very much," replied Alfred, reddening, "but I want nothing and can take nothing. You paid my expenses to Italy, you are paying my expenses here. That is quite enough."

Vera made no remark; but he fancied that she looked pleased.

"As you like," answered the lawyer stiffly. "But money is one of those things a man should never refuse. When you reach my age you will know the value of it."

"Would it make any difference," asked Balmaine, "if instead of giving me this money, which you think I have deserved, you gave it to Warton?"

"Do you really mean it?"

"Certainly."

"It shall be done then. I will give you a cheque for a hundred pounds which you can yourself send to Mr. Warton. And I think I may be able to serve your friend in another way. I will offer him a place in our office. He seems to be a sharp fellow, and I dare say we can afford to pay him a higher salary than he is now receiving. These country offices are not generally too liberal with their clerks. If you will let me have his private address I will write to him."

"He will be delighted, I am sure," exclaimed Alfred eagerly, "and though you may find him a little rough in manner he is very shrewd and knows his business."

"Just the man I want," said Artful, "and if there should be a fight a recruit from the enemy's camp may be useful."

Balmaine asked him about the Hardy Fortune Company.

"They have not done much yet," answered the lawyer. "It is rumoured that Mr. Ferret is not quite satisfied with the evidence he has got and is looking for more. It appears that the man who says he identified Mr. Hardy as John Hardy of Calder, has not seen him for forty or fifty years, and cases of mistaken identity are so common—I have quite a collection of them—that the testimony of a single witness would not count for much. However, now that we have fortunately found the lost heiress, they will have to throw up the sponge. For they have not a ghost of a chance."

Whereupon Mr. Artful opened a big memorandum book and proceeded to make some notes.

"I think I understand all that has passed," remarked Vera in French, "all but the last part of your conversation, which I confess rather puzzles me. What does throwing up the sponge mean?"

Alfred explained.

"It is very painful to think," she said after a long pause, "that I should be the cause of all this strife and trouble. See how much trouble I am giving poor Mr. Artful."

"You need not let that concern you," replied Balmaine smiling, "lawyers like strife and trouble."

"Do they?" said Vera with a look of innocent surprise. "Why?"

"Because they make money by it. They live by other people's quarrels and mistakes."

"Always money. Everybody seems to hunger for money. Where is the charm of it?"

"You will perhaps find out, if you live a few years longer, Miss Hardy. You are just now in a false position, for though you have no control over your fortune, you are reputed to be rich. You have all the evils of wealth and none of its compensations."

"There are compensations then?"

"Very many, I should say."

"You really think that I may esteem myself fortunate in being an heiress? You are glad I am rich?" she said, regarding him keenly.

This was an awkward question. He could not honestly say that he was glad.

"I do think you may esteem yourself fortunate," he answered evasively, "for wealth is a power, and, rightly used, a power for good."

"Who knows that I shall use it rightly? And you only answer one part of my question. But never mind that now. For whom are you in mourning?"

"My mother."

"Your mother! oh, I am so sorry!" and her look and her voice expressed even more sympathy than her words. And then she questioned him further, and learnt more about him and his affairs than she had ever known before. Cora seemed to interest her greatly.

"You must give me her address," she said, "and when I go to London I will see her."

This request was at once complied with. It had been arranged that Vera should return with Mr. Artful to London, where she was to be the guest of Sir James Leyton, one of her grandfather's executors, a city magnate upon whom had lately been conferred the honour of knighthood. When she expressed a wish that Gabrielle should accompany her Mr. Artful demurred.

"The woman acted very dishonestly," he said, "and I do not think you should have anything more to do with her."

"I promised to take Gabrielle," answered Vera simply, "and I want to take her; it would be dreadful to be all alone in that great city. She has done wrong, it is true—who is there that has not done wrong? But she is not bad, and unless Gabrielle goes, Mr. Artful, I do not go."

The lawyer, of course, yielded. As he afterwards remarked to Balmaine, there was nothing else for it. "I was never so much surprised in my life," he said; "most girls of her age have no more character than a mollusc; but Miss Hardy has enough for two men. I hope she will get on well with Lady Leyton."

Another desire of Vera's was to make a pilgrimage to her father's grave at Locarno, a proposal to which Mr. Artful all the more readily acceded, as it occurred to him that it might be well, with a view to future eventualities, to obtain official proof

of Philip Hardy's death and his burial under his own name. So it was arranged that they should travel thither over the Simplon, and go direct to London by the Mont Cenis and Paris. Martino would bear them company as far as the shores of Lago Maggiore.

Balmaine and all the Senarclens went with the travellers to the railway station. Vera was pale, silent, and melancholy, and she kept back her tears with evident effort. Poor girl! she was leaving the mountain land where she had spent so many happy years, and tried friends whom she dearly loved, for a far country and a position that, how ever brilliant it might seem, was yet full of difficulty and peril.

"When shall I see her again?" was Balmaine's thought as he walked slowly and sadly towards the beautiful lake of which she had just taken her last look, for though as resolute as before in his policy of renunciation, he felt that Vera had become dearer to him than ever.

SOME PHASES OF ANIMAL LIFE.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.

II.—A FEW ANOMALIES.

WE have become so familiar with the life-history of the more important animals, that we are apt to forget the interest which attaches itself to their mode of life. I have therefore gathered together a few well-known mammals for the sake of pointing out some of the peculiarities—we may almost call them anomalies—of their structure and biography.

Take, for example, the very conspicuous animal, the Giraffe (*Camelopardalis giraffa*).

Considering that almost every child in the kingdom is familiar with the appearance of the giraffe, and that not even a "Noah's Ark" is held to be complete without a pair of giraffes, it really seems wonderful that scarcely more than a century ago the animal was absolutely unknown in England. The ancient Romans not only knew it, but exhibited it at their public games. Long before the Roman empire was founded, the Egyptians knew it, as is shown by the sculptures upon their ancient monuments.

Its home is in various parts of Africa, so that it has been accessible to European travellers for some centuries. Yet, the knowledge of the giraffe had so utterly faded from Europe, that when Bruce re-discovered

the animal and described it, he was met with a storm of ridicule which to us of the present day seems almost incredible.

It was "impossible" that any animal could have so long a neck without overbalancing itself. It was "impossible" that a mammal could have three horns, one at each side of the head, and the other in the middle. If Bruce had restricted himself to two horns, people might have believed the neck (with some allowance for travellers' exaggerations), but the third horn discredited the whole of the pretended discovery.

It is true that the structure of the horns is quite anomalous, so that the objectors had some reason on their side. The so-called "horns" are not hollow growths of the epidermis supported on bony cores, like those of the oxen, antelopes, and other hollow-horned ruminants. Neither are they bony growths upon the skull, like the horns, or more properly the antlers, of the deer tribe. They are short bony processes, set on very short footstalks, and covered with skin. The longer horns of the sides have a tuft of black hair at their tip, while the short central horn is hairless.

Another anomalous structure is the neck, at which so much umbrage was taken.

In spite of its enormous length, it only possesses the seven vertebrae which are common to nearly all the mammals. In consequence, it is nearly as inflexible as a wooden bar of equal length, so that the many pretty pictures which represent giraffes curving their necks gracefully, after the manner of swans, are ludicrously wrong.

"But," said the objectors, "if it had so long and inflexible a neck it could not graze, and being a ruminant animal, would die of hunger."

It is quite true that it cannot graze. It can only lower its head near the ground by spreading its forelegs as widely as possible and drawing its hind legs under them, thus presenting a most ludicrous aspect. In its native state it never, as far as I know, even attempts to lower its head to the ground, but in captivity it can be induced to do so by laying on the ground a large lump of sugar, of which it is inordinately fond.

The fact is, that it is intended to graze, not on the ground, but on the leaves of trees. The acacia, or mimosa, is its favourite tree, and the Dutch colonists have in consequence called the acacia by the name of "kameeldorn," *i.e.* camel-thorn, they invariably giving the name of "camel" to the giraffe.

This mode of feeding involves another anomalous structure. This is the tongue, on which the giraffe is almost as much dependent as is the elephant on its proboscis.

It is possessed of wonderful powers of extension and contraction, and can be narrowed until it almost resembles the corresponding organ of the ant-eater. The peculiar powers of the tongue can well be seen when the animal takes the sugar from the ground. It does not attempt to seize the sugar with its lips, but protrudes its tongue to its fullest extent, twists the narrowed tip round the sugar, and so draws the coveted dainty into its mouth. When it feeds on the trees, it picks off leaf after leaf quite daintily, selecting those which are most to its taste.

Except when it consorts with other animals in the mixed herds which I described in the last article, it lives in small companies. Being such large and conspicuous animals, the males attaining a height of some eighteen feet, and their skins being covered with boldly marked patches of deep chestnut brown upon a whitish ground, it might readily be imagined that they must be easily discoverable, even at a distance. But, in

point of fact, not even the elephant is less easy of detection.

The acacias on which the giraffe feeds do not grow in forests such as the elephant loves, but in small clumps, each containing only a few trees. In one of these clumps half-a-dozen giraffes may be reposing, and yet even the sharp-eyed native hunters can seldom pronounce whether or not the clump be tenanted.

The fact is, that the long neck and legs of the giraffe harmonize so exactly with the trunks of the mimosa, that at a little distance it is absolutely impossible to distinguish the tree from the animal. Then, the large dark spots upon the light ground so closely resemble the patches of light and shade thrown by the sun's rays from the peculiar foliage of the mimosa, that instead of making the animal conspicuous, they have the effect of rendering it almost invisible as long as it remains under the shadow of the branches.

Except that it moves the legs of each side alternately, its walk has nothing remarkable about it. But, when alarmed, and flying for its life, its gestures are as anomalous as its form. It gallops in a series of jumps which have been compared to the hops of a frog, its long, straight neck rocks up and down, and its tail is jerked backwards and forwards with such force that the hair tuft at its tip makes a hissing sound as it is swished through the air.

In spite of the grotesque and apparently awkward movements, the pace is very swift upon broken ground, but on a level, a fairly good horse can overtake the animal. The gallop of the giraffe has never been witnessed in this country, although a specimen was brought to England in 1836, and the animal has bred freely for the last forty years.

Inhabiting the same country as the giraffe, is an animal which is in every way its opposite, and well deserves a place among the anomalies. This is the Hippopotamus, or Zee-koe, *i.e.* Sea-cow, as it is termed by the Dutch settlers. (*Hippopotamus amphibius*.)

Instead of living wholly on land, it passes almost the whole of its time in the water. Instead of daintily plucking the leaves of trees one by one, it feeds hugely on grass and other herbage, almost shovelling its food into its vast jaws. Instead of possessing a long neck which reaches to the branches of trees, it has a neck so thick and short that, like that of the whale, it is almost merged into the body.

Its skin, instead of being clothed with a coating of beautifully mottled fur, is quite



Hippopotami.

bare and oily. Its legs are as short in proportion as those of the giraffe are long, and, instead of being swift of foot, and galloping with the odd jumps which have already been described, it is slow and clumsy on land, though swift and powerful in the water, which the giraffe never enters.

Now let us examine the hippopotamus in detail, in order to see where it differs from other animals, and deserves the title of anomalous.

Beginning with the exterior, the skin is of enormous thickness and toughness. From it are made the terrible whips called "sjamboks," a stroke of which will cut a groove in a deal board. A large sjambok affords the only argument to which a native draught-ox will listen, and a smaller instrument, called familiarly a "cowhide," is used in lieu of our riding whips.

As the hippopotamus spends so much time in the water, the skin is perforated with a number of pores, through which exudes a thick, dark, oily secretion, which like the fur of the seal, otter, beaver, and other aquatic animals, keeps the creature dry, even when it is submerged.

When, in July, 1849, "Obaysh," the first hippopotamus ever brought to England, was taken in the Nile as a youngster, its slippery skin enabled it to wriggle out of the arms of its captor, and it was only secured by driving a boathook into its hide, the scar remain-

ing through the rest of its long life. When, in May of the following year, it arrived in London, I went to see it, and inadvertently patted it, not knowing of the oily secretion. Consequently, a pair of new kid gloves which I was wearing were utterly spoiled. A female was afterwards obtained, and in 1871 was born the first hippopotamus ever produced in Europe. As its mother did not know how to manage it, the young calf was taken away and fed artificially. Taking it from its mother was a most perilous task, and, after a most exciting series of adventures, was achieved by Scott, the man who was afterwards so well known as "Jumbo's" keeper. The little creature weighed about a hundred pounds, but kicked and screamed like an adult, while its round, smooth body was so oily that Scott could scarcely hold it.

Now we turn to the head.

The eyes, ears, and nostrils are set nearly on the same plane, so that the animal can sink itself entirely below the surface, and be able to perceive the approach of foes by hearing, sight, and scent.

When it lies motionless and dozing in the water, it is naturally a little lighter than a corresponding bulk of water, and so floats with only a little of the back, and the ears, eyes, and nostrils above the surface. But it often has to sink to swim for some distance under water. This necessity involves several other peculiarities of structure.

In order to enable it to sink, it is able to contract its body, so as to make it rather heavier than a corresponding bulk of fresh water, and when it wishes to rise, all it has to do is to relax the contracting muscles, and allow its body to resume its former dimensions. Then, both the ears and the nostrils can be closed as soon as the animal sinks, so as to prevent the water from getting into them.

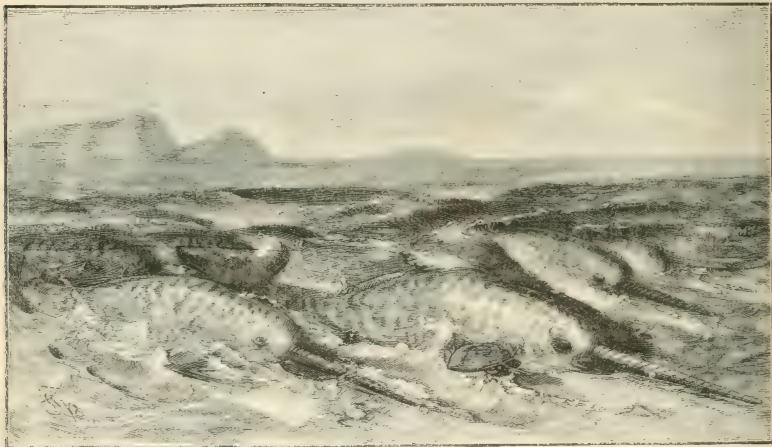
Now come the jaws and teeth.

In order to enable the animal to take into its jaws the enormous masses of herbage which it consumes, the mouth has a vast gape, reaching nearly to the eyes. The teeth more than match the jaws, the front

teeth acting like the blades of a mowing-machine, and the hinder teeth, or molars, serving as grindstones.

The incisor teeth of the lower jaw project forwards, while the canine teeth, or tusks, are curved upwards, like those of the boar, their tips being bevelled like those of the rodents. The tusks are of enormous size, sometimes weighing as much as eight pounds. Those of the upper jaw are formed on the same pattern, but are shorter. The teeth furnish a peculiarly hard and white ivory which does not turn yellow like ordinary ivory, and in consequence, is largely used in the manufacture of artificial teeth.

As we are not engaged upon the biography



Narwhals.

of the animals, but are only concerned with certain portions of their structure and life-history, we will now leave the hippopotamus and proceed to another anomalous mammal.

All the whales, dolphins, and porpoises are so far abnormal animals, in that they are mammals which pass the whole of their life in water, are destitute of hind limbs, and never even repose themselves on ice after the manner of the seals.

All the cetacea are anomalous animals, inasmuch as, being mammals, they must breathe atmospheric air by lungs, and yet must be able to support existence for a considerable time without access to air. Some of the whales, for example, can remain below the surface for more than an hour, and yet

will not be drowned. They owe this power to an internal reservoir of blood, which can be let into the circulation when wanted. It varies in dimensions according to the needs of the animal, but the principle is the same in all. This supplementary supply of blood is aerated by the peculiar respirations which go by the popular names of "blowings" or "spoutings," which are so characteristic of the whale tribe.

One of the dolphins, the celebrated Narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*) is doubly anomalous.

Possessing the peculiar structure and habits which have been mentioned, it also has a most anomalous development of the canine teeth. In the male the left canine tooth of



Beavers.

the upper jaw is enormously developed, being indeed the longest tooth possessed by any of the mammalia. It is quite straight, projecting almost directly in front of the animal, tapering gradually from base to tip, and is spirally grooved throughout its length.

It derives a peculiar interest from its almost historical position as being the "horn" of the fabulous unicorn of which so many strange legends were told and believed, and which for some centuries has been one of the supporters of the royal arms of England.

In a few instances the right tusk is developed instead of the left, and now and then both tusks project from the jaw. In such cases one is mostly shorter than the other; but in the Hull Museum there is a fine narwhal with two full-grown tusks of equal length. The object of the tusk is unknown. As it only belongs to the male, it cannot be of any use in procuring food; and the probability is that it is simply a masculine decoration, like the mane of the lion and the train of the peacock. The average length of the narwhal is thirteen or fourteen feet, and a fine tusk measures about seven feet from base to tip when removed from the animal.

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Much of it is necessarily imbedded in the skull while the narwhal is living.

This remarkable creature inhabits the northern seas, and is occasionally taken off our shores.

Here is another animal which may be included in the present series.

The Beaver (*Castor fiber*) once enjoyed a very wide range of territory, being spread over nearly the whole of Europe, including the British Islands, many parts of Asia, and a large tract of North America. It has long been extinct in this country, and in Europe is mostly confined to Russia and the more northern regions. In Asia it is still found in Siberia, and in North America it flourishes at the present time.

In the Rhone the beaver is still plentiful, and in February, 1886, a specimen was taken which weighed twenty-four pounds. Indeed, it seems to be rather too plentiful, for the Highways and Bridges Department has been obliged to offer a bounty for its destruction, on account of its habit of injuring the banks of the river by its burrows. It seems a pity to expel it completely from France, but sentimental considerations cannot be allowed to interfere with the common welfare.

The European and Asiatic beavers differ somewhat from their American relatives, and

as the latter have retained their wonderful instincts in great perfection, being far removed from the neighbourhood of man, we will take them as our subject.

The beaver is equally at home in the water and on land, and therefore requires certain modifications of structure. The nostrils can be closed while the animal is submerged, and a portion of the external ear is so constructed that it can be pressed to the head so as to exclude water.

Swimming is conducted entirely by the hind feet, which are webbed as far as the claws, the fore feet being reserved for other purposes. When, for example, the beaver brings materials by water, it holds them between the fore paws and the chin, and even on land it has been observed to carry snow in the same manner. The popular idea that the beaver carries mud on its flat tail, and then uses the same organ as a trowel, is entirely unfounded.

It is a good burrower, using its fore paws for this purpose; and as a builder, it is unrivalled among the mammalia. It exercises its architectural powers in two ways.

Wherever it may live it must build a house, or "lodge," as it is generally called. The lodge is shaped very much like a Zulu hut, circular and dome-shaped. But, as the beaver lives in cold climates, and is moreover exposed to the attacks of powerful enemies, its house is very much stronger than the flimsy basket-work of the Zulu, and is much more complicated in detail.

It is always placed on the bank of a stream, and measures externally about fifteen or even twenty feet in diameter, and six or eight feet in height. The walls, however, are so thick that the internal diameter is only some seven feet, and the height three feet. It is made of logs and branches of trees, thickly plastered with mud.

Just before winter sets in, the beaver lays an additional coat of mud on the exterior. During the severe winters of North America, where I have personally known the temperature to be as low as forty degrees below zero, the mud is frozen into stony hardness, and can repel the attacks of even the wolverene or glutton, the beaver's worst enemy. A ditch always surrounds the lodge, and there is invariably an internal communication with the stream on which the lodge is built.

The wood which is employed by these animals serves a double purpose. They feed upon the bark, peeling it from the tree, and storing large quantities under water for future use. The remaining wood is not

wasted, but is employed for building purposes. Sometimes the stream on which the beaver lives is too small to serve the purposes of the animal, or is liable to being dried up in an exceptionally long and hot summer. In those cases the beaver is taught by instinct to construct a dam for the purpose of banking up the water, so as to insure a permanent supply. Some of these wonderful pieces of animal engineering are more than a hundred yards in length, and lay many acres under water.

The materials are the same as those which are used for the lodge, but the lowest logs are of greater size. In order to obtain a supply of wood for this purpose, the beaver will fell trees of considerable size, sitting up on its hind legs and nibbling the tree all round, until it resembles an hour-glass. The tree is sure to fall, and in like manner is cut up into convenient lengths. Stones, mud, and small branches are used together with the logs, and by degrees a strong dam is formed, its width at the bottom being from twelve to twenty feet, and at the top from a yard to five feet or so.

After a dam has been in existence for some years, fallen leaves, river weeds, and similar floating *débris* lodge upon the dam, and produce a kind of soil. Seeds of various kinds, and sometimes those of trees, fall into this soil and spring up, their roots entwining themselves among the logs and branches, and binding them firmly together. Even if the whole colony has been destroyed, the dams remain, and thus exercise a considerable influence on the character of the locality. Places where the beaver has removed the trees are popularly called "beaver clearings."

I need scarcely say that the beaver cannot drive stakes into the ground, and then twist branches among them, as has often been said and even figured. It simply lays the materials, leaving them to settle by their own weight.

The last abnormal structure which can be noticed is the "castoreum," a remarkable secretion produced by the male, and analogous to the well-known civet and musk. It was at one time much valued as a medicine, but has now quite dropped out of the pharmacopœia.

It possesses a powerful odour, which has a wonderful effect upon all male beavers within its range. They rise on their hind legs, squeal with excitement, and make for it as fast as they can.

The trappers make a singular use of this propensity. They keep by them a tightly

closed vessel containing castoreum, and a number of slender twigs. They set their traps so as to be covered by about six inches of water. Then they chew one end of a twig so as to make it into a sort of brush, and dip it in the castoreum. They then set the twig in such a manner that the brush projects for a few inches from the water, just above the trap.

This simple bait will attract any but an

old and experienced beaver. These creatures, however, are as wily as old rats, and when one of them comes to a castoreum bait, it fetches a quantity of stones and mud, drops them on the trap until it has raised a mound above the surface of the water, and then goes away, having rendered the trap useless. Before leaving the spot it always deposits some of its own castoreum on the mound which it has raised.

A SHEPHERD'S CONSOLATION.

"Non semper imbres."—HOR., *Car.* II. 9.

IT'S no' aye rainin' on the misty Achils;
It's no' aye white wi' winter on Nigour;
The winds are no' sae mony sorrowin' Rachels
That grieve, and o' their grief will not gie owre.

Dark are Benarty slopes, an' the steep Lomon'
Flings a lang shadow on the watter plain;
But fair Lochleven's no' for ever gloomin',
An' Devon's no' aye dark wi' Lammas rain.

The birks tho' bare, an' the sune-naked ashes
Not always widowed of their leaves appear;
The oaks cry oot beneath November's lashes,
But not for all the months that mak' the year.

Comes round a time, comes round at last tho' creepin',
And green and glad again stand buss an' tree;
E'en tender gowans thro' the young gress peepin',
Rise in their weakniess an' ower-rin the lea.

Thus Nature sorrows, and forgets her sorrow;
And Reason soberly approves her way:
Why should we shut oor een against to-morrow,
Because our sky was clouded yesterday?

Dear Adie! for we've lang kent ane anither
Tentin' oor flocks upon the selfsame hill,
And if I speak as brither should to brither,
Ye'll neither turn awa' nor tak' it ill,—

It's now three year since little Adie left us;
He was to every ane that kent him dear;
Adam! it was the will of God bereft us,
Called him awa', and left the lave o's here.

Three years ye've sorrowed for the little laddie,
It clouds your broo, I hear it when ye speak,
And thrice I've seen when ithers sawna, Adie,
The sudden tear upon your wasted cheek.

Ye nurse your sorrow in the cheerfu' morning,
Ye nurse it, too, at unavailing eve;
Our rustic gatherings with a silent scorning,
And all our rural sports and joys ye leave.

Sorrow is sacred, but this sair insistence,
 This lang refusal to Heaven's will to boo,
 Consider, Adie! is't a wise resistance?
 You'll go to him, he canna come to you.

And since you go to meet him, go not sadly,
 For the short half of life that yet remains;
 You love your son—go then to meet him gladly
 On that appointed day which Heaven ordains.

HUGH HALIBURTON.

MY ONLY DAY AFTER THE DEER.

By WILLIAM JOLLY, H.M. INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

THERE is no loch in the British islands which, in wild grandeur, equals, certainly none that surpasses, Loch Torridon near Loch Maree. Round it are clustered some of the mightiest mountain masses in the Highlands. These consist of the chocolate-coloured sandstone of the West Coast, which elsewhere rises into the monumental peaks of Suilven and Queenaig, so conspicuous in Assynt. This rock is so splendidly represented round Loch Torridon, that its name has, by common consent, been permanently associated with the formation as the Torridon Red. Nowhere in these islands is there a more magnificent dome than Liathgach, at the head of the loch, which rises sheer from the sea three thousand five hundred feet in mural, fluted precipices, crested with white quartzite, which is set like a crown of fretted silver on the brows of some dusky monarch of the olden time.

Round Liathgach lies one of the finest deer forests in the country; the wild escarpments and inaccessible retreats of the region being the natural habitat of these shyest of animals. Seldom will you see finer antlers than in the mansion of the lord of the forest, which stands under the shadow of Liathgach, on the shore of the loch.

For nigh fifteen years had I wandered over these northern Highlands, and explored their darkest glens in search of science and scenery, but never had gratified a long desire to spend a day with the deer-stalkers. I am not, and never could become, a sportsman with either rod or gun, choosing rather to enjoy the life of nature than to destroy it by dealing death to bird, beast, or fish. When at last I determined to be blood-thirsty for once, I wished to see the sport at its best, and my thoughts at once turned to the wilds of Torridon. Year after year, I had contemplated with wondering awe their impressive scenes and explored their glens and shores in geological

ramble or in school inspection. At these times, I had enjoyed the princely hospitality and intellectual society of my good friend the laird, who holds Liathgach and Alligin in fee, carrying them, as it were, in his pocket. I had but to make known my desire to go a-hunting, to have it cordially gratified.

I had hoped the chief would have accompanied me himself, for the sake of his skill in the field and his company; but circumstances prevented, and I was handed over to his son, a bright, manly boy of some fourteen summers. The selection, certainly, at first not a little disappointed me; for this being my only experiment, I wanted to see real mountaineering, hard stalking and good shooting, now that I was at it. As it was, it looked like playing at deer hunting; for, though the lad had a lot of his father in him, there was a difference between fourteen and forty. But there was no help for it, and I accepted my fate. But I did the young huntsman injustice; he was worthy of his father's trust, and I was fortunate in the choice.

Accompanied by the head-keeper, stalwart, wiry, clear-eyed and firm-footed, we set out at a smart pace for the hills. We went up the deep glen between Liathgach and Alligin, its sides magnificently scooped down to sea-level out of three thousand feet of horizontal strata. We followed the path which skirts the stream that drains it. This river has eaten its way through vertical cliffs, where it foams and roars, finally plunging over a precipice like another Foyers. The corrie grew in grandeur as we ascended. At one point, where the main tributary enters from a side glen, we had in view the white-crested Ben Eay at the head, the mountain piles of Applecross at the foot, Liathgach on our right, and Alligin on our left; while the grand cone of Bushven, the Ben of the Forehead, which forms such a splendid object

from Gairloch, stood full at the end of a narrow pass, the gates of which framed it in rock—an assemblage of striking peaks seldom grouped together even in this land of countless bens and glens.

My companions were fully equipped for their work, carrying each a double-barrelled rifle and other requisites; while the peaceful spectator was burdened with nothing more than a well-filled wallet, a map, a note-book, and a staff. I reckoned, however, I could fairly breast a hill with either, for I had climbed hundreds of our steepest mountains, under all conditions. The day was bright, the scenery inspiring, the circumstances were novel and exciting, and spirits high.

Crossing the stream, we made for the glen which led towards Bushven, through which lay one of the old gateways to Gairloch. It forms a narrow pass between Alligin and Ben Dearg, the Red Ben, the latter only a little lower in height and equally wild and steep. In this beallock, we expected to find a stag, and to enjoy the sport of the day.

We crept slowly and quietly along the side of the burn, not to disturb any deer that might be resting on the hills above. Then, at command, we struck to the left, and, along a water track, climbed right up Ben Alligin. It was hard work, done mostly in silence, but exhilarating in the frosty morning breeze, amidst such wonderful surroundings. The chief impression of the scene on me was the pigmies of to-day we looked, in presence of these ancient giant mountains, which had heaved their mighty heads out of the Laurentian seas twelve geological epochs before man had appeared on the earth.

Halfway up the hill, we sat down on a rift to scan the mountain on the other side of the glen, Ben Dearg, which rose shelf above shelf, three thousand feet in height. The keeper swept the bold front of the Ben with his field glass, long without success; and we youngsters found the search equally fruitless. The glen looked quite tenantless to inexperienced eyes like mine. At length, he quietly announced that he had succeeded, and that a fine antlered stag was crouching on a shelf a little below the crest of the mountain, just opposite. The young laird confirmed the fact; I peered in vain—so blind are we where we have not been trained to see, in more things than in deer-stalking. It was further stated that a pretty hind was feeding in front of him. The stag had selected the best position for his mid-day siesta, for he could note every movement in the glens below, merely by looking round.

That stag was fixed on for our prey, our day's work; that shelf we must reach, though it was first some fifteen hundred feet down and double that height up again—our way lying along the two sides of a huge natural letter V, we then sitting on the middle of the one limb and he resting at the top of the other. Towards him, we at once began stealthy movements. It was probable he saw us, and that made circumspection all the more necessary.

We soon reached the floor of the pass, and made as if for home, descending at last, however, into the bed of the burn that drains it. Under shelter of its steep banks and out of sight of the deer, we dodged, till a side stream opened a passage towards Ben Dearg. Like Alan Graeme, "right up" the mountain we did "press," but the rest of the couplet was too much for me, "and not a sob our toil confess;" for though I had mountaineered more than most wanderers, that climb was about the hardest and roughest I ever had, while my companions, guns and all, toiled quietly and resolutely on. To avoid possible observation from our keen-visioned prey, we scrambled up the bed of a rough gully that ran straight up the hill-face. We dared not show ourselves above the banks or displace a boulder in the solitude; sometimes no easy task, when we had to scramble on to a rocky shelf over which the water splashed; and the mountain was built up of an endless series of these thick shelves. We spoke little in the silence. Once or twice a raven, roused from his perch, swept across the glen with alarmed croak and endangered our success. During the long and arduous ascent, we climbed mostly in pure faith, for the banks of the stream we followed hid the stag from view, except when we could peer over them to note his movements. From time to time, it was announced that he lay undisturbed, and we hoped for the best.

The route was admirably chosen, for we reached the mountain top unseen, and at length, from behind a projecting rock, to which he had climbed, the keeper triumphantly signified, in pantomime, that we were not far from his lair and that all was well. Now came the most delicate part of our approach. We were on the same level as the stag, and must get within gunshot without rousing his remotest suspicions, or all was lost. Between us projected a boss of the hill, beyond which was his shelf. This allowed nearer access out of his sight, if we could do it beyond his hearing; and in the clear thin air, every

sound was strangely elaborated, a dislodged pebble giving a surprising and warning rattle.

Onwards we crawl in silent file, on hands and knees, over dry rock and dripping moss. The rocky knob we stealthily round, after guarded inspection ahead. Happily a hummock still intervenes. Towards it, we move as if on fur, so silent are our movements, headed by the cautious keeper, a veritable human fox. At a signal, we two pause; he peers round the next corner; and a warning look, a flashing eye, and a lifted hand declare success! Back he worms himself to our shelter. The youngster moves ahead, looks, signs breathlessly, and returns. I follow after many pantomimic cautions, with new and curious nervousness. There was the stag within fifty yards of me! He lay crouched between two shelves of a jutting rock, able at a look to scan the whole country below; while on a grassy flat below quietly browsed his beautiful companion. He seemed a fine specimen, though he could not be fully seen, for his head looked up the glen, as if there alone he feared any evil. How still, how intensely still, it felt in the noon-day glare, at that immense height! I could almost hear my heart beat—I certainly felt it beat, as I looked on these two silent creatures, so keen of sense, so wonderfully watchful, resting thus unsuspectingly so near to danger and destruction.

We took our position just round the angle from where the stag lay, whence he could be observed by our hunters' eagle eyes. The young laird lay ahead, the keeper close by, and myself in the rear. We waited his rising, and the marksman's chance lay in the single moment that followed; for just beyond his lair dipped a hollow, into which he could instantly drop out of sight and out of shot! We uttered not a word except in muttered monosyllables, communicating mostly by gesture. There crouched my companions with gun at full cock, in momentary expectation of some movement; while the stag dozed in false security, and the hind nibbled the tender grass, sometimes coming dangerously close to our hiding place. Her they never dreamt of shooting, on account of the precious burden she bore for the forest, though, later on, she would be lawful prey.

It was a beautiful and touching sight to see these exquisite creatures—he, in lordly assurance, showing little recognition of her presence, except at times to turn his antlered head towards her; she satisfied simply to be near her friend and to leave him quietly to

rest. Yet it was painful to think that death lurked darkly in the peace of the scene. Up till now, the struggle between us and the stag had been perfectly fair—the human hunters using their skill and endurance against the superfine faculties and fleetness of the animal hunted, his chances of escape being immensely increased by his unique outlook and his own and his companion's watchfulness—and thus far with deserved success to the hunters. But now all advantage seemed against the hunted deer, and on the side of the deadly weapon pointed towards him by accomplished hands; and man had used his genius simply to secure the slaughter of an unsuspecting brute. Our position, as we lay on that rock with murderous intent, did not seem to me a very noble one. It roused conflicting feelings, chiefly of pain, which even the keen desire for success could not dispel; and I wished I could give the stag some unseen warning of his deadly fate.

For nearly two hours did we crouch on that rocky shelf. We conversed only in whispers, and mostly by signs, even the careful turning of the leaves of my note-book being ruled out of order. It was the longest, stiffest, coldest seat I ever had; for the heat and perspiration caused by the steep clamber up the hill were speedily dissipated by the chill breeze that swept across the mountain at that airy height. The patient endurance and alert vigilance of my companions were beyond praise. They lay there almost without movement, eyes ever on the watch and hand on trigger, the young chief in front, his faithful henchman close by his side, in dead silence, as the weary moments lagged in that utter solitude. To observe the creatures, I clambered furtively at intervals, unknown to them, to see them from a ledge above.

The place we occupied was simply wonderful for view and magnificent in grandeur. Ben Dearg, on whose crest we sat, three thousand feet up, forms a long narrow ridge, commanding a remarkable prospect of multitudinous peaks and glens, lakes and rivers, firths and islands, all visible below us, as to an eagle's eye in mid-air. A glance at the map will show how unsurpassed was the point of survey we occupied. More than once, I silently crept to the rear, over the top of the mountain, to gaze on the scene of wild desolation that stretched on the other side—desolation such as only the barren, grey quartzite of the West Coast, so splendidly shown in Ben Eay, can alone exhibit in this country; while above it all, there heaved high

in the air the pointed peak of the "spear-headed" Slioch, right from the waters of Loch Maree.

At last, the whisper flashed—he moves! How electric the look and word, sending the stagnant blood leaping in the heart, flushing in the cheek, and gleaming in the eye! No, it was a false alarm; his majesty had but brushed away a fly. Yes, yes, it is true, he is rising! All unsuspecting, the noble creature dropped lightly down on the green shelf below, and stood beside his mate. How intense the excitement in myself—I could not have believed it possible—for all the hunting instinct suddenly woke! But how warily calm and self-possessed my friends! All now rests on one moment, for just beyond, the stag could drop instantly out of sight and gain life and liberty. Still they shoot not, critical though the chances are. Wherefore? Because he faces away from them, and it would be ignoble to hit him in the rear. Most fairly and rightly honourable. Another moment, and he turns slightly round to greet his companion, who has moved towards him. Instantly a shot breaks the silence—a startled leap—and both in a second disappear.

Ah! he is gone and our day is lost! We hurry after him. "Stop—crouch! There he is again!" And there he was, in full view, facing his foes, on the top of a projecting rock below, with antlered front nobly erect, bravely returned to discover the source of his terror and pain, or to guard his friend. He stood, a living statue of finest mould, on the crest of that crag, set right against the azure sky, an instantaneous but indelible picture. But it was only for a moment. Another thundering shot—one sudden, silent bound high in air—and then he fell backwards down the precipice behind.

All was over; there was no doubt of it. The ball had pierced his heart, and he was gone for ever. His gentle mate we never saw after the first alarm. Where she hid her widowed fear and grief that lonesome night none can know. That she felt both who can for a moment doubt? For, as Shelley sings, even

"Those viewless beings,
Whose mansion is the smallest particle
Of the impassive atmosphere,
Think, feel, and live, like men."

The shot was simply splendid, especially as delivered under such sudden excitement, after such weary waiting, by a mere boy! But the romance to me had died at once with the dead stag, and I felt sick at heart as we hastened to the rock whence he had fallen. There the mountain formed almost

a sheer cliff for hundreds of feet, and far down, in a narrow ravine, lay the beautiful creature, a huddled heap of venison.

The day seemed strangely darkened to me; the glory of the scene, so grandly shown from that cliff, was shrouded; and I cursed the skill of man that had such a pitiful issue. We clambered down the mountain, passing here a broken horn, there a bit of bowel, and there a splash of blood. Then we found the stag himself, half immersed in a pool, where the stream flowed in a green hollow between cliffs. He was quite dead, his brilliant eye already glazed, his nostrils distended and stained with bloody froth, a horn quite smashed by the terrible fall, which alone would have killed him, had not the too sure bullet already done it too well. Yet the instant despatch of the animal was the one redeeming feature in the transaction. I stroked his beautiful neck, felt the warmth of his soft breast, and lifted his delicate hoof to see if any life still lingered. But, alas! he was motionless as the rocks around, and his life-blood was oozing into the stream from a fatal wound in the breast.

I sat down some distance off, troubled as I could not have anticipated, and—need I be ashamed to own it?—the tear would fill my eyes. Was this mere waste of sentiment, unworthy the occasion? So be it, if you will; I care not to dispute it; I simply tell how I felt on that mountain-side, while the swift hunter's knife did its office under the skilful hands of the keeper.

Soon the water ran foul and red as the process went on—a painful sight under the blue heavens, in the still air, in that lonely glen. By and by the ugly work was completed, and the carcase was left, to be carried home by a gillie; while the keeper bore in his hand the empty stomach, brown and beautiful, with its exquisite honeycomb work, finer than the finest lace, the sweet grass it contained, his morning meal, being emptied on a rock.

We soon reached the deep hollow of the pass, and walked quickly down the side of the Bealoch burn. The quietness and impressiveness of the scene in the evening light were soothing, as the shadows fell from the mighty mountains round us, but they could not obliterate the sadness that had settled on my spirits, which the little brown bag in the hunter's hand painfully perpetuated. It was, however, greatly dispelled by a new and beautiful sight that burst upon us as we joined the main valley.

To our right, rose the long, steep slopes of

Alligin, running right up to its craggy summit; in front, heaved Liathgach in mural majesty; and between them, lay the wider glen that led down to the mansion. A deep corrie exists in the centre of Alligin, known as "The Sanctuary," where no shot may be fired, and where the deer are safe from intrusion. Out of this corrie suddenly trooped a herd of deer, mostly hinds and young ones, with an antler here and there, above a hundred and fifty in all! Down the mountain slope they swiftly swept, at easy canter, and rose, group after group, to the top of an eminence against the sky. Here each bevy stayed for a minute or two to reconnoitre, without observing us where we stopped in

the shadow. Then they dashed into the glen below at playful gallop, crossed the burn at a bound, climbed the opposing ridge, and finally disappeared from view towards the fastnesses of Ben Eay.

It was a beautiful vision, a fairy flight of graceful gazelles, seldom seen in such numbers; all the more impressive that it was so unexpected and rare. It completed delightfully the varied experiences of the day, and formed a bright and cheerful close to hours of new and remarkable incident, which had been to me both sweet and sad, but all powerful, picturesque, and memorable. It fitly and poetically closed my first, and probably my last, day after the deer.

JOSEF ISRAELS.

By ROBERT WALKER.

IN the stirring incidents of the history of Holland we find displayed all the virtues that go to the making of a great nation: endurance, foresight, strength of will, patience and courage, the spirit that no defeat can daunt, the love of learning, and the appreciation of art. The Dutch and the Scottish peoples have many points in common. The origin of the two races is the same; their languages have a strong family resemblance; their national characteristics, modified as they are in each case by the influence of circumstances, situation, and environment, demonstrate by the similarity in their broader features that both nations are descendants of one stock. Like the Scotch, the Hollanders were early educated into the practice of patience and determination through a stern conflict with the unkindly powers of nature. No generous soil, no unvarying sunshine, rendered life for them easy and luxurious. They won from, and now hold against the ocean, the very earth on which they tread. "They with mad labour fished the land to shore;" this, the reproach that Marvel brought against them, is indeed their chief claim to honour. They found swamps almost uninhabitable, and by their incessant toil they covered them with green pastures and great cities. They brought order out of chaos. Where once had rolled a wild waste of waters, or where the precarious pathway had led through slimy morasses, snug homesteads arose, sleek cattle browsed by the banks of trim canals, and magnificent emporiums of commerce attracted the trade of the world. As Motley eloquently

says: "A region, outcast of ocean and earth, wrested at last from both domains their richest treasures." This was, surely, a conquest more fruitful in beneficial results than any Alexander the Great could boast of. The English wits, Marvel and Dryden, Butler and Waller, carried away by party spite, might sneer at the mechanic Dutch and their "half-drowned land," but it was in their fight with nature that the Dutch acquired the qualities that bore them successfully through the blood and fire and agony of the War of Independence; that made them a free and a great nation; that gave to them their far-reaching commerce and their splendid art. In the achievements of both peace and war, the sturdy Hollanders of the seventeenth century carried off high honours. Two hundred and twenty years ago, the fleets of De Ruyter and Van Tromp kept the Channel against the best and bravest of England's sea-dogs; the matchless creations of Rembrandt's genius claim for all time the reverent admiration of the world.

In the eyes of one who is not a native of the land, it is its art that remains as the most abiding monument of Holland's glory. But being a true and a noble art, it cannot be dissociated from the national life of the Dutch. It was the result and the expression of the sorrows they had known, of the triumphs they had gained. The art a nation produces, is not, as Havard points out, one of those accidents of which we can neither distinguish the causes nor foresee the effects. It is the direct outcome of character and dis-

position, and the reflection of the surroundings in which it develops itself. There is not a single exception to this rule. All art that has endured, all art that is worthy of the name, proves it; the art of Raphael as well as the art of Rembrandt, the art of Hogarth as well as the art of Reynolds.

The art of Holland, from the first, is peculiarly characteristic of its place of birth; no other country could have produced it. From the black horrors of the War of Independence the land had passed into the light of peace and freedom. It began to live its own life, with the grateful joyousness and elasticity of spirit

of a man who, with the dawn, shakes off the oppression of some hideous night-fear, and feels his heart grow glad amid the sunshine and the flowers of renewed hope and activity. There were stir and progress everywhere. Trade and commerce flourished, wealth increased, learning was promoted, municipal institutions were developed. With the growth of wealth came the encouragement of art, and the art, like the life that lay around the artists, broke away from the traditions and the fashion of the past.

It was spontaneous and truly national. Instead of Virgins and saints, such as the older painters had delighted to portray, it depicted sturdy burghers and wise syndics, civic feasts and rustic merry-makings, the "Anatomy Lesson" in place of "The Entombment." If now and again it turned its attention to the old sacred stories, it clothed the actors in them in Dutch costume, gave them Dutch features, and set them in a Dutch landscape. It was a strong, manly art. The painters sat down before nature; they painted what they saw; and their works have to this day the impress of

truth and reality. No artist, with either brush or pen, can move the world to any great degree or to any high purpose, unless he himself has first felt and known what he endeavours to convey to others. The work that touches our hearts must have come straight from the heart of its producer. It was in this spirit that, perhaps unconsciously to themselves, the best Dutch artists of the seventeenth century wrought, and their canvases remain among the artistic treasures of the world, a glory and a joy for ever, grand and solemn in colour and shadow, bright with life, and full of humanity and the expression

of all kindly human aspirations and experiences. Than the greatest of them all, Rembrandt, has there ever been a greater painter! Only Velasquez can dispute the palm with him.

The decadence of Dutch art coincides with the decadence of Dutch power in the eighteenth century. Of late years, however, there has been a wonderful artistic revival in Holland, due to a small band of men who, slavishly copying no ancient master, are yet working in the spirit that was Rembrandt's. They have gone

to Nature for their inspiration, and Nature, as our own Wordsworth tells us, "Never did betray the heart that loved her." Of one of these men, Josef Israels, I have now to speak, and I approach the subject with diffidence, as I have to deal with a painter whose subtle charm it is difficult to describe in formal words.

Josef Israels was born on 27th January, 1824, at Groningen, an old and still busy town, lying in the north-east of Holland, away in the Frisian district. It is said that in that district, once upon a time—I cannot exactly say how the matter stands now—all



Josef Israels.

the men were brave and all the women beautiful; and there the Saxon hordes that invaded Britain some fourteen centuries ago, found their most trustworthy recruits. Israels came of Jewish parents, who brought him up piously in their faith. His father was a tradesman by occupation, and a lover of books and a writer of poetry by choice. From him the son must have inherited his artistic sympathies. Josef early showed his predilections; for business he had no aptitude; the multiplication table was a horror to him; as a lad, he was, as he says himself, like the Joseph of the Bible, only a dreamer of dreams. He played on the violin, he wrote verses, above all he loved to draw. Fortune favoured him so far. There was a drawing-school in Groningen that required monetary help. The elder Israels having been appealed to in the matter, contributed to its support and sent Josef to the school. Josef's fate was fixed. His career was to be that of an artist. One of his first masters was Buys, under whom he studied painting. It is pleasant to note that in the choice of his first important subject he was guided by the sympathies that have led him to the triumphs of his later years. In Groningen there was a well-known character, a pedlar, who dealt mostly in pipes. Of him Israels made a life-size study, and sent it to a local exhibition. The picture was hung, but sad to say, on the back of a door, and could be seen only when the door was shut! His father, discreetly encouraging his inclinations, allowed him to go, at the age of eighteen, to Amsterdam, where he worked in the Academy of Fine Arts, of which Pieneman, Jan Kruseman, and Royer were directors. Kruseman was his principal teacher, and wiser than most of his contemporaries, advised him to follow nature, adding that, in so doing, he would come to understand art. Art was then, generally speaking, at a low ebb in Holland, false sentiment and laboured execution having succeeded to the glorious achievements of the seventeenth century. Israels, although at this period he painted and sold several pictures that must have been in the style of the day, early saw its shortcomings, and caught inspiration and a glimpse of better things from men outside of Holland, whose style differed widely from that which he saw practised at home. Ary Scheffer—not a very safe guide—and Knaus, a natural and true painter, were among the artists whose works stimulated his thoughts with suggestions of the boundless possibilities of Art. An eager

desire to master the technique of his profession took him in 1845 to Paris, where he remained four and a half years. He entered the atelier of Picot, a teacher to whose instructions many able artists—Bouguereau among them—are much indebted. Israels, besides studying in the atelier, worked hard at the Louvre, copying, we are told, "not in a servile, slavish manner, but in a style highly individual," the pictures of Velasquez and Rembrandt, whose methods and results had for the young Dutchman a strong fascination.

Of his first pictures after his return from Paris, he says, in a letter to a friend which I have now before me, "I began to paint Biblical subjects, 'Aaron and his Sons,' 'Saul and David,' all big pictures; then subjects from the Dutch national history, such as 'William of Orange defying the King of Spain,' 'John of Oldenbarendveld in Prison,' 'Prince Maurice at the Death-bed of his Father.' But these subjects were not what I felt beautiful in art, and so I came to look after things around me." We can see that all his training, all his sympathies, all the instincts of his genius pointed out to him one road in art, and only one that he could safely and conscientiously follow; and yet it would almost seem that, as so often happens in like cases, he stumbled on the right road almost by chance. When the time and the opportunity came, however, they found the man prepared and ready.

About this period he had a friend called Mollinger, a Dutch artist who, like himself, was weary of the inanities of the day, and longed to have free play for his individuality. The influence of Constable, "*le renovateur du paysage moderne*," as Sensier calls him, had touched Mollinger, as it had touched so many of the French painters, and he bid fair to do things worthy of the old Dutch traditions, but his too-early death in 1867, at the age of thirty-three, cut short a promising career. Israels and he were very intimate, and their friendship was without doubt mutually beneficial. It is pleasant to remember that several of our own Scottish painters—among them George Paul Chalmers—admired and learned of Mollinger and mourned his loss.

Not far from Haarlem, and right among the low sandhills that border the North Sea, lies the little fishing village of Zandvoort, now too much of a popular watering-place. In Israels' younger days, however, it retained its old-world ways and its quiet simplicity of manners. The madding crowd had not yet

made it fashionable and vulgar. In 1856 Israels betook himself there for a rest, and in order also to look for subjects different from those belonging to "the grand style." At Zandvoort he found his true vocation. He became, heart and soul, the painter of "things around him." Conventionality, tradition, false sentiment, wearisome and ineffectual efforts to realise the action of the dead past—all these he threw to the winds. The fisherman's lot, with its troubles and its pleasures, the cottage interiors with mothers and their babes, women happy and sorrowful, children at play, strong men toiling for bread, smiling infancy and tottering age—from these he drew an inspiration and an artistic power that he would have failed to find in the deeds of all the departed heroes of ancient history, or in the splendours of all the imperial palaces or stateliest pleasure domes that magnificence ever built or genius fancied.

There is a chemical experiment in which we are shown a glass vessel apparently holding nothing but a pure liquid in a state of perfect rest. The glass is sharply shaken, and lo! as by the magic of a moment, the liquid is turned into sparkling crystals, that, lying hidden in the still water, had required only the rude shock to give them form and substance. So it was with Israels. The fresh sea breeze of Zandvoort, the fisherfolk's simple ways did not *create* his artistic instincts, but with their healthy influence they called these instincts into action and gave them direction and vitality. The character of his work is now completely changed; henceforward it is his own work he does and not an imitation of another man's. He paints what he sees and feels and sympathises with, and because he himself is moved and influenced by what he paints, he moves the world to emotions in keeping with his own.

He lived two months at Zandvoort, and the first fruit of his new artistic outlook was a picture entitled "First Love," a young girl and her sweetheart. His career from that date has been one of uninterrupted progression and success. His fame grew apace. "The Shipwrecked Mariner," painted in 1861, was among the first of his pictures to attract attention in London. We, in these islands, learned to appreciate his genius before his own countrymen had grown alive to the greatness of his powers, and, even yet, many of the best of his works are in the possession of British connoisseurs. Now, however, the Dutch are proud of him, as they have reason to be. His honours are

many. He has been awarded medal after medal. He is a Corresponding Member of the Institute of France; an officer of both the Legion of Honour and the Order of Leopold; Knight of the chief orders in Holland, Austria, and Italy; Member (graduate) of the Academy of Painting at Antwerp; and Honorary Member of the Academy of Painting at the Hague. In 1870 he removed from Amsterdam, where he dwelt in the street in which Rembrandt had lived, and went to reside at the Hague, one of the most charming little capitals in Europe, and close to Scheveningen, where he can find endless subjects of the kind his heart delights in. At the Hague he is one of the most honoured citizens of the place, and the chief of a circle of accomplished artists, about one or two of whom I hope to have something to say on a future occasion. His house is a typical dwelling of a Dutch artist—comfortable, bright, and peaceful-looking. The studio, at the bottom of the garden, is a genuine work-room, and all its furnishings are plain and simple; not unfrequently there hangs about it the odour of smoked fish, a perfume that tells of the recent visit of one of the artist's favourite models.

Israels in appearance is little and alert-looking, with sensitive features and keen eyes that can sparkle with fun and grow tender with sympathy and emotion. In his temperament, as in that of most true poets, genial cheerfulness and melancholy are blended. He sees the humour of life and all its compensations; and he sees too all its sorrows, its troubles, and its pathos. He has painted the latter aspect more frequently than the former; but in even his saddest pictures, there is generally some ray of light, some suggestion of alleviation that tells of comfort in store for those who now labour and are heavy laden. He enjoys a good story, even when it is against himself, and takes a hearty human interest in all that goes on around him.

Israels is keenly observant, and always carries a sketch-book in which he jots down whatever strikes him as noteworthy. While painting he grows intensely absorbed in his work and knocks a picture about in a ruthless manner until he gets it to his mind. In his eager self-forgetfulness he covers himself as well as his canvas with paint; and when the subject obstinately refuses to take the shape his artistic instincts require, he feels humiliated and degraded. He has no self-complacency; he is never satisfied with his

own performances. He sometimes says he fears he will only be beginning to learn how to paint when it is time for him to die. No artist, he declares, can be in a more hopeless way than when he sits down before a picture he has just finished, and in self-satisfaction twirls his thumbs and murmurs, "Behold how good a thing I have made!"

Among his best pictures, according to Israels himself, are "The Shipwrecked Mariner;" "Old and Worn Out," and "Silent Conversation," both in the gallery of Mr. J. S. Forbes, London, who has perhaps the best collection in the world of Israels' work; and "The Frugal Meal," now in the possession of Mr. James Reid, Glasgow. A few of his other well-known pictures are "Past Mother's Grave," "The Cradle," "Domestic Sorrow," "The Eve of the Separation," "From Darkness to Light," "The Pancake," "The Poor of the Village," which one year gained the Heywood prize at Manchester, "Alone in the World," "The Children of the Sea," "The Shoemaker," "A Cottage Madonna," and "The Sewing Class in the Orphan Asylum."

Israels, who writes poetry as well as paints it, is both a poet and a realist. His sympathies with humanity, in all its aspects and experiences, are intense and broad, but his heart turns with tenderest feeling to the life of the poor, the struggling and the sorrowful. He takes the facts of existence that lie closest to his observation and his knowledge, and he renders these not in a brutal, uncompromising, formal manner, but suffused with the light of his own poetic nature—

"The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream."

He is not a realist of the Zola kind; he is sternly truthful, but his truth is to the inner life of things, and not to the mere outside form. His children are veritable children, whether they splash in merriment among the shallow waves or sit gravely content beside the cottage fire. He shows us men who have to fight hard for a subsistence wrung from a treacherous element, and whose lives stand in daily danger—strong, rough men, uncouth in bearing, yet cherishing, "as they face the billows," tender thoughts for the wives and bairns—"wives and nuthers maist despairin'"—who watch and pray for them at home, while the winds are howling, and the waves foaming on the long stretch of "the ribbed sea sands." He depicts for us women attending to their household duties, mourning their dear ones dead, with grief that lies too deep for tears, clasping with joy unutterable their babies to their

bosoms—cottage Madonnas of a noble homely type—and in all their varying circumstances full of love and helpfulness, and whether in joy or in sorrow, always tender, patient, and loyal. What a depth of pathos he can throw into his pictures! with what a magic touch and insight he clothes with interest the most trivial incidents and the commonest people! There are many ways to excellence in art. Israels has chosen a way for himself, and his heart and the bent of his genius directing him, he has chosen wisely and well.

Verbal descriptions of pictures are generally unsatisfactory, and I prefer rather to speak of Israels' work as a whole than to enter into minute and chronological particulars regarding individual canvases. In his pictures will be found ample justification for all I have said of his merits as an artist. "The Frugal Meal," "The Pancake," and "The Silent Dialogue," show his kindly sympathy with the homely joys and unpretending life of the labouring poor; "The Children of the Sea," his appreciation of the time of youth when

"Life goes a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy;"

and in "The Shipwrecked Mariner," "Past Mother's Grave," "The Eve of the Separation," "From Darkness to Light," and "Alone in the World," we have sentiment that touches the universal heart of humanity. Even in his saddest pictures, as I have already said, there is a ray of hope; beyond every darkened room in which the mourners sit, and from which the coffin is being borne, there lies the green of God's own earth, flecked with the light that comes from heaven.

Israels does not believe in prettiness at all, nor in technique pure and simple. He aims at suggestion rather than at definition. He is the master of technique, not its slave, and uses it simply to carry out what he believes to be the purpose of all painting—namely, to enable him to produce a picture that, expressing strongly and truly his own feelings and sympathies, will touch a corresponding note in the hearts and intellects of all who look upon it.

Israels is an admirable portrait painter, as he renders vividly the character of his sitter. Among his works of this nature may be mentioned portraits of Professor Goudsmidt, of Professor Modderman, and of Mr. Mesdag, sen., the father of the celebrated Hague painter of the sea, one of Israels' most cherished friends. A portrait of Israels himself recalls a visit he made many years ago to

Scotland. He was in a pleasant and genial company. The portrait was begun by George Reid, (now) R.S.A., and was finished by the combined assistance of George Paul Chalmers, Hugh Cameron, (now) R.S.A., and Israels himself. This portrait is in the possession of Mr. Forbes White, of Aberdeen, whose guest Israels was at the time, and who was, I understand, the purchaser of the first picture, "The Departure," that Israels sold in this country.

Israels paints water colours with grace and tenderness, and with a suggestiveness akin to, and even more delicate than, that which he shows in his oil work. As an etcher he has qualities of his own which Hamerton asserts no other artist possesses. The etching of "The Old Couple," for example, is, as Hamerton says, like a touching page from Victor Hugo, or, better still, reminds us of the song we in Scotland know so well, "I'm wearin' awa', Jean."

All Israels' work has in it the air of distinction, the hall mark that separates it from common work. His colour, which is luminous and has beautiful passages running through it, is never brilliant and never in bad taste. The tone of his pictures is, in keeping with their feeling, quiet and impressive. His composition is almost invariably

easy and natural, and he gives splendid atmosphere and distance. In his effects of light and shade, void of exaggerations and blackness, and full of subtilty and mystery, he shows himself to be of the school of his great countryman, Rembrandt.

Israels has a son, Isaac, now twenty-two years of age, who promises to take a high position as a painter. He too has chosen subjects that lie close to his daily life, but of an order entirely different from those that Josef Israels has made his own. He paints military life, and paints it with vigour, animation, and truthfulness. There is admirable ease in both his drawing and grouping, and his tone of colour, subdued and harmonious, yet not in any way dingy, shows that he has not neglected the lessons taught by his father's work.

"The Struggle for Life," which, by the kind permission of Messrs. Boussod, Valadon, and Co., illustrates this article, is a reproduction of a painting that the artist himself holds in high estimation. The picture was first shown at Amsterdam, and was exhibited at the Glasgow Institute in 1885. It is a characteristic scene in the life of those "toilers of the sea," whom Israels knows so well and whom he depicts with insight and tenderness begotten of his knowledge.

OLD BLAZER'S HERO.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOSEPH'S COAT," "RAINBOW GOLD," "AUNT RACHEL," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THERE was a horrible, frowzy portion of the town into which people of the respectable classes rarely ventured. Probably the doctor and the rent collector were the only men who, with any approach to frequency, carried a decent coat into that squalid quarter. The amateur investigation of the houses of the poor, which has lately grown to be so fashionable, was less in vogue at that time; and the clerics of the parish were of the old-fashioned sleepy sort who were content to take things pretty much as they found them. The spot was vile enough to scare away anybody untoughened by custom for the endurance of its horrors. Festerling pools of weedy water lay at the very doors of the ramshackle, age-blackened houses. The buildings themselves had sunk bodily into the slime of their foundations, until the ground without was a foot higher than the

floor within, and in sinking they had canted helplessly over to this side or that in such wise that they had to be propped up on either side by slanting beams of timber. The supporting baulks were rotten with age and moisture, and might be carved with the thumb-nail.

Vile as the place was, it was highly prized by Mr. Horatio Lowther and by Mr. John Howarth, who between them owned the whole abominable plot of land and all the tumbledown bricks and mortar on it. Both were keen hands at a bargain, and both were dearly fond of a good investment. Bell's Holly (probably Bell's Hollow originally) had proved a noble investment for each of them. The wretched tenements were let out in rooms and brought in a far higher rent than wholesome houses of the same class, let in the ordinary fashion, would have done. There was a Board of Commissioners in the parish whose obvious duty it was to

see that this rookery was cleared; but it was not held fair or neighbourly for the Board to go poking its nose too closely into people's private business. Mr. Lowther was not only a private citizen of repute, but a personage renowned in religious circles, and so good a man was safely to be left to his own way of business. Howarth was known to be warm, and was naturally respected on that account. Nobody knew much about the Board, except that it was elected at stated intervals and without excitement of any kind, and Mr. Lowther, who was active in good works, was a member of it, year in and year out—a fact which in itself was enough to dignify the body, if any one had ever been disposed to think of it.

Now it befell whilst Will Hackett was away in America, and his deserted wife was patiently teaching her infant scholars and nursing her own heartbreak, that a clerk of John Howarth's who had been wont, in the pursuance of his regular weekly round of duties, to collect his employer's rents in Bell's Holly, fell ill, and for awhile the task lay upon the builder's shoulders. It chanced further that one of Howarth's tenants, who of course could never have dwelt in Bell's Holly at all unless he had been in a state of abject poverty, sickened at the beginning of the hot weather, and discovered that even he that is down may have a fall to fear. He had been slack in payment always, being of a feeble and sickly constitution and too much given to beer, and now the payments stopped altogether. Howarth was not the man to stand this sort of nonsense, and having never been slothful in business, went in person to superintend the non-paying tenant's eviction.

The non-paying tenant lay on a dirty mattress on the floor, and though the day was sweltering hot, and hotter in the damp and breathless shelter of Bell's Holly than in most places, he was shivering under a foul and ragged blanket. Mr. Howarth disgustedly remarked within himself that there was no stick of furniture about the place which could have realised a sixpence. He fingered his seals and stroked his chin between his thumb and forefinger and looked extremely large and important.

"About that there rent, Millard? Eh? Come now. About that there rent?"

"I ain't got so much as a single farden, gaffer," said the defaulting tenant.

"Oh!" said Howarth. "That bein' the case, thee'st have to get out o' this."

"Gaffer," returned the defaulting creditor shivering, and staring at him with unin-

terested eyes, "I can't move a foot, nor yet hardly a finger."

"Thee'st have to move foot and finger," said the landlord magisterially. "Out thee goest."

He had no idea that he was brutal. It never entered into his mind to ask himself whether he were acting well in the matter or not. The room in which the defaulting tenant lay was John Howarth's property, and was worth eighteenpence a week to him. If the tenant could not find the weekly eighteenpence he had no right to stay there. Nothing could be more obvious, and the advancement of any consideration outside the plain facts of the case would have looked like an absurdity.

"I ought to ha' gone to the workus, gaffer," said the shivering creature on the floor; "but the new Bastille ain't finished building yet, and the old un's full."

"Well," returned Howarth; "that's no affair o' mine. Out thee goest."

"Wheer?" asked the tenant.

Howarth looked at him in a little genuine surprise.

"Why, what affair is that o' mine?"

The man rolled over as if the discussion bored him, as perhaps it did, and drew the tattered blanket a little higher. Howarth stooped and pulled it off him—not violently, but business-like, as if there had been nothing at all there but the blanket.

"Come along!"

"Gaffer," said the tenant, shivering rather more violently than before, "I can't set one foot afore another."

The landlord rolled up the blanket into an untidy bundle and threw it down-stairs.

"Come along!" he said again.

He was not violent or harsh in manner, but simply and purely business-like. He was looking after his own interests, and that is a thing which every man has an undoubted right to do. He got his arms round the man, and being himself stiffly built and sturdy, lifted the skeleton frame easily enough to its feet. Then he helped him, neither kindly nor unkindly, but as if he were deporting a crate or an arm-chair, out of the room and down the stairs and set him outside the house, where he sat on the ground with his back against the wall shivering in the hot sunlight.

"Now," said Howarth, mopping at his forehead, "I'll speak a word to the relieving officer, as I chance to be passin' his gate this afternoon. I've got two applications for that room o' thine, and one on 'em 'll be in this afternoon."

"Gi' me my blanket, gaffer. I've got the shivers deadly."

Howarth gave the man his blanket, and marched into the next house. A dozen slatternly women stood with their hands under their tattered aprons, or tying up wisps of disordered hair, whilst they looked on at such part of this scene as was enacted in the open air; but no one of them said anything, or seemed to think anything, and Howarth himself, having with his own hands secured his own rights, went from house to house, and chamber to chamber, looking even bigger and more magisterial than common.

It reached his ears casually, a day or two later, that there were two or three cases of typhoid in Bell's Holly, and one or two in the workhouse infirmary, and he was aware, without associating the facts together, that he himself was feeling very shaky and queer. He thought he would go home and have a cup of tea and go to bed. His wife was a little alarmed for him, but not much. She herself was suffering from the same symptoms, though apparently in a slighter degree, and was satisfied to attribute them to the unusual heat of the weather. But next day neither of them was able to rise, and the doctor being called in had looked grave and shook his head. Typhoid fever. Both cases very bad.

He took the news to Mary, who received it as if it had been a punishment for her own hardness to her parents. She hardly knew of what to accuse herself, and yet an inward voice of accusation seemed to speak. She might have been more yielding, more submissive, less bitter in her thoughts. And now her father and mother were dangerously ill, and might be dying, and though, had they lived in health, their feud could hardly have known any healing, nature spoke out and would have way. How desolate and lonely life would seem if this unfatherly father and unmotherly mother died and left her alone in the world! Their very living, even though they were alienated from her and she from them, had been a something after all.

She broke up the school and hastened home.

"Ah!" said her mother, recognising her, feebly and fretfully, "you've come at last!"

Mary kissed her for sole answer, and at once assumed the charge of the two sick-rooms. While the pair were conscious they were harsh with her, but when delirium came the memory of late days seemed blotted out of it, and their daughter's voice and hand

could soothe them when every other sound and touch seemed to wound bruised brain and suffering body. They were blinded mercifully from their own anger, and remembered her only by a kindly instinct.

The fever ran much the same course with Howarth and his wife, and so since it had touched him earlier he came out of the delirium and found himself upon the fatal plain of calm the sooner. The room was dim and cool, and Mary was moving noiselessly about the place. A hollow voice—the mere spectre of a voice—addressed her.

"That thee, Polly?"

She hastened to the bedside, and smoothed the clothes and pillows with a hand that trembled. It neared his cheek and he nestled upon it, rolling his head over to one side and holding the cool hand prisoner there like a child. She let it stay. It was the first caress he had offered her for many and many a day which had not seemed purely mechanical. A tear started at either eye and dropped heavily upon his face. He looked up at her with eyes like a bird's—so large and bright.

"Art a good wench," he said.

He nestled down upon the hand again, and seemed to fall asleep. She watched him long, while in the unnatural attitude in which she stood cramps began to rack and twist her, but she would not move whilst there seemed any danger of disturbing him. At length, little by little, she withdrew and left him in an unchanged attitude. Then creeping to her own room she let her heart have vent in natural tears. Love was back again. There was something left to live for, but it seemed for a time as if the pain of it were greater than the joy.

And John Howarth slept with his fathers, and for an hour or two no one discovered that he was gone.

Then little more than a day later his wife followed him without knowing of it, and the girl was alone again.

Everything they had owned came to their daughter, and for awhile Mary left the place, and then coming back resumed her school, though she no longer had need of it, except for heart's food. She must have somebody to care for, so she cared for her children, and but for their society led a life very solitary and quiet.

She bought Mr. Lowther's share of Bell's Holly and pulled the old place down, and took advice about draining the land and building decent cottages there. Winter was coming by this time, and the weather was unseasonable for the sort of operations which

were contemplated, but she walked one evening with a contractor who had in early days been in partnership with her father to look at the place, and to hear his proposals. His business carried him farther than Bell's Holly, and when he had his talk out he bade her good-bye and left her.

She stood awhile in the midst of the ruins, which as yet were but half removed, and then set out to walk through the wintry twilight home. The gas-lit town glimmered before her, and the keen frosty air made motion a pleasure. She was in a state of unusual hopefulness and brightness. Duty done and being done, and all the little cares and tender solitudes of daily life, were drawing her back to the interest in life which is natural to youth. She thought of these things, and surrendered herself to the new influences half gladly and half regretfully.

She reached her own door and rang there. The rosy maid was taken into service again, and opened the door to her. Mary was passing up-stairs with a cheerful "Thank you" when the maid touched her tremblingly.

"What is it?" Mary asked her.

"If you please, ma'am," said the maid, "Mr. Hackett's here. He's asleep, ma'am."

CHAPTER XVIII.

FOR an instant this amazing intelligence seemed to paralyze mind and body, and if Mary had not already had a hand upon the stair-rail she would have fallen at the shock. She turned ghostly white, and her heart, after what felt like a pause, began to beat furiously. She could not have told if she were glad, or sorry, or resentful.

In a little while this extreme agitation subsided, and, standing with one foot on the lowest step of the staircase, with the maid staring round-eyed and frightened at her white face, she listened and heard the deep breath of the returned prodigal rising and falling in a regular cadence. The room in which he slept was on the ground-floor. The door was ajar, and a faint gleam of light came from a single gas jet, which was lowered so far that in daylight it might have been invisible.

Mary moved softly to the door, trembling from head to foot. Three steps carried her across the narrow little hall, and then she paused with a hand upon the doorpost of the room. The maid, opened-mouthed and open-eyed, waited for what might happen. The mistress entered the room noiselessly, and peered through the dusk at the sleeping figure in the arm-chair. Hackett was lying

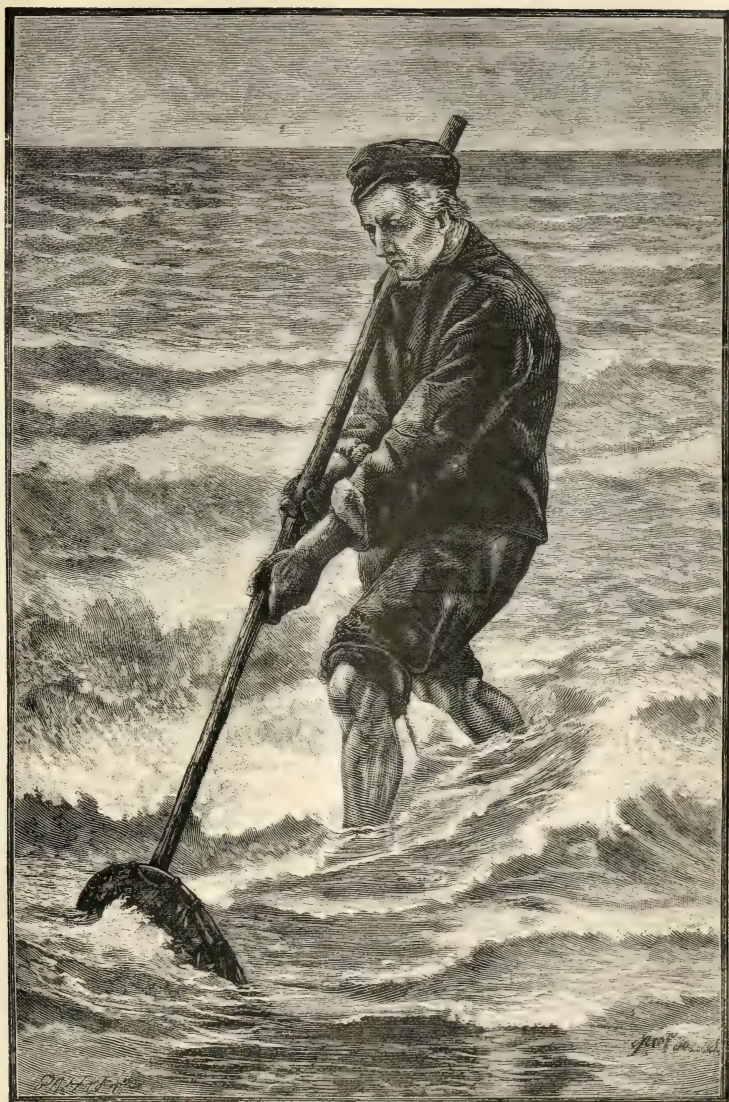
broadcast with his feet wide apart, and his arms hanging loosely over the arms of the chair. His head had lurched forward, and his chin was tucked into his disordered waistcoat. Even in that poor light there was no mistaking him.

Yet when she had looked awhile she was impelled to turn the gas a little higher. In the clearer light the returned prodigal lay at a marked disadvantage. The feet seemed to be cast forward in ostentation of the gaping boots and the frayed edges of the trousers. All his raiment was wrinkled, and seedy, and disreputable. His shirt cuffs were crumpled and dirty, his cheek bore a week's black stubble, his nose had taken a tinge of red.

His wife absorbed all these details of his aspect, and stood wondering that she should care so little and feel so undisturbed. She did not know as yet that the shock of his return had dulled all power of feeling, and she stood and noted every shabby sign of social failure and moral degradation as if they were painted in a picture and had no personal interest for her.

There was an odour of bad brandy and stale tobacco about this graceless returned prodigal, and his dissipated, out-at-elbows look was in accord with it. His wife sat down in a chair opposite to him, regarding him fixedly, going over and over again, one by one, the signs of squalor and decay, and little by little the thought grew up in her mind that she was bound to this man for his life or hers. The first apprehension of this fact arose clearly enough. It was not that the knowledge of it seemed incomplete; but at first she lacked the power to care about it. Then slowly it grew more and more definite, because more and more horrible, and at last it overwhelmed her so, that she rose in physical protest against it. She turned the gaslight to the full, and went anew over every sign before her. Hackett changed his posture, winking and muttering at the light, and she started behind the table instinctively to place some barrier between herself and him; but he settled back again in a mere second or two, and breathed more stertorously than before.

And now that she was awake to the terror of the position, she set her wits to work to find out what she might best do for the moment. There was no creature to whom she might run for advice or assistance, and she was thrown entirely upon her own resources. But she managed in a while to grasp the position pretty thoroughly. Above all other things, it was evident that no pity,



THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.
By JOSEF ISRAELS.



compunction, or affection had brought this rascally husband home again. He had come in search of spoil, and in that respect she was quite defenceless against him, for there was no Married Women's Property Act in those days. She did not even desire to defend herself in that particular, for in the flush of her dread of him and her abhorrence of him, she would willingly have surrendered everything in her possession, to be rid of him once and for all.

So she slipped to her bedroom and searched her desk to see what she had there. Finding some fourteen or fifteen pounds, she packed the money in a sheet of note-paper, and then wrote a hasty note.

"Take this, and make yourself respectable. When you want more write to me. Do not try to see me, for I would rather die than speak to you."

She enclosed this and the money in an envelope, and, descending to the kitchen, gave it into the hands of the maid.

"You must sit up," she said, "until Mr. Hackett awakes, and then give him this. If he asks for me—never mind that. Give him this when he awakes."

Then she fled to her room and locked herself in, and barricaded the door, and lay in wait for what might happen. Footsteps and voices passed, and distant unimportant sounds shook her with dread a score of times. Once a rap at the door, following on the faint sound of stealthy footsteps on the stair, so made her tremble that she could find no voice to answer. The knock was repeated timidly, and Mary whispered—

"What is it?"

"I've brought you a cup of tea, ma'am," the maid whispered back in a voice as frightened as her own.

"Take it away," said her mistress. "Don't come again until Mr. Hackett has gone away."

The maid retired, and in the solitude and silence of her kitchen found things so dismal and oppressive that she was forced at length to wrap a shawl about her head and steal into the roadway. Drawing the front door gently after her, and nursing the note intended for Mr. Hackett in her hand, she went to the gate and stood shivering behind it, finding some comfort in the sight and sound of passers-by. Amongst them was Ned Blane, and it was more timidity than discretion which prevented her from calling upon him and requesting his protection. But when an hour had gone by and the maid's nose was blue with cold and her hands so chilled that

she could no longer feel her own fingers or the note she carried, she recognised a passing figure in the dusk and hailed it.

"That thee, Hepzibah?"

"What's the matter?" Hepzibah demanded, pausing and peering at her. "Who is it?"

"Me," said the maid, beginning to whimper a little. "I wish you'd come in and sit wi' me a bit. I'm afraid to be by myself, and I'm that cold I don't know what to do a-standing here."

"Where's the missis?" Hepzibah demanded.

"Her's locked herself in," answered the maid, with a dreadful enjoyment of the situation. "The master's come home again, and he's asleep down-stairs, and her's afraid of him."

"Will Hackett back again?" cried Hepzibah. "It's pretty plain to see what's brought him back. He's got news somehow as his wife has got money. Has her seen him yet?"

"Her's seen him," said the maid, "but he ain't seen her. He was asleep when the missis came home."

Hepzibah opened the gate with great cautiousness and, preceded by the maid, entered the house silently and stealthily. In the kitchen she drew forth a whispered history of the manner of Mr. Hackett's arrival. The maid, it seems, had heard a loud and bullying noise of knocking at the front door, and going in haste to answer it, had but just escaped from being staggered over by the new arrival, who, after glaring at her for a minute without apparent recognition, had felt his way into the front room, fallen immediately by happy or unhappy accident into the arm-chair and gone to sleep there. Then the narrator of these things produced the note with which her mistress had entrusted her.

"I'm to sit up till he wakens," she said; "and then I've got to gi'e him this. But I'm afraid to go anigh him."

"I ain't," said Hepzibah. "You just run down to Mrs. Blaine's and tell her I shall stop and sleep at mother's to-night, with my compliments, and then run on to mother's and tell her to sit up for me. I'll see this job through, anyway."

So the small servant, happy to escape, got out by the back way and ran swiftly on her errand. She had scarce been gone a quarter of an hour when Hepzibah, seated there in listening wrath, heard a movement and a series of mutterings, and marching bolt up-right into the front room confronted Hackett.

He was rubbing his eyes with both hands and yawning when she first set eyes on him, but a second later he threw his hands aloft and stretched himself. The sudden sight of Hepzibah glaring stonily at him from the doorway froze him in that attitude for a moment, but he recovered himself almost immediately.

"Hillo!" he said, "what are you doing here?"

"I'm told to give you this from Mrs. Hackett," said Hepzibah, throwing the envelope on the table. It dropped heavily there, and a muffled jingle arose from it.

"Oh!" said Hackett, staring angrily back at her as he made a step towards the table. Hepzibah folded her arms and regarded him uncompromisingly. He became a little restless under her gaze, and to escape it took the envelope and opened it. When he had read the note he opened the package within it and counted its contents from one hand into the other.

"Where is Mrs. Hackett?" he asked, transferring the money to his pocket.

"How should I know?" asked Hepzibah in turn. "What do you want with Mrs. Hackett? You've got what you came for."

Will, finding no immediate answer to this direct attack, tried his wrathful stare again, but finding himself looked down, swaggered round on his heel and began to look for his hat. It lay beside the chair he had lately occupied, and having found it, he stood brushing it with his arm, shivering sharply twice or thrice.

"Tell her I'll see her to-morrow," he said, fixing his hat upon his head and avoiding Hepzibah's gaze.

"Not I," said Hepzibah. "If you've got any messages give 'em yourself."

Of course this was very discourteous and impudent; but Will was a little out of sorts and indisposed to combat.

"Let me get by," he said, advancing towards her.

"Glad and willin'," returned Hepzibah, making room for him; "and rare and pleased I should be to see the last of thee."

Even this Mr. Hackett declined to resent, not caring to provoke just then any fuller expression of Hepzibah's sentiments concerning him. As well as his cold, cramped limbs and shuffling boots would allow him, he swaggered to the front door, and throwing it wide open and closing it with a bang, marched from the house, and for that night disappeared. He turned up again next morning in a brand new suit of clothes, with

linen, boots, hat, gloves, and neckcloth, all new and fine, and made a call upon the solicitor who had acted for John Howarth.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE returned wanderer was, of course, a great deal incensed by the note his wife had left for him, and it began to be clear to his own intelligence that before he had read that heartless greeting he had been inspired by the tenderest and most husbandly sentiments. After that, however, he was going to stand no nonsense. She had declared war, and it eased Will's conscience to be able to regard her as an acknowledged and open enemy. He was able to swagger in upon the solicitor and lay claim to his wife's belongings without any too pressing sentiment of self-disdain. At bottom he knew that he was acting like a blackguard, but he was not forced to admit as much to himself.

He put up at the King's Arms, and his open arrival there excited a good deal of attention and comment. People for the most part gave him the cold shoulder, and there was not a soul who met him with that enthusiasm of friendship which he felt to be due to a popular traveller on his return to his native place. There were some who were willing to be friendly, but they were not the people he wanted, and altogether he was less happy than he had hoped to be. In respect of mere money he had never been so well off in all his life. Howarth had died "warm," as the current phrase about him went—he was reputed a twelve thousand pound man—and Master Will had before him the prospect of an undisturbed nibble at that considerable hoard whilst it should last. The wife was defenceless against him, and as a last protest against the possibilities of conscience—What had he married her for but her money?

The averages get wonderfully good care taken of them always, and by way of balance in this instance, if Will Hackett undervalued Mary his wife, Ned Blane overvalued her almost enough for full counterpoise. For by this time there had never been so patient and so angelic a sufferer since the world began. So meek, so defenceless, yet so courageous, she seemed to Ned's eyes, that he worshipped her. His own stalwart limbs and rude health defied disaster and seemed somewhat to merit it, if only for the sake of a rough-and-tumble with the world and fate; but she, so delicate, tender, and pallid, should surely have been sheltered from all imaginable ills, and have been called to confront nothing that was

harsh, comfortless, or unfriendly. And thus, as was natural for a man in love, though it could only be absurd for any but a lover, the infant school was the scene of a most valorous slow tragedy, and the native instinct to hold body and soul together without a lapse from honour, became an enterprise purely angelic.

The passion which deified the girl naturally enough demonised the scoundrel who was her husband. To look at him fairly, Master Will was no more than despicable, but Blane was not in a position to assume a purely critical attitude. To him the unfaithful and selfish rascal stood mountainous, phenomenal, hideously deformed—hateful as the Great Napoleon, and the causer of woes as profound. Blane had carried a dull, slow despair so long that he had begun to think of himself as a man of a dull nature, but now that it began to be noised abroad that Hackett was back again and squandering his wife's substance, he began to hate with a heat and intensity which sometimes terrified him. The fierce loathing and revolt he sometimes felt at the bare existence of this poor and commonplace personage grown phenomenal would stab at him as if with the sudden anguish of a red-hot knife, and he would sick and whirl with the intensity of his own hatred.

Resolutely hour by hour and day by day he had to fight against himself lest he should seek the man and lay upon him hands that could be nothing less than murderous. But to do the villain a damage would have been to rob himself of his own right to despise him. And beyond that, he had no right to interfere. He kept, in the very midst of his madness, self-possession enough to know that he could not quarrel with the husband without throwing an undeserved stigma upon the wife. What were they, Mary and he, to each other? What could they ever be? If the current of his love had flowed in a smooth channel it would certainly never have run dry, for there was a perennial spring of loyalty within the man; but the obstacles it encountered dammed it and held it in until it gathered strength and volume enough to go dashing and spraying in these wild cataracts of passion.

Since he had broken the bestial bond which for a little while had held him, he had fallen back into all the regular ways of his youth, and amongst other revived habits, was that of taking his mother to the old-fashioned Nonconformist chapel, in which she had worshipped, after her own shallow fashion, all

her life. He used to sit in sight of Mary Hackett there, and without criticising motives too closely, it is just possible that he continued that revived habit of his as much for the sake of seeing her, as for any reason which the pastor of the place might have found more solid.

It happened one gusty Sunday night in mid-winter, a month after Hackett's return, that he went to chapel alone, and returning homeward, overheard a phrase which, in its own due time, brought him the supreme temptation of his life.

The Bard was dutifully elbowing Hepzibah homeward, and the two were butting against the wind, head downward and shoulders squared, when Blane came up behind them. Hepzibah, with the wind in her ears, was unconscious of the footsteps in her rear, and shouting at Shadrach, said:

"Trust a woman for readin' a woman's heart. It's Master Ned her cares for."

The unwilling listener stood suddenly still, and all the blood in his body seemed to riot for a moment in his heart and head. He was conscious of nothing for awhile, and when he recovered himself, he was surprised to see the dark figures still but a little way in front of him. He seemed to have been absent from himself and them for a long time.

Hepzibah's voice reached him, blown backward by the wind.

"No." She was evidently answering some saying of Shadrach's which Blane had missed. "No harm'll come on't. Her's as good as gold, and so is he; but it's him as her's grown to care for, though it's a million to one her never guesses it."

Now Ned Blane had never played the eaves-dropper in his life before, but if all self-respect had hung for ever upon the issue of that temptation, he would have let it go. He had followed to hear, simply and purely because he could not do otherwise, but now that he had heard he stood still in the roaring wind.

If that were true!

The thought haunted him thereafter day and night and brought with it such temptations as the simplest-minded may fancy. Yet these were no temptations, for he would not dishonour her in his thoughts, however his own demon might strive with him.

But in a little while the true temptation came. That howling wind turned due north and blew for days. It bore bitter frost upon its wings and locked every stream and canal and lake and standing pond deep in black

ice. There had been no such frost for years, and every skater in the township must needs turn out day by day or night by night (according as their avocations bound them, or their want of avocation left them free) to revel on Parker's Mill-pond, a space of water some dozen acres in extent, which, being sheltered by thick-wooded slopes from the wild wind, had frozen marble smooth. Ned was not much of an expert, but the fleet passage through the stinging air at once inspired and soothed him, and he was there night after night amongst the crowd who sped to and fro in the coming and going of numberless torchlights and the steadier glare of cresset fires which burned upon the bank.

Saturday afternoon left him free for an hour or two of daylight, and he set out for the pool. As he reached the edge there was a great noise of applause, and a huge horse-shoe line of spectators was formed upon the ice to watch the evolutions of some skilled performer. Ned, dangling his skates in his hand, walked over drearily enough to see what might be seen, and shouldering through the crowd at a place where it was less dense than at most points, beheld his enemy, who, with half his world for onlookers, was rollicking hither and thither with an enchanting grace and surety. His habitual swagger became him here, and was converted into a beauty. He circled, poised on the outer edge, at apparently impossible angles, soaring like a bird on even wing, waving and darting with a bold and sweet dexterity, and moving, as it seemed, more by volition than by mere force of skill and muscle.

And as he skimmed the ringing ice, followed by the hurrahs and hand-clapping of the crowd, restored to all his old kingship, Ned looked on, and was aware of such an inward volcano of rage and hatred as scorched his heart within him. There is no speaking of these things. The mere truth is that these extreme rages of great passion, whether they be of love or hate, are so rare that no words have been coined for them. We find words for the commonplace, because all men and women have felt it. But the little hate is as common as glass, and the great is, happily, as rare as the Koh-i-noor.

With that phenomenal and unnamable hate Ned Blane watched his blackguard rival as he swam in perfect grace and Mercurial swiftness on the frozen surface of the pool. The mere presence of the man was enough; but the popular applause choked him as if with sulphurous ashes.

There was at the south end of the sheet of

water a mill-wheel, now frozen and set, but it had been working until yesterday, and near it the ice was known to be quaggy and unsafe. The bases of the horse-shoe line were drawn away from this unsound spot of ice, and in the middle of it was a low post with a cross piece upon it, and on the cross piece was pasted a strip of paper, whereon was printed the word dangerous. Now that day, as every day of late, Hackett had been drinking, and this sign of danger lured him nearer and nearer. He had but enough brandy aboard to spur him to his physical best, and he did things in spirituous recklessness which he would not have dared to do had he been altogether sober, for in that state his nerves were apt to turn aghast at very simple matters.

But now he was so sure of everything that, in spite of warning cries, he must needs go swimming and sailing nearer and nearer to the warning-post, trusting to his own swiftness to carry him harmless over the treacherous ice. And Blane, since one must needs tell the whole truth about him, stood looking on in a devilish satisfaction in the certainty that by-and-by the ice would give way with him, and maybe drown him, and so rid the earth of a villain grown phenomenal.

Crash! Hackett was through, and the ice starred right to the feet of the horse-shoe line. The people started backward with a wild stampede, which set the solid floor waltzing like the slow movement of free water beneath free wind. Ned Blane held his ground.

"Drown!" he said within himself.

Then in one mere second—for at such times fancy will busy herself, and will get through more work than she will do in a common year—he saw all that might happen from this unnamable villain's death, and justified himself to let him die, and exulted in the thing that lay before him.

Up came Hackett, spouting and screaming with struggling arms, and down again he went like a stone. The crowd yelled and screamed, and went silent. He came up again and clutched at a square of ice, and went down with it. And then and there, with one incredible lightning flash, Blane read his own heart, and snatched his own salvation.

EPILOGUE.

ON a spring morning the wind was clanging and the bells were pealing, and rent clouds charged over the chill blue field

of the sky at such a pace that the random gleams of sunshine cast between them swept hill and dale with a bird-like speed. The strong sunshine breasted the heathy hills and climbed them at a flash; the surly shadow crept in its rear, and the new bright racer leapt behind the gloomy edges of the cloudy shade, as if eager to annihilate it.

Shadrach, standing at the door of his mother's cottage, clad in his Sunday best, with a white favour in his coat, and his hands enshrouded in monstrous gloves of Berlin thread, fixed his new hat with an air of resolution, as if prepared to hold to it in any extremity of the wind's boisterous jollity.

"I tek it," he said, turning round to Hepzibah, who stood behind in a summery costume of white muslin and a very triumph of a bonnet, "I tek it as a kind of a honour as ain't often done the likes of huz."

"I should think thee didst and all," answered Hepzibah. She spoke almost snappishly, being engaged with a hairpin and a refractory glove-button, but she looked up a second later with a frank and smiling face.

"Yes," said Shadrach's mother, hovering about Hepzibah and touching her here and there with decided fingers, and retiring with her head on one side to observe the artistic effect of each stroke. "It's a thing as you'd ought to remember to your dyin' day, Shadrach. To be tied by the same words—it's a noble honour, Shadrach, and I hope as it bespeaks well for your future."

"Ankore to that, I says, ma'am!" said Hepzibah's mother, who was weak, like Shadrach, whilst Shadrach's mother was jerkily decided, like Hepzibah. "Hepzibah," she added solicitously, "you're lookin' a bit coldish a-ready. You'll be froze in that book-muslin afore you reach the church. Thee'dst better have a shawl across thy shoulders."

"Rubbidge!" said Shadrach's mother. "The wind 'll keep 'em warm enough. It's time we started, ain't it, Shadrach?"

Shadrach, with difficulty unbuttoning his coat, drew from an inner pocket a great turnip of a watch and consulted it with pride.

"Theer's a good three-quarters yet," he answered. "Theer's no use in arriving before iverybody. Master Ned and his good lady 'll be on the stroke o' time, I bet. Nayther too soon nor yet to late, that's Master Ned's method."

"Well, then, shut the door, and sit down," said his mother; "and for goodness mercy's

sake let me button up thy coat! Thee'st leave all thy finger-tips i' the button-holes."

"Theer's a many curious things as comes to pass," said Hepzibah, seating herself with a slow, angular precision, and spreading out the book muslin with careful hands, "as nobody 'ud iver dream on, and this is one of 'em."

"Ah!" returned Shadrach, "Master Ned's got the wish of his heart at last, and I'm gay and glad on it. Her held him off and on a longish time, though. Her might ha' got it over this time last year, without seemin' anyhow uncommon. I've no mind to speak ill o' them as is departed——"

"Departed!" repeated his mother, cutting him short with an air of disdain. "I wonder how you can use such a word about such a creetur! A tavern railer, as was took by a judgment! And thee mayest say what thee likest, Shadrach, I shall never think it anythin' but a straightfor'ard flyin' i' the face o' Providence as Master Ned should ha' tried to fish him out again. He was meant to be drowned, an' he *was* drowned; and what's meant to be wool be, in spite of all the Master Neds i' the world. And as for 'departed,' all I got to say is, you might know better than try to turn your own mother's stomach on your weddin' mornin'."

"I used the word," said Shadrach meekly, "because I didn't wish to be too hard upon him."

"Let him rest, poor creetur!" put in Hepzibah with unexpected gentleness. "He was a fine figure of a man, but he'd got a bit too much of his grandfeyther and his feyther in him. He had *nothin'* to do with the makin' of either o' *them*, so far as I know, and Them Above 'll know how far he was to be made to answer."

"That is ondoubtedly the way to look at it," returned the Bard, "ondoubtedly the way to look at it." His Berlin-gloved hands groped indeterminately at his tail pockets, and catching Hepzibah's eye he looked confused, and sent a wandering glance around the apartment.

"What ha' you got there?" demanded Hepzibah.

The Bard's glance became more and more confused.

"What is it, Shadrach?" asked the bridegroom's mother.

"It's a line or two," replied the blushing Bard. "Nothin' particular; but I was afeared I might ha' lost it. It's a thing as I knocked off last night a-walkin' home from the pit."

"What's it about?" said Hepzibah, clasp-

ing her knees with her hands, and looking from her own mother to Shadrach's with a beaming face.

"It's about Master Ned and Zyber and me," replied the Bard, avoiding his bride's glance and addressing the society impersonally.

"Thee and me!" cried Hepzibah rapturously, rising in her chair and thumping back again. "Let's have it."

Shadrach produced the manuscript from his tails and read :

"It takes a heart fired from above
To risk your life for them you love,
What must it be although too late
To strive to save the life you hate?
Yet such it was with Edward Elane
Who always bore the hero's name.

"It was the act of Master Ned
Which let his humble friend be wed
Because Hepzyber was so fond
Her never could unloose the bond.
Till Master Ned should married be,
Her would not wedded be to me.

"I hope good luck may come to all,
Whate'er their station may befall,
And all about the English nation
Be happy in their place and station;
As I am sure I am in mine
To be Hepzyber's valentine."

This, by immediate and unanimous consent, was voted Shadrach's *chef d'œuvre*, and before the day was out his mother had confided it to the printer's hands. It was issued I may say, though I run beyond the temporal limits of my story to make the announcement, for private circulation only, and to this day framed copies of it, yellow with age, decorate several mantelpieces in the district.

"Time we was off, Shadrach," said Hepzibah, when the tumult of enthusiastic comment had subsided.

They passed out at the door and over the windy heath, the bridegroom sheepishly arming the bride.

"We shall have a run for it yet, I declare," cried Shadrach's mother. "There's the carriage a-drivin' to the church. I can see the white faviour on the coachman's bosom."

The wind-swept music of the bells rolled round them, and as they reached the gate, panting in indecorous haste, Mary Hackett stepped from the carriage and greeted them with a smile. The last ray of cloud was borne away by the boisterous wind, and the sky shone clear, as if for a happy omen.

CASTLE GLOUME.*

By JOHN RUSSELL.

HIGH on the breezy fell, in the gap of the mountain waters,
Where the deep-voiced cataract booms to the chime of its tinkling daughters,
Where the oak and the hazel grow in a bower of their own contriving,
And the primrose, year by year, comes forth at Spring's reviving,
Standeth the Castle of Gloume, half prone in its mouldering beauty,
Like a sentinel fallen asleep and slain at his post of duty.

Ah, but the time is long since it rose at the builder's will,
And the stones were dragged from the brook, and piled on the slope of the hill,
And archway and loophole were framed, tall turret and bastion fair,
The deep moat far below, and the battlements high in air;
And the ramparts, morn and even, and all through the still o' the night,
Rang with the tramp of the warrior, ready for foray or fight.

Many a sun hath set since over its turrets upborne
Floated on blazoned banner the sable galley of Lorne;
Since out of the stormy west the Sons of Diarmid came,
And christened its lordly towers with the strength of the Campbell name,
Till the host of the mighty Montrose, with a hurricane's rush and roar,
Swept down on the fated halls of the proud Maccallummore.

* Castle Gloume is the ancient name of Castle Campbell, near Dollar, Clackmannanshire. It belonged at one time to the Stewarts of Lorne, and passed from them, by marriage, to the Argyll family, who about the end of the fifteenth century changed the name to Castle Campbell.

But Nature is stronger than man, and nobler than vengeance and war,
 And the touch of her hand hath softened the ruinous rent and the scar;
 She hath muffled the sounding ramparts with a mossy turf of green,
 And her feathery grasses are waving where the banner of old was seen,
 And the swallow that comes with the Summer is her guest in chamber and hall,
 And the blackbird and throstle are singing in the bourtree high on the wall.

And under the castled summit she hath mingled the wild and the sweet,
 In the gorge of the seething waters, where beauty and terror meet,
 Where the ash and the elm are flinging green boughs o'er the cataract's way
 As it plunges beneath the cliffs with the roar of a lion at bay,
 And whitens, and boils, and rages, through chasms unseen by the sun,
 Till it leaps into light with the triumph of a conflict encountered and won.

And away from this gloomy grandeur, savage and wild and stern,
 Away from the roar of the torrent, what a glory of leaf and fern!
 Mazes of rowan and wildwood, where the harebell and violet blow,
 And the sunlight through flickering beeches is flecking the brook below;
 And, pillared against the shadows, the bole of the birch is seen
 Like a broken shaft of moonlight entangled amid the green.

Lovely in Spring-time's sweetness, and lovely in Summer's bloom,
 Are thy dells and streams and woodlands, O mouldering Castle of Gloume!
 Lovely when Autumn is shedding the beauty that brings decay,
 And the red October flushes the bracken-shaded brae;
 Lovely when tree and turret are tufted with Winter's snow,
 And the frost with its mystical fretwork hath silvered the glen below.

But alike to thee are the seasons, O castle old and grey!
 For what to the dead of December are the birds and the blossoms of May?
 And what unto thee are the memories that deep on my spirit flow,
 As I think of thee and the past, and the faces of long ago?
 Yet thou holdest for me the delights and regrets of a buried year,
 And dear art thou to my heart, as the graves of the dead are dear.

WALKS IN OLD PARIS.

BY AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE.

V.—LA CITÉ.

NEITHER the Conciergerie nor the modern Salle des Pas Perdus can be considered to belong to old Paris. So the Avenue de Constantine must lead us away to the Rue de la Cité (formerly Rue de la Lanterne, de la Juiverie, and du Marché Palu), which crosses the island from the Pont Notre-Dame to the Petit Pont. Neither of these bridges is now of the slightest interest, but in the last century the Pont Notre-Dame, built in 1500, defended at the ends by tourelles and lined on either side by quaint gabled houses, with open shops beneath, was especially picturesque. One of its bridge-shops belonged to the famous picture-dealer Gersaint, and had a

sign painted and given by Watteau. Close to the bridge, and by the spot where the ancient Porte de la Cité stood, was the Prison de Glaucin, where St. Denis, the Apostle of the Gauls, was immured. From very early times this cell was transformed into an oratory, and as early as 1015 the knight Ansolde and his wife Rotrude founded a convent of secular-canonics opposite it, in honour of *Monsieur Saint Denis*. The oratory, under various names, St. Catherine, St. Denis de la Chartre, and St. Symphorien, existed till 1704, when the building was given to the Academy of St. Luke. The conventual church contained, till its demolition in 1810, a group by Michel Auguier

representing St. Denis in prison receiving the sacrament from the Saviour himself, and over the portal was inscribed, "Icy est la chartre en laquelle saint Denis fut mis prisonnier, où notre Sauveur Jésus le visita et lui bailla

whom its church was rebuilt in 1703. Church and monastery were alike destroyed in 1859 to build the barrack. At the entrance of the precincts of St. Eloi, opposite the palace, at the angle of the Rue de la Vieille Draperie and de la Barillerie, stood, till 1605, a pyramidal monument, marking the site of the paternal home of Jean Chastel, razed to the ground by decree of Parliament.



Notre-Dame.

son précieux corps et sang. Il y a grand pardon pour toutes personnes qui visiteront ce saint lieu." The site of St. Denis de la Chartre is now covered by the new wing of the Hôtel Dieu.

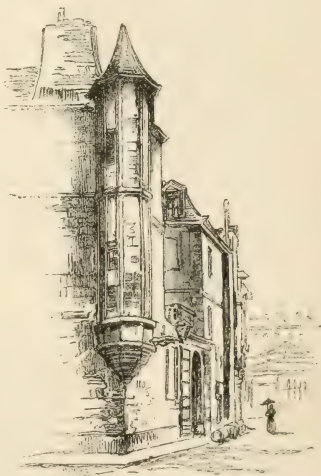
The street which opened opposite St. Denis first bore the name of Miera Madiana—the little Midian—from its Jewish inhabitants. It was afterwards called Rue de la Pelleterie, from the trade which at one time almost exclusively occupied it. At the end of the street was the church of St. Barthélemy, which served as a chapel to the palace of the Merovingian kings, and which Hugues Capet endowed with the relics of St. Magloire, Bishop of Dol. It became a parish church in 1140; its rebuilding in the style of Louis XVI. was begun in 1775, but it was unfinished at the Revolution, when it was totally destroyed, together with the neighbouring church of St. Pierre des Arcis and that of St. Croix, which had become parochial in 1134.

On the right of the broad Avenue Constantine, which leads from the Palais de Justice, across the centre of the island, to the Rue de la Cité, on the site now occupied by the great Caserne de la Cité, was the Ceinture St. Eloi, containing the vast monastery of St. Eloi, which the sainted goldsmith founded in a house facing the palace which he had received from Dagobert, and placed under the government of St. Aure, who died there of the plague in October, 666, with 160 of her nuns. The monastery of St. Eloi was bestowed in 1629 upon the Barnabites, for

served the custom of reciting the office of Good Friday upon every Friday in Lent to the intention of the conversion of the Jews. From the thirteenth century the curé of La Madeleine bore the title of arch-priest, which secured him a supremacy over all other curés of the diocese: the little church was also the seat of the oldest of Parisian confraternities—*la grande confrérie de Notre-Dame aux seigneurs, prêtres, et bourgeois de Paris*, which had the archbishop for its abbot and the president of Parliament for its dean, and possessed 25,000 livres of rental. La Madeleine was sold and pulled down at the Revolution, but a pretty side door belonging to it, which opened from 1512 upon the Rue de Licorne, continued in existence here till 1843, when, on the opening of the Rue de Constantine, it was adapted to the presbytery of St. Severin. A little farther down the Rue de la Juiverie, on the western side, was the Halle de Beauce, a corn exchange, which existed from immemorial times till the sixteenth century. Beyond this the Rue de la Calandre opened westwards, and here, in the "Maison des Paradis," St. Marcel, bishop of Paris, is said to have been born in the fourth century, in honour of which, on Ascension Day, the chapter of Notre-Dame visited it, in solemn procession, annually. In the Rue de la Calandre, at the house called from its sign, *du Grand Cog*, Theophraste Renaudot, in 1630, printed the first Parisian newspaper, *La Gazette de France*.

Beyond the opening of the Rue de la Calandre, the Rue de la Cité was called Rue du Marché Palu (palé or raised). Here, on the right, beyond the Grande Orberie (Herberie, afterwards the Marché Neuf, destroyed 1860), stood the ancient basilica of St. Germain le Vieux, founded by Chilperic after the death of St. Germain, bishop of Paris, in the hope of eventually endowing it with the body of that prelate, provisionally buried in the abbey of St. Vincent, afterwards St. Germain des Prés. The church never obtained so great a relic except as a visitor, when it was brought for refuge here within the walls of the Cité, from the Normans, but when it was taken back in peace to the mainland, an arm was left here in recognition of the hospitality it had received. St. Germain le Vieux was sold and entirely destroyed at the Revolution. The space east of the Rue de la Cité is now occupied by the huge buildings of the Hôtel Dieu, which, from the earliest times, though on a much smaller scale, has been the neighbour of Notre-Dame. The ground now occupied by the hospital was covered till the present century, by a labyrinth of little streets and curious old buildings. Between the Rue de la Lanterne and Rue de la Juiverie (both now swallowed up in the Rue de la Cité) the Rue des Marmousets ran eastwards to the cloister of Notre-Dame, taking its name from a house described as *Domus Marmosetorum*, from the little sculptured figures on its front. Another house pointed out in this street, inspired the neighbours with terror. It was said to have been inhabited by a pastry-cook, who made an alliance with his next neighbour, a barber. When any one entered the barber's room to be shaved, as soon as he was seated a trap-door opened beneath his chair, and he disappeared into a cellar communicating with the house of the pastry-cook, who served up his flesh to his customers in little patties, which long enjoyed an extraordinary popularity in Paris. De Breul, who tells this story, states that the house was razed to the ground, and that it was forbidden ever to build on its site, but Jaillot proves that Pierre Balut, counsellor of Parliament, was permitted to build on the spot by letters patent of François I. in January, 1536. A curious round tourelle, with a well at its foot, belonging to the house which was then erected, stood till the middle of the present century. The first street towards the river, on the left of the Rue des Marmousets, was the Rue de Glatigny, named from a house which belonged to Robert and, Guillaume de Glatigny in 1241.

Title deeds of 1266 speak of houses in *Glatigniac*. Here was the Val d'Amour, and here, according to Guillot, "Maignent (demeurent) dames au corps gent, folles la leurs corps." Behind the Rue de Glatigny, close to the back of St. Denis de la Chartre, was the little church of S. Luc, where the relics of St. Cloud were secured from the English, from 1428 to 1443. Eastwards from the Rue de Glatigny ran the Haute and Basse Rue des Ursins. In the Rue Haute des Ursins (also called de l'Ymage) stood the old Hôtel des Ursins where Jean Juvénal des Ursins lived (1360—1431), who was counsellor to the Châtelet, advocate to Parliament, provost of the trades, advocate and counsellor of the king, and chancellor of the dauphin. He is represented with his wife and eleven children in a curious picture, formerly in Notre-Dame and now in the Louvre, and another portrait in the Louvre represents his son Jean-Guillaume, Baron de Traynel, Chancellor of France under Charles VII. and Louis XI. It is said that Racine resided for a time at No. 9, Rue Basse des Ursins. Close to the end of this street was the interesting church of St. Landry, which, in 1160, was already



In the Rue de Hautefeuille.

parochial. It contained a shrine, enriched, in 1418, by Pierre d'Orgemont, with some bones from the shrine of St. Landry at Notre-Dame. The Dauvet family restored the

church in the fifteenth century, and it contained the fine tombs of Jehan Dauvet (1471) and Jehan Baudran (1459) his wife, as well as several eighteenth-century monuments to the family of Boucherat, and the mausoleum of Catherine Duchemin, wife of the famous sculptor François Giraudon, bearing a beautiful pieta inscribed, "Le sieur Giraudon, voulant consacrer à Jésus-Christ tout ce qu'il peut avoir acquis d'intelligence et de lumières dans son art, a fait et donné à l'église de Saint-Landry, cet ouvrage au pied duquel il repose dès premier Septembre MDCCXV." St. Landry, sold in the Revolution, was occupied as a carpenter's shop till 1829, when it was pulled down. In the Rue St. Landry lived the Councillor Pierre Broussel, famous in the intrigues of the Fronde, and there he was arrested by Comminges, August 26, 1648. A very curious account of his seizure is to be found in the *Mémoires de Brienne*. Behind the church of St. Landry, the Rue d'Enfer ran parallel to the river, having the Hôtel de Clavigny on the left. In its early existence it was called Rue Port St. Landry, as it led to the only point of embarkation at the east end of the island, the spot where the coffin of Isabeau de Bavière, who had died in the Hôtel St. Paul, was embarked for St. Denis, accompanied by a few servants only, after a service in Notre-Dame. On the right of the Rue d'Enfer was the church of St. Agnan, founded c. 1118 by Archdeacon Etienne de Garland, formerly Dean of St. Agnan at Orleans. Here the Archdeacon of Notre-Dame found St. Bernard despairing at the inefficiency of his preaching in Paris, lamenting through a whole day at the foot of the humble altar, and consoled him with his counsels. The church was sold at the Revolution, but existed, divided into two stories of a warehouse, till late years. Racine lived, c. 1670, in a house on the south side of the Rue d'Enfer.

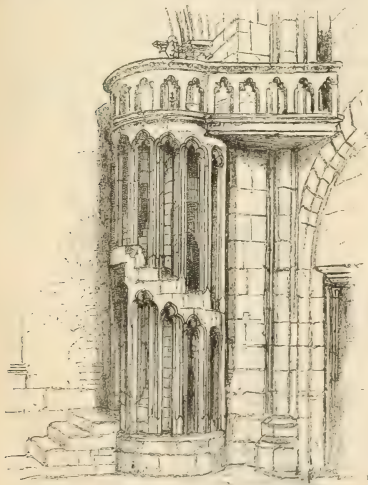
Returning in imagination to the site of St. Landry, the Rue du Chevet led under the east end of the church, to the Rue St. Pierre aux Bœufs, on the eastern side of which was the church of that name, the especial church of the butchers, mentioned in a bull of Innocent XII. (1136) as *Capella Sancti Petri de Bobus*. It was sold at the Revolution, and, after long serving as a wine-cellar, was pulled down in 1837, though its picturesque portal was preserved and applied to the western façade of St. Severin. Close behind St. Pierre, the little church of St. Marine stood from the eleventh century, with a parish of twenty houses, and a curé

who was chaplain to the episcopal prisons. Sold at the Revolution, St. Marine was used first as a popular theatre, then for workshops: it existed till recent times. On the opposite side of the Rue St. Pierre, the Rue Cocatrix ran west, named from the fief of a family which existed here in the thirteenth century.

All these sites are now swallowed up. Most of them are covered by the vast modern buildings of the Hôtel Dieu, the Maison Dieu of the Middle Ages. This is said to have originated in a hospital founded by St. Landry, and was probably the same which a charter of 829 mentions under the name of St. Christophe. But the first building which bore the name of Hôtel Dieu, which was on the south side of the Place du Parvis Notre-Dame, was begun by Philippe Auguste, who gave the title of Salle St. Denis to its first ward. To this Queen Blanche of Castille added the Salle St. Thomas, and St. Louis continued the work by building the Salle Jaune, with two attendant chapels, along the banks of the river. After being long neglected during the hundred years' war, the Hôtel Dieu found a great benefactor in Louis XI., who built the beautiful Gothic portals of the two chapels near the Petit-Pont, which, with the noble Renaissance gable by their sides belonging to the Salle du Légat, were the great feature of the building till the whole was destroyed by fire on December 30, 1772, when many of the sick perished, the rest being received by the archbishop in Notre-Dame. In its next form the Hôtel Dieu had no interest, except that under the peristyle was a statue of the philanthropist Montyon, who desired that his remains might rest there (1838) in the midst of the poor and sick. The whole of this building was pulled down and the present Hôtel Dieu, built by Diet, was inaugurated August 11, 1877.

More open and airy, the island has nowhere lost more in picturesqueness, than in the opening out of the Parvis Notre-Dame to its present dimensions and surrounding it with straight rows of featureless houses. The ancient Parvis, where the scaffold was erected, upon which the Templars protested their innocence before their execution, was made narrower and surrounded by lofty houses of varied outline. On its right was a fountain (destroyed 1748) and in front of this a statue of unknown origin, representing a man holding a book, which was called by the people Le Grand Jeusneur, and became the recipient of all the satires of the time,

as the statue of Pasquin at Rome. On the south of the Parvis, where the buildings of the Hôtel Dieu now stand, was the Hôpital des Enfants Trouvés, having its origin in a house called La Couche, which resulted from the preaching of St. Vincent de Paul, for the rescue of children who used previously to be openly sold in the Rue St. Landry for a franc apiece to acrobats or professional beggars. The hospital was rebuilt in 1746—48, with a chapel, celebrated for its ceiling, painted in an imaginary state of ruin, with such power that it seemed to those below as if it must fall and crush them. The second hospital swallowed up the Church of S. Geneviève des Ardents, whither legend asserted that the shepherd-patroness was wont to resort for prayer. The dedication of Sancta Genovefa parva commemorated the cure, as the shrine of St. Geneviève was carried by, of a vast multitude, attacked by the terrible epidemic called *des Ardents*. The Hospital of the Enfants Trouvés has been recently demolished to expose the indifferent front of the southern division of the Hôtel Dieu.



Staircase, Notre-Dame.

The metropolitan cathedral of Notre-Dame now faces us in all its Gothic magnificence. The remains of an altar of Jupiter discovered in 1711, indicate that a pagan temple once occupied the site, where, c. 375, a church dedicated to St. Stephen was built under Prudentius, eighth bishop of Paris. In 528,

through the gratitude of Childebert—"le nouveau Melchisedech"—for his recovery from sickness by St. Germain, another far more rich and beautiful edifice arose by the side of the first church, and was destined to become *ecclesia parisiaca*, the cathedral of Paris. Childebert endowed it with three estates—at Chelles en Brie, at La Celle near Montereau, and at La Celle near Frejus, which last supplied the oil for its sacred ordinances. The new church had not long been finished when La Cité, in which the monks of St. Germain had taken refuge with their treasures, was besieged by the Normans, but it was successfully defended by Bishop Gozlin, who died during the siege.

The first stone of a new and much larger cathedral was laid by Pope Alexander III. in 1163, under Bishop Maurice de Sully: *A fundamentis extruxit ecclesiam cui preerat*, writes his contemporary Robert of Auxerre. On its first altar Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, celebrated mass. The work advanced rapidly. The choir was finished in 1185, and two years later Geoffrey Plantagenet, son of Henry II. of England, was buried in front of the high-altar. Early in the thirteenth century the nave, towers, and façade were completed. It was then that the old church of St. Etienne, where Fredegonde had taken refuge with her treasures after the murder of Chilperic (584), was pulled down. The south porch was begun, as its inscription tells, by Jehan de Chelles, master mason, Feb. 12, 1257, the north portal about the same time, and by the beginning of the reign of St. Louis the cathedral was finished.

In spite of serious injuries from fire, no serious restoration ruined the glory of the cathedral before the seventeenth century. But under Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. the stalls, tombs, and twelfth-century windows of the choir were swept away, and, in 1771, to give a freer passage for processions, the central pillar of the western portal was removed, with the lower sculptures of its tympanum. Every year after this saw some destruction under the name of improvement, till the Great Revolution broke out, when the greater part of the statues of the portals and choir chapels were destroyed, and the cathedral became a Temple of Reason. Since 1845, the urgency of M. de Montalambert has led to much of these injuries being repaired, and to a magnificent restoration of the entire fabric under Viollet le Duc, though the whole has since narrowly escaped perishing under the Commune, when all its chairs were piled up in the choir and set on



Tourelle, Rue de Hautefeuille.

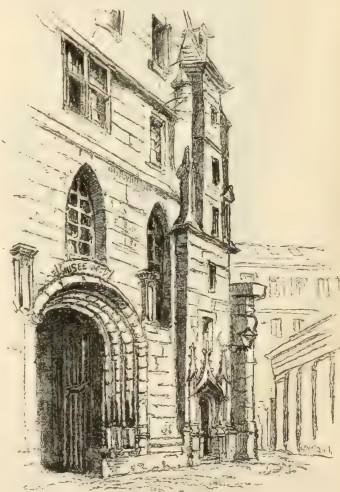
fire, and only the want of air and dampness of the walls saved the building.

The glorious western portals are known to many who have never seen them, by the description of Victor Hugo, in his "Notre-Dame de Paris." On entering the church from the sunlit square the extreme darkness is at first almost oppressive, then infinitely imposing. The chief light comes from above, from the windows of the clerestory, which, in the choir, are filled with gorgeous stained glass. The group of sculpture called *le vœu de Louis XIII.* still occupies its place at the high-altar, and in the choir chapels are monuments to Archbishop Affré, killed upon the barricades of the Faubourg St. Antoine; to Archbishop Sibour, murdered in St. Etienne du Mont, and to Archbishop Darboy, murdered by the communists. But scarcely any ancient monuments have escaped from the Revolution; the tomb of Bishop Matiffas de Bucy, who built some of the earliest chapels of the cathedral, is almost the only one which remains. The Treasury was despoiled at the same time, and most of its relics were destroyed: but the few saved by the care and devotion of private individuals include the precious Crown of Thorns, brought hither from the Sainte Chapelle. Latterly the religious feelings of the Middle Ages have seemed to be awakened at Notre-Dame, where twelve thousand persons have listened at once to the preaching of the

Dominican Lacordaire, and as many as eight thousand have been led to a general communion by the fiery words of the Jesuit Père de Ravignan.

Nothing remains now of the episcopal palace, sacked Feb. 14, 1831, when, under Monseigneur de Quelen, its library of twenty thousand volumes were burnt, and its precious pictures were burnt, without the slightest interference from the government of Louis Philippe, who remained utterly impassive to the scenes which were going on. Equally destroyed is Le Cloître Notre-Dame, on the northern side of the church, with its thirty-seven canonical houses and its famous episcopal schools, in which St. Anselm defeated Roscelin and St. Bernard combated Abelard. The site of so much interest is now occupied by a garden, at the end of which is a low one-storied building, where shuddering figures are always pressing against the windows of the terrible Morgue.

Upon the island itself almost all ancient domestic buildings have perished under modern improvements; but just beyond its precincts, crossing the Pont St. Michel, we may reach the Rue de Hautefeuille, much curtailed of late years, but still one of the most interesting old streets in Paris. The name Hautefeuille comes from a fortress—"altum folium," the lofty dwelling—which existed close to this in very early times.



Les Cordeliers.

No. 5 has an admirable round tourelle belonging to the Hôtel de Fécamp. No. 9 is a very curious house with turrets. No. 21 has a well-proportioned octangular tourelle. Close to the end of the street a surgical museum occupies the remains of the famous Convent of the Cordeliers, an admirable Gothic

building of the fifteenth century. This was the place where the club was established in 1790, of which Camille Desmoulins and Danton were the principal orators; and it was the tocsin of the Cordeliers which, on the 10th of August, 1792, gave the signal for the attack upon the Tuileries.

EXPERIENCES OF A METEOROLOGIST IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

By CLEMENT L. WRAGGE, F.R.G.S., F.R.MET.SOC., ETC.

PART I.—THE VOYAGE.—NOTES BY THE WAY.

READERS will remember the accounts of my "Weather-watching on Ben Nevis" which appeared in GOOD WORDS of 1882—83.

As many kind friends have expressed interest in my subsequent experiences, I beg to offer the ensuing notes. Follow me, then, in mere outline, on my journey from the snows and gales of the dear old Ben to the "Land of the Southern Cross"—to far-off Australia.

A farewell visit to my home in North Staffordshire—at Oakamoor, in the romantic Churnet Valley—and away to London. I carried a precious freight. Sundry instruments that had done duty on Ben Nevis—delicate barometers, sextants, and what not, which I intended to use in Australia—besides personal *impedimenta*, formed a unique picture, carefully poised on a porter's trolley; and while with one hand I steadied a barometer, with the other I held my old dog, "Robin Renzo," the hero of a hundred gales, and now about to accompany his master to the Antipodes; readers will remember him. In a basket, hanging on the arm, was a Persian cat, also a Highland favourite, outward bound to the land of the kangaroo. Later on the cat got loose, frightened by the noise of the train, but a chase round the guard's van resulted in her capture. Never shall I forget that day. At length I was safe with my baggage at the Royal Albert Docks, and on October 18th, 1883, I sailed thence for Adelaide, accompanied by my wife. The vessel was the *Maranoa*, a fine specimen of naval architecture, belonging to the Queensland Steam Shipping Company, and commanded by Captain W. W. Hampton, a sailor as gallant as any I have met. She was about to undertake her maiden voyage.

On the previous day the permanent observatory, in continuance of my work, was

opened on the summit of Ben Nevis, and I own to some touch of pride which may be pardoned.

The passage down Channel was very rough. Renzo, contrary to the seaman's doggerel whence he derives his name, proved a good sailor. Ever and anon he broke away from his kennel, and planted himself under the settee in the brand new saloon to the steward's horror, while puss soon distinguished herself, if we are to believe the pantrymen, by demolishing seven canaries, and was consigned to the hold, there to live on rats for the remainder of the voyage.

No course of life offers advantages more real than that of a traveller. He views nature in her various aspects; and habits of precise observation engender an intense sympathetic interest in her every phase and mood. If he be scientifically inclined so much the better. He can take one branch as a speciality, and pursue others as recreations. Thus can every circumstance of travel be made to yield its interest.

With such thoughts I firmly determined to do my best throughout the opening sphere of action, and resolved to make the utmost of every opportunity. To this end I chose from my meteorological instruments such as could be used on board a passenger steamer, and on taking final departure from Portland, on October 20th, I proceeded to establish a floating observatory. Captain Hampton and his genial officers granted every facility, but an account of results, except in selected instances, is not within my present purpose. I should mention, however, that Stevenson's celebrated double-louved thermometer screen was employed. This I lashed to a spar in the after-part of the ship, and fitted it with hygrometer and self-registering thermometers. The "Kew" barometer, hanging in gimbals, was mounted in my state-room, and there,

also, I swung the new "Richard" barograph, an ingenious form of self-recording barometer; it is in every respect an admirable instrument. Probably this was the first occasion of its being used at sea; and I can cordially recommend it to all seafaring men. It must swing freely, say to a curtain-rod, so as to avoid contact with any object when the vessel rolls. Thus a continuous record of atmospheric pressure is traced on a drum-chart driven by clock-motion, and the sailor at a glance can determine whether a serious change of weather is impending. If these instruments were supplied to all British ships I believe more would be done in twelve months in the investigation of pressure-distribution, than would be accomplished in as many years by the present tedious system of eye-observation and reduction. A mercurial barometer is, nevertheless, indispensable to scientific accuracy, and the barograph should be compared with it from time to time.

The *Maranoa* made good way, and on the 22nd we sighted the steep broken coast-line of north-west Spain, with its fiord-like inlets or *rias*. Then away down the sunny coast of Portugal in view of the ruddy cretaceous cliffs, beaten and corroded by the wild fury of many an Atlantic gale. Shoals of bonito escort us south, and merrily gambol alongside the ship. Smiling villages with red-tiled roofs and fan-sailed windmills soon open to the eye; and yonder is the convent high on the bluffs of Cape Roca.

By this time passengers were recovering from sickness, and while ladies feebly tottered to the quarter-deck gentlemen had again taken pipes, and were solacing themselves moreover with sundry nips from flasks labelled *cognac*. My time was fully occupied in sketching the coast, taking weather notes, and committing to the deep silent messages of our progress—in empty beer-bottles looted from the pantry—some of which returned to me after many days.* Temperature steadily rose, and by the time we reached the Strait the maximum thermometer indicated 66°·7, while the temperature of the sea surface had increased from 55°·2 to 66°·0.

I obtained several sketches of Cape Spardel, and of the imposing mountainous ridge at the north-west extremity of the great African continent. Deeply did I admire the

grandeur of these noble bluffs. Alternately, however, the coast is bold, low, and undulating; and here the wind-action of sub-aerial denudation appears to have been in play. The sun's fierce heat also takes a part, and is a substitute for frost in higher latitudes in weathering the rocks—wasted through long ages; and the undulations seem to be debris of a once higher range.

After leaving Gibraltar a course was shaped direct for Cape Tenez, Algiers, and Cape Bon; and after passing the former point, until we reached the Bight of Tunis, an almost uninterrupted view was obtained of the North African shore. I was charmed beyond measure with the rugged grandeur of this coast-line. East from Algiers the picture is unique, and scenery of one type. In front are the placid waters of the blue Mediterranean, dotted here and there with rude Arab boats, whose lateen sails bend gracefully to the balmy breeze. Then come shelving hills and undulations reaching up from the shore, and clad with a scrubby vegetation, while volumes of smoke from charcoal fires may be seen wreathing slowly upwards here and there. Surveying this vista, from the distant background towers a noble stretch of weird and grotesque mountain heights, with peaklets, knolls, and tops in almost every conceivable variety of shape and form, indicating a theatre of vast physical changes. A greenish haze hung as a filmy veil about the lower parts of the range, while fleecy cloudlets of cumulus floated over the knolls as I had lately beheld them in the Highlands. Here again had weathering agencies carved a mountain chain unlike anything I had seen before, and I gazed at its rugged pinnacles with deep fascination. Temperature had risen to 73°·4, and the water to 70°·2.

So to Malta. A flotilla of gaudily painted gondolas in all the colours of the rainbow lay waiting as we steamed into Valetta early on the 28th. Some were laden with melons and other delicious fruits of the Mediterranean; others merely plied for hire, vying with each other in the race for passengers. "Me poor fellow, sir," is painted on this craft, "Live and let live" on another. There was "Bub-bley Joe" with his bum-boat all ready to do us service; and still more eager for "something nice," yonder was "Nobby Alick" and others of his ilk. The babel was deafening. "Heave, sir; heave something, sir."—"Capsize the boat for three shillings, sir."—"Give you pleasant passage, sir;" and as coins went flying into the water in response to these

* A bottle which I cast from the *Hesperus* during my last voyage from Australia, on May 9th, 1878, when 510 miles south-west from the Azores, was picked up two years and four months afterwards on the Louisiana coast. Evidently it followed the easterly set from the Gulf Stream, and then sloughed off into the Equatorial current. Many more instances I could give, all of great interest in their bearing on the currents.

earnest appeals over plunged the tawny boys, heels up heads down, and brought them to the surface between the toes. Oh, 'twas rare fun! Pages could be filled by a description of this famous place. Did my purpose permit I could tell of quaint streets with houses painted blue, picturesque costumes, the noble armoury, and beautiful gardens decked with oleander and plumbago in full flower; yea, even of the very trumpet which sounded the retreat of the order of St. John from Rhodes in 1522. With a parting salute of decayed melons from the sailors, directed with unerring accuracy at the heads of some sneaking natives who had cheated, we started *en route* to Port Said.

The blueness of the Mediterranean is proverbial. As we passed to the south of Crete, the sea had a most wonderful colour. From the surface, flecked by the snow-white foam as the ship ploughed along, the water was blue to the deepest shade. Whence is this colour derived? Clearly it is a spectroscopic phenomenon, the result of absorption. The rays composing beams of sunlight are absorbed by particles contained in the water, with the exception of the blue rays, which are reflected to the delighted eye with an intensity proportionate to the absorptive power. As to the nature of these particles in this instance, we must for the present be silent.

Other phenomena characteristic of the Mediterranean are (a), intense clearness at the offing, whereby distant objects are "thrown up" with wonderful distinctness, and (b), a certain spectroscopic peculiarity. The former is merely an effect of refraction, chiefly under easterly winds, and indicates low barometric pressure over the heated Sahara. The latter deserves more notice. When sunlight is analysed by the spectroscope, certain lines appear indicative of vapours of metals which exist in the sun. Other bands and lines are also seen, but are not constant in the spectrum. They are, in fact, of telluric origin, being caused by gases and vapours in our own atmosphere. Foremost amongst these is a dark band, usually present to the left of the "sodium line" in the yellow portion of the spectrum when rain is imminent, and hence known as the rain-band. But during fine weather in these waters this band is so intense as to be nearly black. It does not mean rain, as my observations prove; and must be taken as a sign of rapid evaporation and an accumulation of vapour over the surface waters. In other words, from the indications of the spectroscope,

rightly interpreted, we learn that the Mediterranean is intensely salt.

Three days from Malta, and we draw nigh to the land of Egypt. The temperature of the sea rose to $76^{\circ}9$ under the influence of Nile waters, air temperature being $76^{\circ}8$, the highest since leaving England. At this time, too, the great "Red-Glow" was first noticed. Imposing belts of ruddy orange bordered the horizon as gleams from some huge fire, and from these shot upwards "streamers," rivalling in beauty the finest aurora. Delicately they blended with exquisite shades of blue sky, and in front floated odd-looking cumuli, like sable elfs, uncanny in outline and grotesque in shape—an Egyptian sunset doubly intensified. The latitude had told on familiar constellations, and the Great Bear's tail now dips below the horizon.

The Canal was reached on November 1st. I took the French mail boat to Ismailia, thence to Suez by train.

The geological formation of the isthmus is limestone of Eocene times. This is covered by deep layers of sand, worn down by the action of the weather throughout long ages, from the ancient high lands of Egypt, as is evidenced on examining the particles which show marks of great attrition.

I was gratified to find that since my last passage of the Canal, eight years before, a belt of vegetation had grown up in many parts, so acting as a natural barrier to the sand, and relieving the work of the dredgers. *Arundo phragmites*, *Gnaphalium*, and a species of lotus may be noticed. Otherwise, there is not much to break the monotony of the Canal passage, save for a few stray Bedouins at Kantara, in their long striped robes, kaffeias, and "arcals," and camels attached to some caravan bound to Jerusalem, with all the delightful associations of Oriental life. On the shores of Lake Timsah I obtained many specimens of marine mollusca, including the cockle, *Cardium edule*, *Maetra*, *Solida*, and several mussels, which the Arabs affirmed had migrated from the Red Sea.

Passing over glimpses of Egyptian life, I am again on the *Maranoo*, steaming down the Gulf of Suez. Grand old Sinai is away on the left, and one thinks of Bible days and the hosts of Israel.

Renzo was delighted to see me back, and so was the cat which was pining in the hold. Poor creatures! They felt the Red Sea passage terribly, Renzo especially, after his "arctic" experiences on Ben Nevis—as also did many of our passengers, who lived in

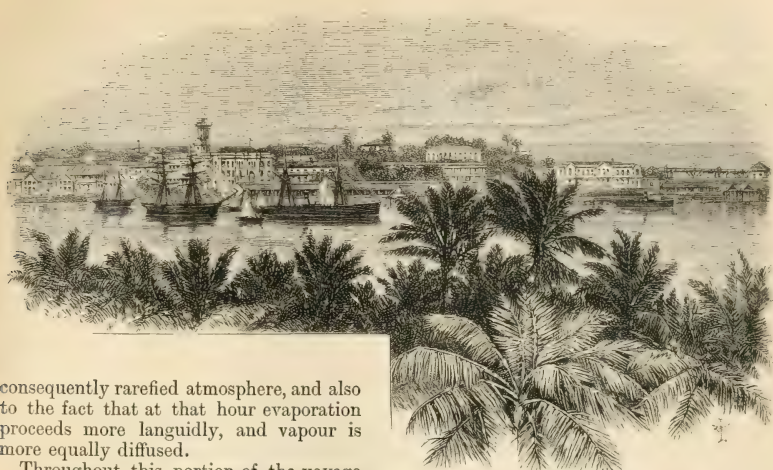
a bath of perspiration for the next five days. And yet 'twas not so very hot. The maximum thermometer during the entire Red Sea voyage did not rise higher than $87^{\circ}6$, and the minimum temperature was $70^{\circ}1$. The temperature of the water ranged between $75^{\circ}3$ at 50 miles south from Suez to $88^{\circ}9$ in latitude $17^{\circ}45'$ N. My friend, Mr. Buchan, declares that the highest sea-surface temperature yet observed was $94^{\circ}0$, in the Strait of Babelmandeb. The Red Sea Islands, of which I may mention desolate Jebel Teir and the Twelve Apostles, are undoubtedly of igneous origin—old volcanoes, in fact, but recently extinct.

By November 7th we pass the Gate of Death, and are now forging our way through a milk-white sea, sparkling at night as with living fire. This appearance, which during a former voyage I also noticed on the Malabar coast, was due to myriads of medusæ, which give that phosphorescent aspect to the sea so often described. Next morning we approached Aden. The only region which, to my knowledge, adequately resembles this dreary spot is not of earth. I can only liken it to the lunar chain of the Apennines, as viewed in the telescope. Great volcanic heights, all jagged and repellent, tower upwards to a height of 4,600 feet. The formation is probably later tertiary. Not a green patch is there, not even a single date palm could be seen, not a sign of any living thing, except perchance some ghoul-like vulture hovering around the serrated crags in search of prey. But soon we arrive, and all is bustle. Dexterous Somali boys put off in canoes, with quaint-looking paddles, others may follow, swimming hand over hand, eager to bring up the rear. They encompass the vessel. No sooner does the passenger approach the gangway than he is greeted with a volley from these swarthy, shaggy-haired scions of Guardafui, grinning as only the Somalis can:—"Hurrah, hurrah, have a dive;" "Yes, sir; ah, ah; oh, oh; oh-o-o-o;" "Heave, sir, throw away, sixpence, threepence;" "Under the ship for a shilling." Down they went, under the starboard side, up again on the port, securing the coveted treasure. I preferred some further return for spare shillings, and stipulated they should dive to the bottom to bring up shells and sediment. So many specimens were obtained. Then came boats bearing cocoa-nuts, eggs, dates, oranges, and lovely coral, very tempting. A few hours only were allowed for a run ashore. A rush to the old town, near the tanks, just a few sniffs of the delicious

odours pervading the bazaars, and away back to the ship, past Arabs and Bedouins in costumes and turbans of gaudy hue, Somalis, Jews; laden camels, humped oxen, donkeys and horses—all thoroughly characteristic of the far-famed East. I just managed to get specimens of the rocks, metamorphic slates and calcite, with pieces of trachytic or felspathic lava. We sailed in the afternoon for Colombo, as the next port of call, and on the 10th passed the Island of Socotra, 4,656 feet high. This is an admirable position for a high-level meteorological station, and valuable data in the problems of vertical barometric gradients bearing on the monsoons would be forthcoming.

In this neighbourhood, fine specimens of *Acalephæ*, purple jelly-fish, may be seen; and flying-fish in numbers. From careful observation of the latter, I am enabled to assert that they can change and direct their flight, and have seen them fly a distance of 150 yards.

During our passage of the Arabian Sea the barometric curve, as recorded by the barograph hanging in my state room, was of great interest. The diurnal range of pressure was so steady in its variations that the hour of the day could be ascertained by the barometer alone. Such a curve is a distinct phenomenon of the tropics, and the slightest deviation from this uniform march is a sure warning of a serious disturbance, maybe a hurricane. Within any given twenty-four hours two maxima and two minima regularly occur; the former about 9 A.M. and 10 P.M., the latter about 3 A.M. and 4 P.M. Thus we have a total diurnal range of but 0.125 , in striking contrast with 0.850 and more, within twenty-four hours, in British latitudes. A few words in explanation, based on Mr. Buchan's elaborate investigations, may not be out of place. In those tropical latitudes, where winds are constant, the diurnal range is always marked; in higher latitudes, in the zone of variable winds it may be detected, but is frequently eliminated from the curve by reason of travelling systems of high and low pressure. The 9 A.M. maximum is occasioned by rapid evaporation, drawing to the lower atmosphere an accumulation of vapour which is measured by the barometer, and causes an increase in the pressure. By 10 P.M. the air has chilled and become more dense, giving the second maximum. By night the dew falls, and the air becomes drier, with a diminished vapour tension, hence the 3 A.M. minimum; and the lowest, at 4 P.M., is due, partly to the high temperature and



Colombo.

consequently rarefied atmosphere, and also to the fact that at that hour evaporation proceeds more languidly, and vapour is more equally diffused.

Throughout this portion of the voyage the north-east monsoon prevailed. Asia had chilled, and the heavy air was rushing to warmer latitudes, deflected to south-west by the earth's rotation. Wonderful cloud-pictures were seen during this weather. At evening dark cumuli of most fanciful forms skirted the western horizon, altogether exceptional within previous experience of the Indian Ocean. Some resembled trees and branches, others islands, rocks, and even solar prominences, while heavy cumulo-stratus stretched in long belts above.

The highest temperature during this portion of the trip was $85^{\circ}2$, when thirty miles south from Socotra, and the lowest $75^{\circ}1$. The water ranged between $83^{\circ}2$ and $78^{\circ}2$, both in the Gulf of Aden.

Early on November 15th we reached Colombo. Ere the loom of the land hove in sight delightful perfumes filled the air—the odour of spice was wafted afar. “Catamarans,” bearing hosts of Moormen and vendors of precious(?) stones come forth to meet us, and swarm to the deck. Leaving victims of misplaced confidence to pay their pounds for bits of glass not worth shillings, I hie me ashore. If Aden is Hades, Colombo is Elysium. I take the train on the sea-side railway, and travel with the darkies for very novelty. The line stretches on past stately palms, laden with cocoa-nuts, and counted by the thousand. Next in turn come breaks in the foliage, with hills in the distance, and fronds on the palm-trees against the sky. To the right is the ocean. White-

crested breakers lap over the shore, and dusky natives wander on the beach. Some go plunging in the snowy waves; others are paddling their “catamarans.” Here a group washing clothes; there women bathing in a pool; while that fellow in the distance in bright red “petticoat,” and sportive squirrels gamboling in the groves give additional touches to the picture. I descend from the train, and stroll amid bananas in an ecstasy of delight. Oh, that my pen could do justice to the scene, and space permit but a tithe of detail!

Sailed at midnight, and in two days more crossed the Line. By December 2nd we had rounded Cape Leeuwin. Wandering albatross bear us company, and follow as a convoy into the Australian Bight. And now we realise the distance from home. The sun is yonder in the northern sky, and shadows to southward tell of the “nether world.” The grand old Bear has disappeared, and “the Cross shines forth in everlasting light.”

Temperature throughout this section ranged between $83^{\circ}8$ in Lat. $5^{\circ} 50' S.$, Long. $89^{\circ} 45' E.$, and $59^{\circ}0$ near the Recherche Archipelago; and the temperature of the sea between $82^{\circ}9$ and $58^{\circ}9$ at the same points respectively.

At length, on December 6th, while enjoying morning coffee on the bridge, the land of Australia was seen in the distance. 'Twas Cape Borda, the western extremity of Kangaroo Island, and soon we spied the Mount

Lofty Hills away to eastward. The first sight of this coast to a stranger is decidedly remarkable. Long lines of blue hills, heavily timbered with dull-looking, glaucous gum-trees, border the view, without a break except for some craggy cliffs, where old paleozoic rocks break the monotony of the scene. A few hours later and I was ashore at Largs Bay, once again in Australia, near my wife's home. My poor Renzo was not allowed to follow his master. The colonials were fearful lest he had hydrophobia, and decreed his immediate removal to a desolate island of St. Vincent's Gulf, there to gain his first experience of colonial life. He was to be kept

in quarantine for six months, and I had to deposit no less than thirty pounds sterling as a contribution to his keep, veterinary's fees, and so forth. The money was paid, and I looked forward to the time when I should see my faithful friend again.

A journey by train, eight miles, brought us to Adelaide. Strawberries, loquats, and cherries filled the greengrocers' shops, and right glad we were to make a purchase. Having settled my belongings temporarily in apartments, I set out to find a more permanent residence, and a spot whereon to establish my contemplated observatory. The temperature was 100° in the shade.

"A WAY OF MANY MOONS."

O SPRING'S a coquette, for she will and she'll not ;
 She cajoles and deludes ; she blows cold and blows hot.
 Is she fair ? Does she smile ? Are her soft airs caressing ?
 Have a care ! 'Tis a guile ; she is only finessing.
 I met her one day by a daffy-down-dilly.
 The flirt ! she was tempting Persephone's lily.
 Big Boreas blustered along, and the jilt
 Danced off with the wind, leaving daffy to wilt,
 And I longed for the Summer to come.

And Summer came, buxom and *debonair*,
 With a sinuous step and a rose in her hair ;
 With round red lips and great blue eyes,
 That were part of her own deep, cloudless skies.
 But Summer grew fervid ; her love became pain ;
 She sighed like a furnace, wept hot gushing rain ;
 Her round lips parched and a misty haze
 Crept over the blue of her earlier days,
 And I waited for Autumn to come.

And Autumn came, a nut-brown maid
 In a thousand garish tints arrayed.
 I found her—so lissome, so witching, so gay—
 In a hazel copse, watching the squirrels at play.
 She fled, and I followed through woods and o'er moors,
 Wherever her golden and purple robe lures,
 Till at last the enchantress gave me the slip
 In a grim, grey fog that she blew from her lip,
 And I longed for the Winter to come.

But Winter was stately, grave, severe,
 A haughty dame and something sear,
 Whose girdle, like chaste Dian's shone,
 An icy belt, an Arctic zone ;
 Crisp of speech, with a chilling air,
 Nipping love ere love was aware.
 Then I said to my sea-coal fire,
 Fruition is death, but love is desire,
 Let us pray for the Spring to come.

OSCAR PARK.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXII.—A LITTLE HOLIDAY.

IT is not a pleasant thing to have the gout, nor is it a creditable thing to overeat yourself; but since, unfortunately, a very considerable number of persons both have the one and do the other, society at large ought to be thankful for the existence of Homburg. Dismal indeed would be the lot of those who should find themselves reduced to choose between Bath and Buxton as a *locus penitentie*. Now Homburg in the month of August is by no means a dismal place. The light air, the bright sunshine, the early hours, the excellent bands which begin to tune up while the dew is still on the grass and sound their last note only at bedtime, the host of friends whom everybody is sure to fall in with in the neighbourhood of the Elisabethan spring—all these combine to render life at that gay little watering-place a cheerful, innocent, and invigorating sort of business for all such as the beneficent action of the waters does not cause to lie down upon the flat of their backs and howl aloud.

But indeed if Homburg had been as dull, as empty and as enervating as London at the same season, not the less would it have appeared of all spots upon the earth's surface the most desirable to Brian Segrave. Little did he, who knew not the meaning of the word gout, care about the curative properties of climate or *Brunnen*; little did it matter to him whether or not the broad alleys of the gardens and the terraces in front of the Cursaal were thronged daily by an assemblage of British peers, Members of Parliament, and other celebrities, with here and there an affable Royal Highness or Serenity amongst them: to him there was but one person in Homburg whose presence was of the very smallest importance; and a great joy it was to him to discover—as he did on the first occasion of his meeting with her—that this was not the Miss Huntley of Park Lane who was holding out her hand to him, but the Beatrice Huntley of Kingscliff whose frank good-fellowship had made him feel at ease and happy in her company before ever he had committed the folly of falling in love with her. The difference was perhaps more perceptible to him now than it had been in London. Assuredly she had not shown any

lack of friendship to him then; only he had had a sense of distance from her—social inferiority would be rather too strong an expression—which had not been the less real for being difficult of definition, and which, in some undefinable fashion, troubled him no longer in this clearer atmosphere.

In any case, she seemed bent upon dismissing Park Lane and all its associations from her memory for the time being. "I am out for a holiday and I want to enjoy it," was almost the first thing that she said. "Suppose we agree that during the next three weeks we will treat England as a mere geographical expression?"

"I am prepared to treat everything and everybody exactly as you think best," Brian replied.

She raised her eyebrows and smiled. "Really? Then I will tell you just what you shall do, so that there may be no mistake. Every morning at half-past seven, or a quarter to eight at latest, you will meet us at the Elisabethan Brunnen and trudge up and down, up and down with us, while we drink our prescribed number of glasses and the band plays, until you are ready to drop. Perhaps I shall introduce you to one or two fellow-sufferers, and if I do, you must treat them civilly. Some liberty ought to be allowed to you with regard to your treatment of yourself; so you needn't drink the waters if you don't think they would be good for you. Well, then you will go home to breakfast, and you can rest or compose operas or do what you like until the middle of the day, when you will meet us again at the Cursaal and join us in a nondescript sort of meal. In the afternoon we shall stroll down to the lawn-tennis ground—by the way, I hope you have brought flannels and a racquet with you—and if it isn't too hot and there are some nice people there, we shall play. Otherwise, we shall look on and listen to the old fogeys talking scandal. I hate driving; but sometimes you will be taken out for a drive, as a small concession to Miss Joy, who adores it. Then will come dinner, and then the band again, and at about ten o'clock you will be sent off home to bed. You can write *D.C. ad lib.* at the end of that programme. How do you like the prospect?"

Well, he liked the prospect very much,

and he liked the fulfilment of it still better. He too was out for a holiday ; he too was resolved to banish melancholy thoughts and misgivings from his mind, if he could ; and, as it turned out, he found this quite easy. When every hour of the day is filled up, when one has to rise the moment after waking, and when one goes to bed, pleasantly tired out, at night, little leisure remains for self-torture. That marching to and fro in the crisp air of the early morning was far from being the pain and grief to him that it is to persons of a less robust physique ; the friends with whom Beatrice stopped, every now and again, to exchange a few words, and to some of whom she presented him, were people of agreeable, easy manners and of an outward appearance pleasing to the eye. They represented London society ; but they seemed to Brian to represent it in an infinitely more attractive way there than at home ; so true is it that the results of observation depend chiefly upon the observer. Moreover, the complete novelty of everything was in itself enough to satisfy a man who had never been out of England before, while the amusements enumerated by Miss Huntley served as well as any others to bring about the one end that he desired, which was to be always near her.

But what was best of all was that Miss Joy, who was going through a systematic course of the waters, and who, as she pathetically declared, was losing weight every minute, could not possibly go through the amount of exercise which two young people in perfect health thought nothing of. Besides, she had to absent herself for a certain time every afternoon in order to take a bath. Hence it came about that there were occasional long talks among the more secluded paths of the woods—talks in which not a word was said about Stapleford or the future member for the Kingscliff division or any other of those persons and topics which had been tabooed by a tacit agreement, but in which generalities were discussed after a fashion which rendered the mention of names wholly superfluous. And in these conversations there were always two things by which Brian was impressed : firstly, his companion's indecision with regard to her future course (for it was evident that more than one plan was fermenting in her mind) ; and secondly, her submissive and even admiring way of listening to his own humble views of life and duty, which, to be sure, were of a fascinatingly simple character.

"You are like Mr. Monckton," she said once ; "you only see two sides to every-

thing, a right and a wrong one, and you have no more difficulty in telling which to choose than you would have in distinguishing between A and B. I suppose, if everybody resembled you, the millennium might begin without further loss of time."

Sometimes, however, she was a little less complimentary, and seemed as if she were seeking to excuse herself. "After all," she would urge, "it isn't every point that can be reached by making straight for it as the crow flies. Supposing, for example, that you were the Prime Minister and had to come to a definite conclusion of some kind about the Eastern question and the Irish question and all the other puzzles. You wouldn't find it help you very far on your way to be perfectly sound as to first principles. First of all, you would have to make up your mind what ought to be done, then you would have to discover how much of it came within the range of practical politics ; after which, I suppose, you would have to set to work to cudgel or cajole others into taking the right direction. And do you imagine that you would ever get through that business without persuading yourself that the end justifies the means ?"

If, as would occasionally happen, the discussion took too much of a personal turn, both parties to it were ready, and even anxious, to change the subject. One of them, at all events, was nervously alive to the danger of quitting the safe ground of abstract debate. He felt that the footing upon which he now stood with Beatrice could hardly be altered for the better, though it might easily enough be altered for the worse. Whether she divined his love for her or not he was quite uncertain ; but, supposing that she did, that would surely not tell against him, seeing that he was so very careful to avoid hinting at its existence.

But, of course, this happy state of things, this ignoring of patent facts and resolution to live only in the present, could not last very long. It lasted, in fact, for the space of one week ; at the end of which time the list of arrivals included that of "Lord Stapleford, *mit Familie und Begleitung*," at the Hotel Victoria. The last words were probably added for the sake of euphony, Stapleford, as we know, being as yet unprovided with a family, while his "*Begleitung*" was confined to a modest unit ; but as regarded the principal figure, the announcement was but too accurate ; and perhaps the only person who derived any pleasure from the perusal of it was Miss Joy.

That disinterested, but slightly obtuse lady did not fail to express her satisfaction to Brian when, for the first time since their interview in London, she obtained speech of him in private. This was at the springs on the morning after Stapleford's arrival; and as Miss Joy ambled along the alley beside him, murmuring complacently that all would be well now, that it was high time to have done with hesitation, and so forth, Brian could see Stapleford's back and Beatrice's moving across the alternate bands of shadow and sunshine a few yards ahead. He tried not to be jealous; he tried not to feel as if he had been abruptly dismissed; he even tried to think that the very well-dressed, good-humoured, and conventional young man who had relieved him of his daily spell of escort duty was a fit and proper person to become Beatrice Huntley's husband; and he was about as successful in this last attempt as in the other two. Nevertheless, he was sufficiently master of himself to conceal his feelings; nor, indeed, was he subjected in the sequel to any such trying ordeal as during that first hour had seemed to be in store for him. For it speedily became manifest that Beatrice did not wish to be left alone with her cousin. Stapleford's manoeuvres, ably seconded by those of Miss Joy, proved totally unavailing to draw her away from the phalanx of friends with which she now chose to surround herself, and if at any time she had a fancy to leave the beaten track for ten minutes or so, it was invariably Brian who was requested to bear her company. However, her whole manner had once more undergone a complete change, so that there was little comfort to be got out of those brief and rare audiences.

"One should endeavour to avoid incongruity," she said one day, when, not without some prickings of conscience, he ventured to suggest that they might wander a little deeper into the woods. "Homburg really isn't the place for pastorals and idyls; make an effort, and bring yourself more into harmony with local colour. I have arranged that you and Stapleford are to play a lawn-tennis match this afternoon against two men, who he says are very strong, and in the evening we are going to have quite a large dinner at the Cursaal—no less than eight of us."

"The programme is altered, then?" said Brian interrogatively.

"The programme is altered," she replied. "So are the circumstances."

That was indisputable; and although the alteration might not be entirely welcome, yet

he had known all along that it must come in the end. Moreover, during the next week or ten days he could not help enjoying himself, notwithstanding the dark clouds that obscured his horizon. Stapleford struck up a friendship with him; he became more or less intimate with the other young men who were at Homburg for reasons which apparently were in no way connected with ill-health; his leisure was fully occupied by games of lawn-tennis in the sunny afternoons, by cheery little dinners at the various hotels and restaurants, by strolls through the illuminated gardens after dark, to a musical accompaniment. The really happy portion of his holiday was over, but this epilogue was not devoid of charm. Only, as time went on, he became more and more sensible of an uneasy feeling about Beatrice, whose behaviour caused him some perplexity, and also some distress. He would have been glad if she had rejected Stapleford; he would not have been altogether sorry if she had seen her way to accept him (for, indeed, the young man deserved every word that Miss Joy had said in his favour); but it seemed rather unfair, and even unworthy, to encourage him and hold him off at one and the same time; and this was evidently what Beatrice wanted to do.

Now, Stapleford, who had the patience of Job and a supply of good-nature so inexhaustible that he himself might have been cited as offering a personification of that quality, was not a born fool, and consequently allowed it to be seen, in the long run, that he did not intend to be trifled with for ever. "I understand the fun of playing a fish; but really I can't see any sport in keeping him on the hook after a baby in arms might land him," he said once to Miss Joy, who duly reported this remark in the proper quarter.

The effect of it was to bring down upon him such a shower of snubs and cutting little speeches as must have driven him, if he had had a spark of spirit left, to show that a fish, so long as he remains in the water, is a free fish still; and since he responded but feebly to the stimulus, Miss Huntley took another way with him, and tried to scare him off by drawing perpetual comparisons between him and Brian Segrave, as well as by conspicuously increasing her marks of favour towards the latter. Thus she obtained, it is true, the respite which she probably desired; but it was at the expense of offending both her lovers; for Brian was surprised and hurt at being made use of as a stalking-horse.

So this odd and rather absurd contest went

on until a trivial incident brought it to a climax. One evening they were all returning by train, after dining and witnessing a display of fireworks in the Thiergarten at Frankfurt. The excursion had not been a pleasant one for Stapleford, who throughout it had been trying ineffectually, and somewhat too persistently, to lead his cousin away from the others; it had not been pleasant for Brian, through whose unwilling instrumentality his efforts had been baffled; and when they reached the Homburg station Beatrice, with an undisguised yawn, declared that it had not been pleasant for her either.

"The three F's," she remarked, as she rose to leave the railway carriage; "Frankfort, Fireworks, and Fatigue—and a little one thrown in for fiasco. This experience shall not be repeated."

"Why stop there?" asked Stapleford; for his endurance had been subjected to a prolonged strain; "why not add Fools?"

"I don't see any occasion to use the plural number," she rejoined.

She had her back turned towards him, and was in the act of descending from the carriage, so that there was no great harm in his relieving his feelings by a smothered ejaculation and a stamp; but certainly it was unlucky for him that he chose the tail of her gown to stamp upon. If Brian, who had already got out, had not extended his long arms and caught her, she must infallibly have fallen headlong upon the platform. She turned round with that look of deadly ire which will come over the features of the best of women under such provocation.

"Another F," she observed calmly; "a big one this time, since it stands for your foot."

"I'm awfully sorry," said Stapleford; "I seem to be destined to put my foot in it to-day."

"You do," she agreed, with marked emphasis; "and it seems to be Mr. Segrave's destiny to protect me from the consequences. But for him, I should probably be now lying on a stretcher, with my nose and all my front teeth broken."

Now, a little exasperation might very well have been pardoned, under the circumstances, nor was this rebuke at all more severe than many others which Stapleford had laughed off; but perhaps it came upon him as the last straw. Anyhow, he looked very gloomy and savage over it; and after the ladies had been put into their carriage and driven away, Brian really thought for a moment that the young man who stood frowning at

him in the glare of the gas-lamps meant to have his blood.

However, there was no sound of anger in Stapleford's voice when he said presently, "It's early yet; I think I'll walk round to your place and have a smoke with you before I turn in, Segrave, if you don't mind."

And as they strolled towards the Kisseleff Strasse, where Brian had engaged rooms, he discoursed with all his accustomed amiability, cracking small jokes and seeming to have quite recovered from a passing irritation; so that, after he had been made comfortable with an arm-chair and a cigar, it was a little startling to hear him begin:

"I say, old chap, we may as well understand one another. Are we rivals or are we not? Because I'll be hanged if I can make out. Of course you know what I'm here for; but I dare say you don't know that I'm about as crazily in love with Beatrice Huntley as a man can be. I tell you that because I think it may make a difference. If you're in love with her yourself, I've no more to say; but if you're not, you might give a fellow a helping hand, now you know that he's in earnest."

Brian hesitated; it was more difficult for him than it was for Stapleford to lay bare the innermost secrets of his heart. Still, thinking himself bound to be honest, he replied, with something of a blush: "Well, then, since you ask me, I do love her; these things are not matters of choice, you know. But I hope you don't think that I have been trying to—interfere with you in any way."

"Oh, that's all right," said Stapleford; "I only wanted to know. You are just as much entitled to be in love with her as I am, and we won't quarrel over it. Let the best man win."

"But, my dear fellow," protested Brian, "you surely don't imagine that I shall ask Miss Huntley to be my wife, do you? You forget who I am—a mere nobody, without an acre of land and with only a few hundreds a year of my own."

"I don't see what better reason you could find for marrying an heiress—especially since you happen to be in love with her. In fact, that's precisely my own case."

"Not quite, I think," said Brian.

"Well, it's near enough. What I fancied was that you suspected me of being after her money; and small blame to you! It began in that way, I confess. Her people and my people got the thing up, and I had no objection. But after I came to know her, why, I changed my point of view altogether;

and now I'd marry her if she hadn't a sixpence. I would indeed; though I suppose it would be a perfectly idiotic thing to do. So now I think I may claim to be as little of a fortune-hunter as you are, and if I come in first I shall win on my merits, don't you see?"

Brian nodded. "But there's no race," he said.

"That remains to be seen. I doubt whether she is in love with you, if you'll excuse my saying so. Old Joy swears she isn't, but thinks she has no end of a high opinion of you. As for me, I'm about sick of this fast and loose game. Now, look here, Segrave, would you mind not coming down to the springs to-morrow morning? It can't make much odds to you, and if you're out of the way, I shall have some chance of getting her to say plainly what she means."

Brian readily gave the promise requested and added, with some magnanimity, "I wish you good luck, Stapleford, and if Miss Huntley marries you, she will marry a real good fellow, I'm sure of that. You won't expect me to say that I quite enjoy the idea of her marrying anybody."

So the two young men shook hands and parted. It may be (for human nature is human nature, after all) that their mutual good-will would have been a trifle less genuine if each of them had not been secretly persuaded that the other's prospect of success was small.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—STAPLEFORD IS FOUND IMPOSSIBLE.

By mere force of habit, Brian rose at an early hour the next morning and had nearly finished dressing before he remembered that he was a self-constituted prisoner. He did not repent of the concession that he had made—which, to be sure, was no very important one—but when he recollected that he had actually gone so far as to wish Stapleford success, he could not help smiling; because, although he had believed himself to be speaking sincerely at the time, he was now quite sure that he wished for no such thing. How could he possibly wish Beatrice to marry a man whom she did not love?

He strolled out on to his balcony, which was overgrown with masses of bright-coloured petunias, and looked down the sunny street towards the Untere Promenade. In the distance he could hear the band opening the proceedings with *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*; a light, bluish mist hung over the gardens and softened the rounded outlines of the trees,

giving promise of a hot day; from every direction matutinal water-drinkers were hurrying towards their meeting-place at the Elisabethen spring. There they all went: the Hereditary Grand-Duke of Langenschwalbach with his long-legged equerry; old Lady Chatterton, looking to right and left with inquisitive twitchings of the nose, as though she already scented scandal in that pure air; fat Miss Kingfisher, pounding along post-haste to catch up His Serene Highness; and the Judges and the Generals and the debilitated young men and the young men who had nothing the matter with them. Then his heart gave a little jump; for Beatrice herself, walking with her head in the air, as usual, came within the field of his vision and passed on, Miss Joy trotting in her wake. Had she any suspicion of what was in store for her? Brian could imagine it all. Stapleford would march up with a determined air; Miss Joy, taking in the situation at a glance, would retire precipitately; and then—well, then there would probably be very little preliminary beating about the bush. A man who does not mind sacrificing his own life can assassinate the Czar of all the Russias, and a man who is willing to take his chance of rejection cannot be prevented from proposing to any lady with whom he is alone for five minutes, be she never so reluctant to be proposed to.

And supposing that Beatrice should reject this long-suffering suitor, as Brian believed that she would, when it came to the push—might it not, after all, be just possible that at some future time, when perhaps he might have made a name for himself— But he was determined not to revert to dreams which he had dismissed long ago as idle. Stapleford had been pleased to speak as if they stood upon the same footing; but the fact remained that an impecunious peer differs in many essential points from an impecunious composer of music. "Moreover," concluded Brian, "she doesn't care a straw for either of us." So he went back into the room and played scales resolutely until his coffee was brought to him, together with a few letters, one of which, as he saw with pleasure, was addressed in Monckton's handwriting.

Monckton was away on his annual holiday, and wrote from Milford Haven, whither he had successfully navigated the ten-ton yawl in which he was wont to sail the seas when driven to seek a little relaxation. He had carried away his topmast, had run short of provisions, had not taken off his clothes for three days and nights, and had altogether

been having a most enjoyable and invigorating time of it. "I only wish you were on board," he wrote. "The sea-breezes would do you a great deal more good than you are likely to get out of the waters of Homburg or its society either. I haven't heard much from Kingscliff, except the announcement of your brother's engagement to Miss Greenwood, which, of course, will be no news to you." Then followed a hearty panegyric on Kitty, and an expression of opinion on the writer's part that any man who married her might consider himself uncommonly lucky.

In the latter sentiment Brian warmly concurred. Gilbert might have written to him, he thought; but then he remembered that he had not written to Gilbert and resolved to repair that omission forthwith. This engagement was, to his mind, an entirely satisfactory thing. It showed that Gilbert had a spark of romance in him; it showed that he was capable of constancy; it even furnished something of an excuse for that sale of land to which Brian had never been able to reconcile himself; for when a man wants to marry and can't afford to do so, he should not be too harshly judged if he disposes of what, after all, is his own. In his anxiety to whitewash his brother, Brian had very nearly gone the length of acquiescing in Beatrice's favourite thesis that right and wrong admit of no exact definition, when his thoughts were diverted into quite another channel by the abrupt entrance of Stapleford, whose features and gait bore the unmistakable impress of defeat.

"I just looked in to bid you good-bye," said he; "I'm off to England by the next train."

"You haven't prospered, then?" asked Brian, with a not very successful effort to look sympathetic.

"Prospered?—rather not! Well, I'm out of it now, and you can go in and try your luck if you choose; but upon my word, I doubt whether you'll do any better."

Brian did not think it worth while to renew his protestations of the previous evening; but after a time he inquired: "Did she give you any reason for refusing you?"

"She began by saying that she might very likely have accepted me if I hadn't been in such a hurry; and when I pointed out to her that I had waited about as long as anybody could be expected to wait she changed her ground and declared that my having fallen in love with her made all the difference, because she couldn't consent to a one-sided bargain. Then I suppose she saw that I was a little cut up about it, you know, and

she spoke very kindly and seemed to be really sorry for me. Indeed, from the way that she went on about not being good enough for me and all that, I almost hoped that I should be able to bring her round. However, she very soon let me see that the thing wasn't to be done. She is an odd sort of girl," concluded Stapleford thoughtfully.

And when Brian, with some warmth, declared that she had no equal, if that made her odd, he did not at once assent. It was plain that he had been hard hit, and also that he was smarting a little from the consciousness of having been made a fool of, though he was too much of a gentleman to say so.

Nor, after he had gone away, was Brian able to pronounce quite so favourable a verdict as he could have wished upon the conduct of the lady who had no equal. True it was that there were no grounds for accusing her of having flirted with Stapleford merely to amuse herself. Whatever she might be, she was not a flirt; and besides, it had been abundantly evident of late that Stapleford's attentions were disagreeable to her. Still it was not less true that she might easily have got rid of him at an earlier stage of the proceedings, that it had been quite unnecessary to bring him all the way to Homburg to send him about his business, and that her only reason for so doing must have been that she had not taken the trouble to find out her own mind. That seemed to show a certain want of consideration for the feelings of others. But the heat and light of the sun (which the Germans, with a linguistic perversity which might have been expected of them, have made feminine), are not perceptibly diminished by the spots which can be discerned upon its surface, and there are many lives which circle round a female luminary. Brian's, apparently, was destined to be one of these; nor could he feel that the discovery of a trifling flaw here and there in any way lessened the attraction to which he had surrendered himself. Assuredly it was not likely to prevent him from taking the earliest possibly opportunity of indemnifying himself for the loss of his accustomed morning walk with Miss Huntley.

Knowing her habits as he did, he set forth at three o'clock for the lawn-tennis ground, in the confident expectation of meeting her; and there, sure enough, she was, sitting under the trees, the centre of a group of spectators, to whom she was chatting as unconcernedly as if there had been no luckless young man at that moment speeding towards Cologne,

with the fragments of a broken heart beneath his waistcoat. Brian stood watching her for a short time. She did not see him, nor did he care to force his way through the circle, which was sure to break up presently. But Miss Joy, who occupied a chair some yards in the background, beckoned to him as soon as she became aware of his vicinity.

"Have you heard?" she whispered, lowering her sunshade and turning a distressed countenance towards him.

He seated himself on the dry grass beside her. "Yes," he replied, "I've heard, but I'm afraid I can't look upon it in the light of a calamity, as you do."

"Well," returned Miss Joy, with a touch of irritability, "I suppose it wouldn't make much difference if you could. As for me, I am disappointed and disgusted, and it is a relief to me to think that I am just about to take my last bath. The sooner we leave Homburg now the better I shall be pleased."

"Are you leaving at once, then?" asked Brian in dismay; for he had not calculated upon so precipitate a departure.

"I fancy we shall start in a day or two. I have finished my cure, and Beatrice was saying this afternoon that she had had enough of the place."

"Where shall you go?"

"To Switzerland, I believe; and then, no doubt, to Kingscliff for the autumn. You know, perhaps, that Beatrice has been having the Manor House put in order and furnished."

Miss Joy paused and sighed. "Is there any likelihood of our meeting you there?" she asked by-and-by.

Brian shook his head. "Oh, no; I shall be busy in London. Besides, there would be nothing to take me to Kingscliff, unless, indeed, I should go down for my brother's wedding."

"What!" exclaimed Miss Joy, in accents of such amazement that Brian burst out laughing.

"I should have thought," said he, "that, after spending so many months in our part of the world, you would have been prepared to hear of Gilbert's engagement to Kitty Greenwood."

Prepared or unprepared, Miss Joy received this intelligence with a demonstration as surprising as it was inexplicable. She flung her sunshade up into the air, caught it by the handle as it fell and ejaculated, "Hooray!" Then, perceiving that her neighbour was staring at her as if he suspected her of having suddenly gone raving mad, "Excuse this exuberance of animal spirits," she

said; "but I never did like your brother, Mr. Segrave, and that's the truth."

"I may be very dense," observed Brian; "but I confess I don't see why your disliking my brother should make you rejoice in his happiness."

"It is our duty to love our enemies," returned Miss Joy sentimentally.

"Oh, Miss Joy, that really won't do!"

"That won't do? Then you may take it that mine is the glee of a sour old maid who naturally exults when she sees a fellow-creature blunder into the snare of matrimony. And if that doesn't satisfy you, let me mention that I have the greatest esteem and regard for Miss Greenwood: I suppose I may be allowed to rejoice in her happiness, may I not?"

"Yes, but I think you must have had other reasons than those for behaving so indecorously in public."

"Very well, then; I had other reasons. Only I am not going to communicate them to you; so you needn't bother me. It is time for me to take my bath now. When you write to your brother, please give him my hearty congratulations."

With that, she marched off, leaving Brian completely mystified, and resolved to find out from Beatrice what might be the meaning of these enigmatic utterances.

But of course, when Beatrice separated herself from her friends and joined him, it was neither about the news of his brother's engagement nor about Miss Joy's singular manner of receiving it that he was chiefly desirous of talking to her.

"If you are not going to play lawn-tennis," she said, "let us find some cooler and more sequestered spot than this. I have a crow to pluck with you."

However, she did not seem to be very seriously angry: on the contrary, there was a lurking smile about her eyes and lips which reminded him of what she had been during that happy week which had preceded Stapleford's advent upon the scene. Moreover, she made straight for a certain retired bench, shut in by trees and shrubs, where she and he had sometimes sat in those days, but which they had not since revisited.

"You did not put in an appearance at the springs this morning," she began; "was that accidental or intentional? But I won't tempt you to prevaricate. I happen to have been informed, upon the very best authority, that your absence was due to a preconcerted arrangement; and pray, do you consider that friendly behaviour?"

"I thought it was friendly to him," answered Brian, without embarrassment (for he was sure that Stapleford had betrayed nothing more than the fact mentioned); "and I certainly didn't think it was unfriendly to you. Why should it be?"

"As if you didn't know I have been using you as a shield and buckler for the last fortnight! But perhaps you don't like being used as a shield and buckler. Anyhow, I can forgive you; for you have done both Stapleford and me a service, whether you intended it or not. Oh, what a comfort it is to be able to write *Finis* to that chapter!"

"Couldn't you have done that before you left London?" Brian ventured to suggest.

"No doubt I could; and I see by your face that you think I ought to have done it. You are a man; so you don't understand indecision in such cases. You would, if you were a woman, and especially if you were a rich woman. Joseph, whose remarks are often much to the point, said to me before we parted, 'I could lay my hand on as many as twenty men of good position and character who would be very pleased to have the spending of your money; but I doubt whether you would find one of them wear as well as Lord Stapleford.'"

"Stapleford wanted something more than the spending of your money," Brian felt bound in justice to say.

"Exactly so; and that was just what made him impossible. Why do you look at me in that dissatisfied way? Were you so very anxious that I should become Lady Stapleford?"

"No," answered Brian; "I never wished that, and I'm glad that it isn't to be. All the same, I am very sorry for him."

"So am I. I expressed my sorrow to him and abased myself before him when he looked piteous at me. Nevertheless, he has had a lucky escape, and he isn't badly hurt. Men who are devoted to athletics and sport get over these little misadventures with wonderful rapidity. He is going to shoot grouse now; and if that doesn't cure him, as perhaps it won't, the stalking will. I made a point of ascertaining that he would get some stalking later on."

And nothing would persuade her to take a more serious view than this of poor Stapleford's disappointment. "You will see—you will see," she said. "We are in August now: well, before Christmas he will be thanking me for having let him off. If you must needs pity somebody, pity Clementina, who will not be so quickly consoled. You might even

spare a little pity for me; for I can assure you that there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when she and I meet. The mere thought of it makes me long to remain abroad until the winter and then fly to Egypt."

"I hope you won't do that," said Brian.

"Oh, I can't. I have urgent affairs to attend to at home: not to speak of the first representation of your opera, which I wouldn't miss for anything. You must write and tell me when the date is fixed. I shall have taken up my abode at the Manor House by that time, and I shall bring your brother and a large Kingsliff contingent to London with me to pelt you with laurels."

"By the way," said Brian, "my brother is going to be married to Kitty Greenwood. I only heard of it this morning."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Beatrice incredulously. And then: "You don't mean that it is actually settled and announced?"

And on being informed that such was the case, she turned her head away and drummed impatiently upon the ground with her foot.

A horrid suspicion flashed suddenly across Brian's mind. He remembered Miss Joy's unaccountable exultation; he remembered that Gilbert had certainly been very assiduous in his attentions to Miss Huntley at Lady Clementina's dinner-party: and Gilbert was handsome, clever, likely enough to distinguish himself—just the sort of man who would probably arouse her interest. But the next instant he was certain that this suspicion was groundless, although there would be nothing surprising in Miss Joy's entertaining it. Everybody must admit that there are things which we know to be facts, without being able to prove them such either to others or ourselves.

"You don't seem pleased," he hazarded at length.

"I am not pleased," she answered. "I was in hopes that the girl would have had the sense to marry Captain Mitchell, who would make her as happy as the day is long. As for your brother he cares for nothing in heaven or on earth but himself."

"I think he must care a little for Kitty," Brian urged.

"Oh, yes; a little—that's the unfortunate part of it. I wish you hadn't told me this! I should have liked to have only pleasant memories of our last day."

"Your last day," echoed Brian dismally. "Yes; our time is up, and I have decided to issue marching orders for to-morrow."

Now, if you please, I want to forget your brother and Stapleford, and Clementina, and everybody else whom it is painful to think of. Tell me about your opera."

But in truth this subject had been somewhat threshed out, and neither Brian's efforts nor Miss Huntley's could prevent the day from ending in a dreary and unsatisfactory fashion. To him, at any rate, the shadow of the coming parting was ever present—a parting which, as he felt, must add the melancholy word *Finis* to another chapter than that of which she had so lightly spoken.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—HALF-REGRETS.

So large a number of well-meaning but officious persons thought fit to assemble at the railway-station to bid Miss Huntley goodbye, that Brian obtained no more than a shake of the hand from her, and indeed was indebted to his physical advantages of stature and muscle for even that small boon. He returned to his rooms, through a town which had all at once become utterly commonplace and uninteresting, and began to pack up forthwith. The curtain had fallen; the scene was vacant; duty as well as inclination beckoned him away; for that morning's post had brought him an opportune reminder from Phipps that his time was not his own.

Two days afterwards he was once more at his old quarters in Duke Street, and on the following evening his collaborator, who had taken a small house on the river for the summer months, in order to be within easy reach, dined with him at their deserted club and laid before him the final arrangement which had been entered into with the manager of the Ambiguity Theatre. That enterprising person had decided to introduce *The King's Veto* in the beginning of November, being of opinion that failure would be less costly and disastrous then than at a later date. However, the manager did not anticipate failure, while Phipps professed himself assured of success.

"Only, you know, Segrave," said he, "you mustn't mind a few excisions and alterations. I don't pretend to judge of your work from the musical critic's standpoint, but I think I know pretty well what will fetch the play-going public, and it is the play-going public that we have to please, no matter at what sacrifice."

"You have only to give your orders," answered Brian. "I won't promise never to argue, but I'll promise to yield if I can't talk you over."

And he kept to his word, notwithstanding

that, after the piece had been put in rehearsal, the sacrifices demanded of him proved to be rather greater, and the excisions more numerous than he had bargained for. In every field of art a man must sooner or later find himself face to face with the question of whether he will pursue his vocation for its own sake or for the sake of profit. Both motives are legitimate, but they are very seldom compatible with one another; and although a compromise may be, and generally is, arrived at, self-respect is apt to have a little of the bloom rubbed off it in the process. Brian, who at one time might have felt that his first duty, after all, was to keep life in himself and that beggars must not be choosers, had no longer that incentive to pander to popular bad taste, and in spite of his anxiety to achieve success, there were moments when he thought that success, if it should come, would be hardly worth the price asked for it.

Fortunately, his modesty and good temper not only kept him on excellent terms with Phipps and the manager, but induced them to stretch a point here and there to give him pleasure; and if the perpetual consultations and discussions in which he was required to take part did nothing else for him, they at least served to fill up his time and a large measure of his thoughts. Of Beatrice he heard nothing; but then he had not expected to hear of her; nor had he been again disquieted by that fugitive surmise with reference to her and his brother, although in the brief acknowledgment of his congratulations which he had received from the latter, there had occurred a somewhat ambiguous phrase:—

"With your romantic notions you will probably consider me a wise man, not a fool; but I confess that I am sometimes amazed at myself. I have always, as you know, been a common-sense, common-place person, with a proper appreciation of the main chance, and if I had allowed a great chance to escape me for the sake of love (as I may have done, for who knows what is in the lucky-bag until he has dipped his hand into it?), shouldn't I be bound, in mere consistency, to accuse myself of almost criminal folly?"

People whom the force of circumstances has deprived of a confidant will sometimes relieve themselves by making half-confidences to those whom they believe to be too dense to understand them, and it may have been in obedience to some such impulse that Gilbert had penned the above incautious words. For nothing could be more certain than that, after a week or two of unthinking

bliss, he would begin to formulate against himself the accusation specified ; and even if his own judgment had not condemned him, was not Mr. Buswell ready and determined to act the part of a candid friend ? That pillar of the Liberal cause was not long absent from Kingscliff, nor, after his return, did he lose much time in paying Gilbert a friendly visit.

"So you're going to be married, I hear," he began. "Well, Mr. Segrave, you disappoint me, you do indeed. Not that I've a word to say against your young lady, far from it ! But she ain't the right one, you see."

"Perhaps," said Gilbert mildly, "I may be excused for thinking myself the best judge of that."

"Quite natural you should think so," assented Mr. Buswell generously ; "though not what I should have looked for from a man of your intelligence. I gave you fair warning too, as you may remember. Don't you make any mistake about it, sir ; you ought to have married the Manor 'Ouse, or, in other words, Miss 'Untley."

And it was altogether useless to take up a lofty tone with this too familiar personage and point out to him that the usages of society forbid such free mention of ladies' names.

"You and me ain't society," he returned, not a whit abashed, "and what passes betwixt you and me don't go no further. I'm determined to have the Manor 'Ouse, and I make no doubt but what I *shall* have it ; for if you don't marry the young lady, there's plenty of others for her to choose from, and we may expect to see the property put up for sale again before very long. On'y, as I told you before, if Kingscliff don't get the land through you, why, there's a fairish number of Kingscliff voters who may think you ain't the man to represent 'em."

Threats or warnings of this kind, repeated day after day in varying language, made Gilbert long to throw off the Buswell yoke and fight his own battle ; but that, as he very well knew, would be tantamount to abandoning the contest. Buswell, who continued to work for him with apparent assiduity, and who was all-powerful with the Radical portion of the constituency, could, and doubtless would, start a third candidate if defied ; and it was easy to foresee who, in that event, would be compelled, by loyalty to his party, to retire.

Thus it came to pass that the brow of Miss Kitty's lover was often clouded by care, and

that he sometimes distressed her by the total irrelevance of his replies.

"I do hope, dear," she said one day, with a profound sigh, "that when you are a member you will never, never vote for such an abominable thing as triennial parliaments ! What would life be worth to us if it were one long general election ?"

"It is indeed an appalling picture," answered Gilbert, "but I dare say we should get accustomed to it, and pull through somehow. I think any kind of life would be worth a good deal to me so long as I had you beside me, Kitty."

He said these pretty things to her every now and then, and meant them too. He was still as much in love with her as he had ever been, and he realised besides that she was his best friend—possibly his only friend. If her love and companionship did not suffice to console him for all imaginable losses and disappointments, it must be acknowledged that therein he did not greatly differ from the majority of mankind ; his misfortune was that he was perfectly conscious of a fact which most of us manage to keep out of sight.

No date had as yet been fixed for the wedding. It was to take place "after the election," but how soon or how long after remained an open question. Admiral and Mrs. Greenwood were not in a hurry, nor was Kitty ; and for the time being they were, one and all, too much impressed with the paramount necessity of getting their candidate returned to have leisure for the consideration of other projects.

That their utmost efforts would be required was becoming more and more manifest as the autumn approached. It was all very well for Mr. Buswell to boast, "I 'old this division in the 'oller of my 'and ;" but when his audacious words were reported in the Conservative camp, Sir John Pollington shook with silent, comfortable laughter, instead of becoming scarlet in the face and using bad language, as he would have done earlier in the year. For Giles, Q.C., was now hard at work and was proving himself able, energetic, and apt in the acquisition of popularity. All the hot summer through he was holding meetings here, there, and everywhere, making acquaintance with his constituents from the highest to the lowest, and delighting them with an inexhaustible supply of jokes and anecdotes. To the staid country gentlemen and their families, and to the well-to-do inhabitants of the Kingscliff villas, his oratory came as a spring of fresh water in the desert.

He was, perhaps, rather vulgar (and this exercised villadom a good deal), but then he was so very amusing; and what reward can be too great for a man who is capable of extracting amusement from modern English politics? Even those who said they really must vote against him could not help liking him; and as for Admiral Greenwood, it would have been nothing short of cruelty to restrain him from asking this jolly opponent to dinner. So Mrs. Greenwood gave her consent, and the invitation was accepted, and Mr. Giles made himself so pleasant to everybody that all sting of personal animosity was removed from the struggle at once and for ever. This was creditable to both sides, and was generally declared to be so; but somehow or other Giles got all the glory of it. In the humbler ranks of society, too—and especially among the tradespeople—he earned many friends for himself. Business is business, and some of the latter shrewdly remarked that Mr. Segrave would continue to reside among them and consume the necessities of life whether he were elected or not; whereas a stranger who spent his money freely, and who made no secret of his intention to purchase a villa in the town, in the event of his return, would be a distinct acquisition.

All these things rendered it imperative upon earnest Liberals to bestir themselves; nor had Gilbert any reason to complain of lukewarmness on the part of his friends. In certain quarters of the borough Miss Kitty's influence was very strong, and many were the promises of support which her pleading drew from those who, on previous occasions, had not troubled themselves to go to the poll. The Admiral, too, did good service by beating up the outlying districts and proclaiming aloud what great things the party of progress meant to do for the downtrodden tillers of the soil. He was, moreover, nobly seconded by a person from whom, at the most, nothing beyond a benevolent neutrality could have been expected. In truth, it was no love for Gilbert Segrave (whom he disliked and distrusted) that led Captain Mitchell to espouse the cause which Miss Greenwood had so much at heart; but to her he could not help being loyal through thick and thin, and to please her he would have undertaken tasks more repulsive than that into which he now threw himself with characteristic energy. Gilbert found that it would not do to sneer at the exertions of this unsolicited partisan. The only approach to a difference that he ever had with Kitty,

was when, with flushed cheeks and a quiver in her voice, she begged him to keep disparaging remarks about Captain Mitchell for other ears than hers.

"He never breathes a word against *you*," she said, "although——"

"Although he might justly lay so many sins to my charge?" suggested Gilbert smiling.

"No, not justly; but it must be more difficult for him to be generous than for you. And he is very, very generous!" cried Kitty, with tears in her eyes.

Well, if Mitchell abstained from bringing accusations against the young squire of Beekton, there were others who were less considerate; and indeed one of the terrors of canvassing is that the canvassed will not always understand the difference between public and private qualifications. Thus Mr. Puttick, when waited upon and requested in the most urbane manner to state his political views, replied bluntly that he didn't see a ha'porth to choose between Tories and Rads. If either side had proposed to abolish the duty on spirits, that would have been something like; but he had been informed that no such measure was in contemplation, and consequently he "hadn't no politics to speak of," beyond the general sentiment of Rule Britannia, which gave him a slightly Conservative bias.

"But what I want cleared up, sir, is this," said he, fixing his eyes upon Gilbert's. "It has been put about as you done Mr. Brian out of his rights; and parson, when I ask him the question fair and square, he don't give me no answer. Now Dan'l Puttick ain't the man to promise his vote to a thief, if you'll excuse the liberty of me sayin' so."

It was not everybody who spoke with such shocking directness; but of hints and insinuations there was no lack; and the worst of it was that many of these were uttered in Kitty's presence. Gilbert bitterly attributed their origin to Monckton, but Monckton was another person of whom it was hardly safe to speak ill to his betrothed, so he had to smother his wrath and derive such comfort as he could from her indignant repudiation of the calumnies reported by Mr. Puttick and others.

It was something to know that neither whisperings nor backbitings could avail to shake her faith in him for an instant; it was something to know that, come weal, come woe, she would always remain faithful to him. But he, for his part, did not want woe to come, and at times he was sadly doubtful

whether he would always remain faithful to her. If only she had had Miss Huntley's fortune, or even the half of it! Every day, as he left his own domain, he had to pass the Manor House, and the sight of the transformation that was being wrought in that long-disused dwelling, of the masons hurrying to and fro, the gardeners planting, transplanting, and levelling, the furniture vans unloading at the door, became a grievance to him. The place really ought to have been his; it ought never to have been separated from the Beckton property; perhaps he forgot that it had never been intended to be so separated. And after all, and in spite of all, it might have been his. That was the thought which would keep recurring to his mind and vexing him with its importunity. He might—he was almost sure of it—have gained possession not only of the Manor House, but of all the wealth of which but a trifling portion was now being lavished upon its improvement; and wealth to an ambitious man means so much more than mere luxury! He had, it is true, the grace to be ashamed of these half-regrets; he tried to shake them off, and never went the length of asking himself whether it might not be yet time to repair his error—supposing that he had committed an error. Still he looked forward to Miss Huntley's return with no slight interest and curiosity, wondering how she would receive him, and what effect the news of his engagement to Kitty Greenwood would have had upon her, and whether she would or would not exert herself on his behalf in the coming election fray.

In process of time the builder's men departed, the traces of their labour were removed, the stream of furniture-vans ceased, and the gravel drive was carefully swept. At last, when Gilbert was riding homewards one fine autumn afternoon, admiring the yellow and russet tints of the woods with that increased appreciation which arises from the sense of ownership, a smart victoria dashed past him, and he was aware of two ladies, one of whom turned her head to nod to him in a very friendly fashion, while the other allowed him to see no more of her person than a very broad back.

Miss Joy's back and any expression that she might contrive to throw into it possessed as little interest for Gilbert as her face would have done; but that glimpse of Miss Huntley's stimulated his desire for an interview with her: and indeed neighbourly courtesy seemed to demand that he should lose no time about leaving a card at the Manor

House. To the Manor House he accordingly betook himself on the following day; but even if he had wished to stop short at the formal ceremony of leaving his card at the door, he could hardly have done so after being informed that Miss Huntley was at home and had given particular orders for his admission. He was not sure that he quite liked this implied conviction on her part that he would call at the earliest possible moment, and, being more or less conversant with the ways of women, he at once suspected her of a design to draw him away from his allegiance. That she must resent his abrupt desertion of her he did not doubt for an instant; women, he thought, always do resent such behaviour, whether the deserter be personally indifferent to them or not. Thus, with his nerves ready braced up for action and all his wits on the alert, he followed the butler across a thickly-carpeted hall, which the resources of modern upholstery had adorned out of all resemblance to its former self, and was shown into what he remembered to have been in old days a small library.

Here, too, the upholsterers and decorators had been at work, and certainly no lady could wish for a more charming snuggerly than that in which Miss Huntley was now seated, writing letters. Gilbert took in all the details of the picture at a glance—the subdued colouring, the artistic furniture, the Japanese bronzes, and old china, and what-not—and smothered a sigh, for the refinements which money can buy always appealed forcibly to him. A wood fire was crackling cheerfully upon the high, brass-mounted dogs; but the windows, which looked out over the bay, had been thrown open, letting in the crisp autumnal air and a flood of yellow sunlight.

Beatrice rose and held out her hand with a frank smile which ought to have sufficed to disarm suspicion. "This is very pretty of you," she said. "I wanted you to be the first to welcome me, because I am painfully aware that I and my belongings are brand-new, while everything around us is as old as the hills. Your countenance gives us a sort of sanction; and we shall try to mellow as quickly as we can."

"I don't think either you or your belongings stand in need of any sanction," answered Gilbert politely.

"We are grateful for it, all the same. Now find a comfortable chair for yourself, and tell me what Kingscliff has been saying and doing all this long time."

CHAPTER XXXV.—MISS HUNTLEY'S TACTICS.

SAD it is to think of neglected opportunities, and sad to look upon what might have been ours, but for our folly or perversity; but the contemplation of great gain relinquished from honourable and disinterested motives is both soothing and inspiring. Gilbert, sitting in a luxurious arm-chair, with his back to the light and his eyes upon the beautiful and wealthy lady who had placed herself opposite to him, felt that he occupied a strong moral position, and that in any encounter which might be imminent it would be needless for him to employ strategy. So, in answer to her question he said :—

"Kingscliff is, and has been, busy electioneering. That sums up its public annals. In the way of personal items, I don't know that I have any to offer you, except what you have perhaps heard already, that I am going to be married." And then he looked at her to see whether she would wince.

Of course, she did no such thing; she laughed a little, and answered: "Oh, I heard of your engagement ages ago, and I ought to have begun by congratulating you; but I feel as if all that had been gone through. It was such a very foregone conclusion, wasn't it?"

"I didn't know it was," said Gilbert, not best pleased. "Is it also a foregone conclusion that I am to be congratulated?"

"Naturally. It would require a stronger mind than mine to offer anything except congratulations to persons about to marry."

"I am sure you would always use the proper formula; but are your congratulations sincere in my particular case?" persisted Gilbert, not choosing to be put off in that way.

"You must be very conceited if you doubt it. Kitty Greenwood is the prettiest girl in the county, and as good as she is pretty. Really, with the highest possible respect for you, I don't see what better fortune you are entitled to by your merits."

"I don't consider myself entitled to any good fortune at all," Gilbert declared; "only I am not a rich man, and many people would say that I should have acted more prudently by marrying a woman with a little money of her own, that's all. I thought you might possibly take that view."

"Oh, if you talk about prudence that is another matter. One may be permitted to congratulate one's friends sometimes on being imprudent. Congratulations are especially appropriate in the present instance, because

I should imagine that, as a rule, you look a very long time before you leap. We can't all be romantic—I myself, for instance, am distressingly the reverse—but that is rather our misfortune than our fault; and nothing is more refreshing than to see an unromantic person doing a romantic thing. Still, I hope you won't give up all idea of political life just yet; that would be almost a pity, I think."

He assured her that he fully intended to enter Parliament and remain there, if only a majority of the electors could be brought to intrust their interests to him, and this for a time gave the conversation another turn. But Miss Huntley soon harked back to the subject of Kitty Greenwood, in whose praise it seemed as if she could not find anything strong enough to say. So eulogistic was she that at length Gilbert, somewhat bewildered by a line of criticism which he had not anticipated, and a trifle vexed by the reiterated implication that he was fortunate beyond his deserts, began insensibly to point to the reverse of the medal and to hint that, although Kitty might be worth a sacrifice, a sacrifice had not the less been made for her sake. He caught himself in the act of saying that a man who has gone certain lengths in the heedlessness of youth can't honourably retreat, and broke off, red and ashamed, in the middle of his sentence.

Miss Huntley did not seem to see his embarrassment. "Are you by any chance going to Morden this afternoon?" she asked; "and if you are, may I drive you there? I do so want to see Kitty again."

He could not, of course, do otherwise than accept this offer gratefully; and soon afterwards he was seated in a low phaeton, drawn by a pair of well-matched cobs, and driven by Miss Huntley with the ease of a practised whip. She contrived to keep him very well amused by the way. She never in her wanderings lost touch of the fashionable world, its sayings and doings, whereas Gilbert, the moment that he left London, felt himself as utterly excluded as if he were dead from the society which he loved all the more dearly because he did not, strictly speaking, belong to it. Therefore both the matter and the manner of Miss Huntley's talk fell refreshingly upon ears which for so many weeks had been listening to quite another style of conversation; and of this she was doubtless aware. She may even have been also aware that the effect produced upon her hearer was not entirely pleasurable, and that by degrees he became affected with a vague restlessness

and dissatisfaction, as exiles are moved first to joy and then to tears by the accents of their fatherland.

"How completely out of it one is down here!" he exclaimed, with a sigh.

To which she responded cheerfully, "Oh, you will be glad enough to be out of it for a few months after a session or two. The time is rapidly approaching when Parliament will meet before Christmas, and sit until the second week in August."

He sighed again, wondering whether he would be able to afford a London house, and whether, if he could do so, it would be such a house and in such a neighbourhood as to enable him to receive the friends whom he was chiefly desirous of retaining. This was a point which he had latterly debated more than once with painful misgivings. He dismissed it impatiently, as he had dismissed it before, with the perfectly just reflection that it was too late to repine at comparative poverty now, and that he must be contented with such good luck as had fallen to his share.

Nor, in truth, did that luck present itself under an unfavourable aspect when Kitty, who had seen the approach of the phaeton from afar, came to the door to greet her lover and embrace her visitor. There was no need to draw comparisons between these two re-united friends. Certainly Miss Huntley's dress was more skilfully cut than Kitty's; but a woman with her income would have been inexcusable if her gowns had been badly cut; and if she had a certain air which was lacking in a provincial maiden, what else could be expected? Each was charming in her own way.

The warm-hearted Greenwoods, at any rate, found Miss Huntley charming, and loudly proclaimed their joy at her return. The Admiral bustled into the drawing-room, where she was seated between his wife and daughter, and joined in their demonstrations with much heartiness.

"Well, Miss Huntley, you make us all very proud; upon my word you do! The whole world to choose from, and you have chosen Kingscliff! I shouldn't wonder if Buswell were to mention that in one of his huge painted advertisements. A business-like man, Buswell, and uncommonly useful to us at the present juncture, I can tell you. Our friend there is to be our future M.P., you know, and we shall count upon your assistance to get him in."

But she shook her head laughingly, and, unfastening her jacket, pointed to a small

yellow enamel brooch, fashioned in the shape of a primrose, which she wore at her neck. "Sent me by Clementina," she explained, "with instructions to display it at all times and places until further orders. Would you expose me to the risk of being disowned by my family for ever?"

"Perhaps, as you have no vote, and as your out-door servants won't be upon the register, we may forgive you for sporting that ugly symbol," answered the Admiral; "but it is a sad thing to think of your being still in the darkness of Toryism, Miss Huntley."

"I was born and bred in a Tory atmosphere," she said. "If I haven't yet seen the error of my ways it is the fault of Mr. Segrave, who undertook to convert me, and abandoned his enterprise before he was half way through it. Naturally, I have had a relapse, and I'm afraid there won't be time to instruct my ignorance of the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee before the end of November."

However, as Gilbert soon discovered, she was neither so ignorant of these distinctions nor so persuaded of their microscopic character as she chose to pretend. She did not remain long at the Greenwoods' that afternoon; but he met her there again on the following day, and walked home with her; and as they walked she spoke of the future distribution of parties with a shrewdness which both surprised and fascinated him.

"Whatever you do," she said, "don't go in for extreme Radicalism. The country isn't Radical yet; or if it is, that is only a passing fit, which will be followed by a reaction when the inevitable European war breaks out. It is quite true that the mass of the electors neither know nor care anything about foreign politics; but the result of having no foreign policy will be brought home to them before they are much older, and then they will get frightened and angry. Join the moderates and bide your time. It is the fashion to laugh at these men, but they are the men who will come to the front as soon as they have found out what to call themselves, and when once they are in the saddle it won't be easy to form a strong opposition to them. At your age you can very well afford to wait through one Parliament without committing yourself."

Now these opinions, whether wise or not, seemed so to Gilbert, because they happened to chime in with his own; nor was it only with regard to the position which he should take up in the House that Miss Huntley had

sound advice to offer him. According to her—and here again he was quite of her mind—it is not in public life alone that the path to office and honours is to be found. To be acquainted with Cabinet Ministers and the wives of Cabinet Ministers is an advantage which a man of tact may easily turn to account, and which, at the very least, must render his existence more enjoyable and exciting than it could otherwise be.

"The great thing," she declared, "is to be seen and known. That is both a means and an end; and if one is to be neither the one nor the other one might almost as well be planting cabbages at Beckton as sitting in the House of Commons, night after night, listening to weary, dreary debates."

Such sentiments found a ready echo in Gilbert's heart; nor is it surprising that they should also have set him speculating upon the probable future career of Miss Huntley's husband. That lucky individual would, at all events, have what was denied to him—unlimited command of ready money and a house at which the best of good company would congregate.

It was not in the course of one or even two interviews similar to the above that Gilbert succeeded in making himself thoroughly discontented. The greater part of his leisure time was spent with Kitty, and spent more pleasantly, perhaps also more profitably, than in devising ambitious schemes. But Kitty, in spite of the claims of her lover and of the canvassing labours which she had undertaken on his behalf, had not severed her connection with St. Michael's, and it frequently happened that her presence was required at the church or the vicarage after the daily five-o'clock evensong. Gilbert was wont to accompany her so far and then to take his way homewards; but now that the evenings were drawing in, it was dull work to sit all alone in the great empty house at Beckton, waiting for the dinner-bell to ring; and what could be more natural than that a forlorn bachelor should turn aside to the Manor House for a cup of tea and a little improving conversation? As a matter of fact, he did so turn aside nearly every day, and about this time Kitty noted with satisfaction that he ceased to grumble at her for "making herself a slave to that immaculate parson."

One cannot please everybody. These evening visits, these prolonged *tête-à-têtes* by the firelight, which seemed to give so much pleasure to Gilbert, and in which Kitty (who was duly informed of them) acquiesced quite

cheerfully, were a source of deep disquietude and disgust to Miss Joy. Not often had she ventured to read a lecture to the somewhat imperious lady whose nominal chaperon she was; still, being a courageous and conscientious woman, she felt it incumbent upon her one morning to say—

"Beatrice, dear, Mr. Segrave comes here too often."

"Does he?" asked Beatrice with innocent simplicity. "Well, now that you mention it, I daresay he does. He hasn't begun to bore me yet though."

"I don't mean that; I mean that he comes here too often for his happiness—and perhaps for Miss Greenwood's into the bargain."

"Matilda, my beloved, are you so desperately anxious for his happiness?"

"I don't care a brass farthing whether he is happy or unhappy; it is about you that I am anxious," answered Miss Joy candidly.

"Oh!—neither about him nor about poor Kitty, then, after all? Now be honest, Matilda: don't you think that I am pretty well able to take care of myself?"

"Most certainly I do not," Miss Joy declared; "that is just exactly what I don't think."

"How little you know me! Some day you will admit your mistake. In the meantime, if it would relieve you to speak a word of warning to Mr. Segrave or to Kitty, or to both of them, pray do so. Nobody will be the worse for it."

"And nobody will be the better," sighed Miss Joy, conscious of her impotence.

The excellent woman saw plainly that neither warnings nor remonstrances would be of any avail, and therefore held her peace; but she was sorely distressed in mind, for Gilbert, of whom she had never thought too highly, had forfeited the last vestige of her esteem by his present behaviour; and what was still worse, she found herself compelled to admit that Beatrice was behaving quite as badly as he. That was as much as to say that the world was upside down.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, the little world in which Miss Joy dwelt was composed for the most part of people who could not easily believe their bosom friends capable of treachery. The soft, misty autumn days passed on and brought no clouds over the contentment of the Greenwood family. Kitty, it is true, remarked that Gilbert was nervous and irritable at times; but this she attributed to election worries, and was too sweet-tempered to resent. As for jealousy, that had never been among her failings.

Certainly she had been a little jealous of Beatrice Huntley once upon a time, and had confessed that peccadillo, half penitently, half laughingly, to Gilbert long ago. In those days she had not been sure of his love—she was sure of it now, and it would have required something a great deal more serious than his visits to the Manor House to make her distrust him. As reasonably might he have distrusted her for making much of Mitchell, who at this time was far more constantly with her than Gilbert was with Miss Huntley. For Mitchell's goods and chattels were being packed up. Somewhat suddenly he had announced his appointment to another coastguard station in the north of England, and Kitty, who divined that the transfer had not been unsolicited, felt that the least she could do was to make his last days at Kings-cliff as pleasant for him as might be. On the eve of his departure a few friends were invited to a farewell dinner in his honour at Morden Court; and then it was that Miss Huntley and he had a little talk together for the first time since her return; for although they had met before, neither of them had displayed much anxiety to compare notes with the other. Now, however, she beckoned him aside to say:

"So you are retiring from the field of battle."

"That is the usual thing to do after one has been beaten, is it not?" he returned.

"One should not allow oneself to be so easily beaten."

"Well, I don't know about that; under certain circumstances defeat is inevitable, I suppose."

"And a bungling ally is not quite the right person to make criticisms, perhaps?"

"Oh, you mustn't put words into my mouth that I never used, Miss Huntley. I know you did your best for me—and very kind it was of you, I'm sure."

"Nevertheless, I miscalculated my strength; and you didn't think much of my tactics, did you?"

Mitchell hesitated.

"You never told me what your tactics were," he replied at length; "but as far as I could understand them, they weren't exactly—well, I don't think I should have employed them myself. The fact is, I believe honesty to be the best policy."

Miss Huntley did not appear to relish the condemnation which she had invited; for she frowned and shut up her fan with a snap.

"That sounds a very rude thing to say," Mitchell went on apologetically; "but what I

mean is that in these cases it is really all plain sailing. She didn't care for me, and she did care for Segrave. That seems to me to be final. I couldn't make her care for me."

"Oh, excuse me; that doesn't follow at all. And how do you know that she cares for Mr. Segrave? How do you know that the person with whom she is in love isn't an imaginary being whom she will never find inside Mr. Segrave's skin?"

But this was too subtle for the straightforward Mitchell, who shook his head and answered:

"It would be no kindness to encourage me, Miss Huntley, even if you could. But you can't. I must grin and bear it. The only thing is that I find I can't bear to stay here, and that is why I'm off to Berwick-on-Tweed."

"Leaving the enemy in possession."

"Oh, I don't want to call him the enemy. He and I have never hit it off together particularly well; but most people like him, and after all, he is the man whom she has chosen to be her husband."

"And suppose the man whom she has chosen to be her husband should break her heart some fine day?"

"In that case, I shouldn't think twice about breaking his head."

"A very useful and practical measure, though hardly to be described as either prevention or cure. Perhaps you wouldn't carry it out, though; perhaps by that time you may have found consolation on one side or other of the Border."

Mitchell reddened.

"Look here, Miss Huntley," said he a little roughly; "I have known Kitty Greenwood since she was a child in the schoolroom, and I have never in all my life loved another woman. I don't know that it matters very much what you may think of me; but if you think that I shall 'find consolation,' as you call it, at this time of day, you make a mistake."

"Don't be angry," she returned, laughing; "I give you full credit for constancy, though I can't say as much for your perseverance. Apparently, your notion of fighting a battle isn't the same as mine. If I were in your place, I should say to myself that all was not lost so long as the girl whom I loved remained unmarried, that engagements have been broken off before now, and that when a woman looks at a rejected lover with tears in her eyes, it is because she is beginning to find out what he is worth."

"She didn't look at me with tears in her

eyes!" exclaimed Mitchell. "What do you mean?"

"Did she not? I suppose I must have been deceived, then, when I caught a glimpse of her across the dinner-table. Perhaps she had swallowed an over-dose of mustard, or she may have been dazzled by the brilliancy of her prospects. To be sure she might have wept all the tears of Niobe before you would have seen them; for your own eyes don't seem to be as sharp as a sailor's ought to be. Since you won't use them at Kingscliff, perhaps you may as well be at Berwick-on-Tweed as here. It wouldn't be a bad plan to take a return-ticket though."

"What do you mean?" asked Mitchell, for the second time.

"That you will be wanted to act as best man to Mr. Segrave on his wedding-day, of

course. What else should I mean? and what part could suit you better? You have chosen to surrender to him without striking a blow; it is only fit that you should walk in his triumph."

Mitchell drove home that night with a young man who was loud in his commendation of Miss Huntley, her beauty, her talents, and her amiability. The elder man listened for a long time with that silence which is said to imply assent; but at length he responded:

"Miss Huntley may be all that you say, and I should think she is; but between you and me, I doubt whether she is quite right in the upper story."

It was this impression of her, and no other, that he took away with him to Berwick-on-Tweed.

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

SUNDAY READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER.

By JAMES BROWN, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read John iv. 1—15.

THE traveller from Judæa to Galilee, who, as of old, goes through Samaria, resting at Jacob's well, and passing on to Nablous, on the site of the ancient Sychar, finds the distance between the city and the well greater than the casual reader of St. John's narrative would suppose. As he traverses that distance, which is at least two miles, the question is forced upon him, What was this woman's motive in going so far to draw water? There is a perennial fountain at the city gate from which she could have obtained the supply needed for her household. If it be true that, being of worse than doubtful reputation, she was not permitted to associate with the women who frequented the well at the gate, there were other and nearer fountains in the Vale of Shechem from which she could have drawn. There is no valley in Palestine where the traveller is so cheered by the tinkle of brooks and by those sounds of the green-leaved earth which betoken the presence of abundant water. Why then did this woman habitually leave the city gate and, passing the many fountains in the valley, find her weary way to Jacob's well that she might fill her water-pot from its depths? It hardly admits of doubt that she was im-

pelled by a superstitious motive. She made the pilgrimage to the distant well because she esteemed its water sacred. It was the gift of the holy patriarch who had drunk thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle. It must be endowed with saving virtue. The woman sought peace to her troubled conscience in a toilsome act of religious devotion.

When we recognise that this was her motive, light is shed on the whole narrative. We understand better than before her amazement that a Jew should ask drink of a woman of Samaria. She heard the request not merely as that of a wayworn thirsty traveller for a cup of cold water, for such a request might have been made without impropriety to one of the alien race. But she greatly wondered that a Jew with his proud exclusiveness should ask leave to participate with her in what she reckoned a religious rite.

Then, too, we see new point and meaning in the Saviour's reply, "If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is who saith to thee, give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." These words touch the error which lay at the root of her religion. She thought the favour of God could be purchased by outward observances. She was going about to establish a righteousness of her own, seek-

ing peace and life by habitual pilgrimages to a sacred spot, and by drinking the water of a holy well. The Lord would have her learn that eternal life is the gift of God, bestowed without money and without price on those who humbly ask it.

Nor did the woman so grievously misunderstand Him as she seemed when she answered, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with and the well is deep; from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob which gave us the well?" She was not thinking of the material, while He was speaking of the spiritual. What she asked was whether this Jew, who had not even the means of bringing water from the depths of her holy well, laid claim to greater sanctity than the father of his race, and could give her such water as would avail her more than that which was sacred through the patriarch's memory.

When the Saviour said in reply, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life," He contrasted the temporary and evanescent peace which is obtained by outward rites, such as the drinking of the water of a holy well, with the enduring and boundless blessedness which flows from the indwelling of His grace in the heart. Outward rites can give no lasting relief. They are like the anodyne, that stills for a season the gnawing of the deadly pain, but can do nothing to eradicate the disease. The gift of God's grace reaches the root of the malady. It takes our guilt away, and thus it gives deliverance from the fears which guilt begets. It is in the heart a fountain of life, sending streams into every region of our nature and making it beautiful and fruitful to God's praise.

The woman understood Him well. Her experience attested the truth of what He said about thirsting again. The unrest of her weary heart could be soothed only for a season by her pilgrimages to Jacob's well. She had ever to be coming again to draw. There was something inexpressibly attractive to her in the thought of any fountain of enduring peace, of any water that would be in her as a well springing up into everlasting life. It was in no jest, but in deepest earnest that she cried, "Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Her words were a sincere and earnest prayer.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read John iv. 16-26.

He to whom all hearts are open and all desires known recognised the woman's words, "Sir, give me this water," as an earnest prayer for spiritual blessing, and proceeded at once to answer that prayer. He would not withhold the request of her lips. She had asked life of Him, and He would give it. That she might realise the blessing she sought, two things were essential. She must be convinced of her sin, and her mind must be enlightened in the knowledge of the Saviour. These two essential parts of her effectual calling to life and peace were both secured when Jesus said, "Go, call thy husband and come hither." His words brought a twofold revelation to her heart—a revelation of the evil of her life, and a revelation of the glory of Him whom she perceived to be a prophet, because He was telling her all that ever she did.

They revealed the evil of her life, bringing her face to face with the reality of her sin. She had had five husbands, and he whom she now had was not her husband. Such conviction of sin is the first step towards regeneration. When, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, we are glossing over our sin, we may be able for a time to still our unrest by formal acts of religious devotion: by setting the number of our sacrifices over against our disobedience. But when the sharp two-edged sword of God's word pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and lays our sin bare, we feel how vain are our oblations. They cannot wipe out the stain of our guilt. If we are to be pardoned it must be through the free gift of God's love; if we are to be regenerated it must be by a power mightier than our own taking hold of our hearts and renewing our lives.

The same word of Christ which brought conviction of sin to the woman's heart revealed to her One whose power to help her was attested by the fact that He was searching out the secrets of her life. Here was a Physician who, by one skilful touch, had probed her heart and revealed the root of her unrest. To whom but to Him could she go for healing? She said, "Sir, I perceive that Thou art a Prophet;" and propounded for His solution the vexed question between Jews and Samaritans as to whether Mount Gerizim or Mount Zion was the scene of acceptable worship. She was not seeking to escape from an inconvenient personal question by taking refuge in a commonplace of ecclesiastical controversy. She earnestly de-

sired to learn through what channel salvation was to flow to her. It was not wonderful that the zealous pilgrim to Jacob's Well should think only of a channel of formal observance; and she was willing to accept the guidance of the Prophet she had found as to which channel was the true. She asked, in effect, Are the well-springs on Zion sources of more enduring peace than I can find on this mountain? In even hinting at such a question she was already showing a willing and obedient heart. All her sacred associations clustered round the hill where her fathers worshipped. But what things were gain to her she was willing to count loss for the life she craved. She was ready to forget her own people and her father's house—nay, even to cast in her lot with the hated Jews—if that sacrifice would avail.

There is a stage in spiritual history in which questions similar to this seem of paramount importance. The soul is perplexed with inquiries as to what form of doctrine is most accordant with truth and most likely to give rest to the troubled heart; as to what Church is the true sanctuary of refuge. Such perplexities are very real, and are by no means to be despised; they are an evidence of spiritual quickening. But in view of them the Saviour's reply to the woman of Samaria is for ever memorable: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem worship the Father." There are deeper questions than of creeds and forms of worship. It is the spirit of our worship that is all-important. If men worship the Father—if there underlies their worship the child-like spirit of faith and obedience, it is a secondary matter whether that worship is rendered on Gerizim or Zion. The language of true worship is one, though the dialects in which it is uttered are many.

But forms of doctrine or of worship are not therefore indifferent. The difference between Mount Gerizim and Jerusalem is secondary, yet there is a difference. "Ye worship," the Saviour adds, "ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." The Jewish worship was founded on a clearer apprehension of the nature and relations of Him who was its object than was the worship of Samaria. The Samaritans had begun to worship through blind fear of the God of the land into which they had been brought as aliens, and because the wild beasts of the depopulated country were destroying them. They never learned to know God fully. They accepted only the

Books of Moses; they shut out the ever-broadening light of divine revelation that came to Israel by the later prophets. They had not the same clearness of hope as had Israel, to whom the sure word of prophecy was as a light shining in a dark place till the day dawned, and the day-star arose in men's hearts. There is a difference between truth and error, between more enlightened and less enlightened forms. The worship of those who refuse to recognise the presence of the ever-living God, revealing Himself continually and in many ways, be they Samaritan or Jew, Catholic or Protestant, can neither be as acceptable nor as profitable as the homage rendered by the men whose ears are open to the words of prophecy that are spoken as the ages roll on.

But no worship of the one Father, sincerely rendered in the spirit of devotion by filial hearts, is rejected. "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." He inhabiteth the praises of Israel, by whatever name Israel is called. Christ always recognised that they are not all Israel who are of Israel. Samaritans are sometimes nearer the kingdom than Jews. It was a Samaritan who showed the neighbourly spirit of true religion when priest and Levite passed by on the other side. It was a Samaritan who, alone of ten that were healed, returned to give God thanks. The Samaritans were in error, but God is no respecter of persons; and in every nation and under every creed they that fear God and work righteousness are accepted of Him. The Father seeketh such to worship Him.

This was involved in that fundamental truth acknowledged by Jew and Samaritan alike, that God is a spirit. His nature is spiritual, and it is therefore in the spiritual region alone that there can be true fellowship with Him. They forget this truth who think that outward forms, bodily exercises, can be in themselves acceptable to God. If we once realise the spirituality of God we shall feel that He must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. He desireth truth in the inward parts, and they only can have fellowship with Him in whom His own spirit dwells.

We know not whether something in the Saviour's bearing or words suggested to the woman that this was no common Jewish Rabbi, but perchance the promised Messiah, or whether the lofty regions of thought into which He led her made her feel her need of some one to guide her on the giddy

heights. Be this as it may, in leading her to the declaration, "I know that Messias cometh which is called Christ, when He is come He will tell us all things," He prepared her for the revelation of Himself, which was the second necessary part of her effectual calling to life and peace: "I that speak unto thee am He." Now, indeed, she had found the living water, for which as with fevered thirst she had been longing. She was face to face with One who could deliver her from the guilt which burdened her conscience and from the confusions of her wasted life. She could rest from her weary search after peace at His most blessed feet. She could with implicit confidence accept His guidance who could tell her all things.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read John iv. 27-30.

At the point to which we have come in our readings, when Jesus—having led the woman to confess her expectation of the advent of the Christ—revealed Himself as the fulfiller of that expectation, the conversation was interrupted by the return of the disciples who had gone into the city to buy meat. They were amazed that their Master should be holding converse with one who belonged to the alien race, with one moreover whose appearance indicated that she was of evil life. They had not yet reached the wider views of the kingdom of God into which they were by-and-by to be led. They had not yet learned that the Son of Man had come to seek that which was lost. The parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Silver, and the Prodigal Son, had not yet been spoken. The disciples had not heard the words He had just uttered which disallowed any claim to peculiar sacredness, put forth in behalf of this or the other mountain. They would probably not have understood them if they had. They were true and loyal disciples, but they were *disciples* and had still much to learn. It is a necessary condition of discipleship, that we should be ever and again perplexed by glimpses into new regions of truth.

The conduct of the wondering disciples is an example of the spirit we should manifest under such perplexity. They marvelled, but they did not presume to question. No one said to the woman, What seekest thou? or to the Master, Why talkest thou with her? They could trust their Master even while they wondered; they could quietly wait for further light. It is foolish to cry out whenever in our pursuit of truth we discover

something which does not square with the system we have adopted. Calvin well says, "that we, when something in the works of God and of Christ does not please us, should not indulge in complaint and opposition, but should rather be modestly silent until what is hidden from us be revealed from heaven."

If the conversation had not been interrupted by the arrival of the disciples, the woman might probably, in reply to our Lord's avowal of His Messiahship, have confessed her faith. As it was she did so in another way. She showed her faith by her works. She gave the best possible evidence of the presence of the new life which had begun to stir within her. She left her water-pot—the symbol of her servile toil. It was no longer needed. Jesus had answered her prayer, and had given her the living water, that she might thirst no more, neither come thither to draw. Already there was springing up within her a well of life, overflowing in compassion for her kinsfolk and her neighbours, whom she would make partakers of the gift of God she had received. As long as she trusted in her acts of painful devotion, she was self-seeking in her religious zeal. She went solitarily the weary way to Jacob's well. Why should she ask others to join her pilgrimage? She had no gospel to tell them, no joy to share with them. She was gloomily intent on the solution of the problem, how to obtain the favour of God and find peace to her own troubled conscience. But now everything is changed. The joy of God's salvation has enlarged her heart. She has drunk at a fountain of boundless grace, which must be free to all. This is the secret of the missionary spirit, characteristic of those who trust for salvation to God's free grace. They who believe the good tidings cannot hold their peace, but must make them known. So this new convert goes "her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man which told me all that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

She is not hindered by the remembrance of her degradation. She was of unclean lips; but if there is no other to tell that the Christ has come she will not be silent. Her iniquity is taken away, her sin is purged, and the first fruits of her cleansed lips shall be words of good tidings to those who have known her shame. It has been remarked that she spoke to the men. Perhaps the women would not have hearkened to her; but where there was hope of audience she could not choose but speak. Her words are distinguished by be-

coming humility ; she gives herself no airs of sanctity. Her dark story is known in the city, and her declaration of the Christ is founded on the fact that He has read that story. "Come, see a man which told me all that ever I did." She asks, "Is not this the Christ?" She does not throw her message into dogmatic form. This is no evidence of doubt ; it is rather an evidence of the strength of her conviction. Dogmatic assertion is often a cloak to cover doubt. When we are most firmly assured of the truth we are most ready to put our declaration of it into least dogmatic form. All that we ask is a candid examination. We say, Come and see. We are sure that the evidence which has convinced us will carry conviction to other hearts.

This method of declaring truth is generally the most effectual. Dogmatism repels ; but there is a disposition on the part of men to respond to an appeal earnestly made to them to come and see ; and there was unmistakable earnestness here which commanded attention. The men of Sychar at once responded to the woman's appeal ; they went out of the city and came to Jesus at the well. Perhaps the want of success which attends so much of our religious teaching is to be accounted for by the dogmatism of its tone. We speak too often with a cold air of infallible authority, pronouncing pains and penalties against those who will not believe as we believe. We thus drive men into opposition, while if we were less assertive and more earnest we might win them to Christ. When the Church returns to the spirit of the apostle who said that by manifestation of the truth he and his fellow-labourers commended themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, the number of the men of every city who come to Him of whom the Church bears testimony will be greatly increased.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read John iv. 31—42.

When the woman was away on her errand the disciples, solicitous for their Master, begged Him to eat of the meat which they had bought. But in His preoccupation of mind His weariness and hunger and thirst had disappeared. We are all familiar with the fact, which proves the subjection of the material to the spiritual, that intense mental occupation swallows up the bodily appetites. It is only, however, in rare and Christ-like men that such intensity is manifested in unselfish works of well-doing. When the dis-

ciples pressed the offered food upon Jesus He excused Himself, saying, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." They showed that they knew not of it by their incapacity to understand the imagery which He employed. These disciples were certainly rough material out of which to make the apostles and preachers of the highest ideal life, when, even after some months' fellowship with their Master, they could think of no higher interpretation of His words than that some man had brought Him something to eat. But He is patient with them, and in accommodation to their weakness explains more fully the great principle of His life : "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work."

In these words we have the distinctive characteristic of that ideal life which Christ exemplified, and to which He would bring all His followers. It stands out in contrast to the life of the legalist who shapes his conduct by the formal precepts of a written law. To Christ, and to the man who is partaker of Christ's life, the doing of God's will is a necessity of his nature, like that which impels him to eat his daily food. His inner being is so in harmony with the will of God, he so loves the thing which God has commanded, that he is impelled to do it by a craving strong as hunger. Nay, as men will make any sacrifice for bread, as the desire for bread is one of the most powerful motives to human action and human endurance—so those who have attained to this ideal life will count no toil too sore, no sacrifice too costly, if only they can do the will of Him who sent them, and finish His work. They will find their highest gratification in doing it, and through doing it their natures will be strengthened and developed till they attain to the measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus.

This is the characteristic of healthful life. Legal restriction and formal precept may be necessary in view of spiritual disease, even as a sick man eats his food in obedience to prescribed rules. But that is at best a sickly life which is thus controlled. When, through the grace of God, our iniquities are forgiven and our diseases are healed, the doing of God's will becomes as the food of our souls, for which we crave and in which we take delight.

The transition is perfectly harmonious which our Lord makes from speaking of the doing God's work as bread, to speak of the large opportunities of doing it which are opening up to Him and to His disciples, as

an already ripened harvest. "Say not ye, There are yet four months and then cometh harvest?" This was probably a proverbial saying, expressing the necessity of waiting with patience for the results of human effort. Men had learned from experience and from the analogy of nature that spiritual results do not generally come at once, and had framed this proverb to comfort the desponding and to warn the sanguine. The proverb expresses the rule, but every rule has its exception; and there are seasons when, because of special preparedness, the fruits of spiritual labour are not delayed. Such a season was this of our Lord's visit to Samaria. He had marked the Samaritan woman's peculiar receptivity. He had divined the errand on which she had gone when she left the well. He had the assurance that the errand would be successful. Perhaps He could see the men approaching whom she was bringing to hear His word. He knew that a rich harvest of souls was ready to be gathered in the alien city. He may have pointed to the advancing Samaritans—at all events He had them in His mind's eye—when He said, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." In despised Samaria there were to be immediate results, contradicting the proverb which had availed to cheer the disciples depressed by the discouragements of the Judean ministry. There was no need here to exercise the long patience of the husbandman who waits for the early and the latter rain.

The Saviour gives utterance to the joy with which the prospect fills His heart: "And he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." He was receiving even then earnest of His wages—of the joy set before Him, for sake of which He was braving toil and scorn, and was in the end to endure the cross; and of the glory with which, for the suffering of death, He should be crowned—the joy of doing good, the glory of saving the lost. This eternal joy and glory every reaper in the great spiritual harvest shares. If we work for Christ and with Christ, we labour for no temporary and evanescent reward.

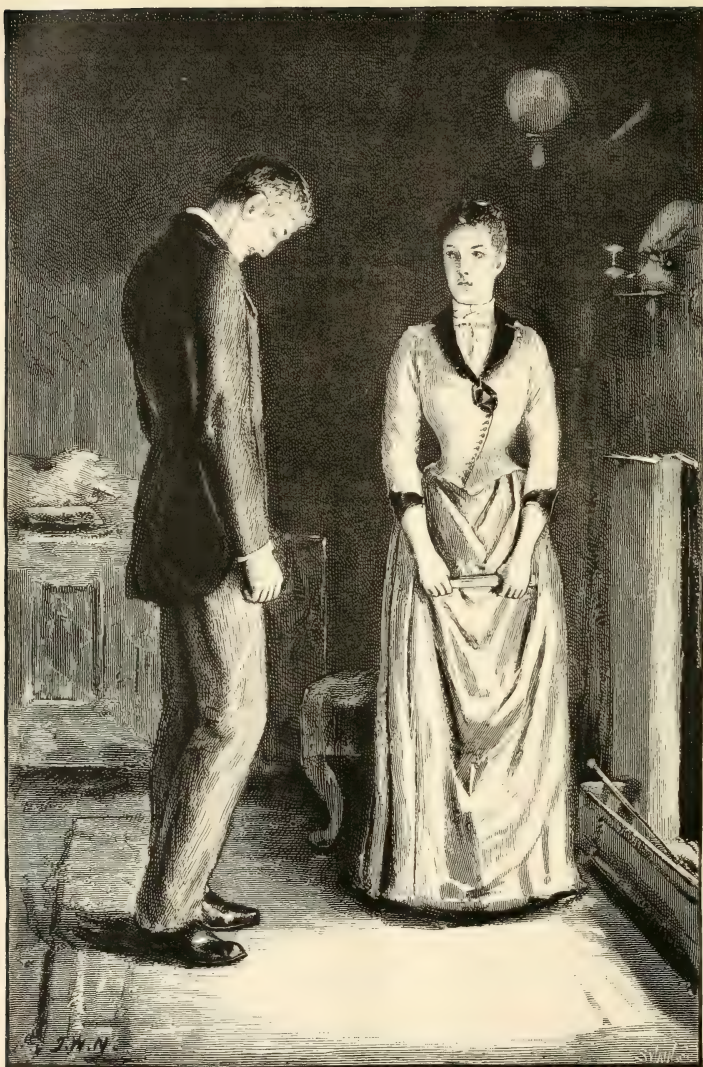
And in the joy with which we are rewarded, we are brought into fellowship with the faithful who have wrought before us, but who seemed to labour in vain. In the success which comes to us they find the fruit of their fruitless toil. They went forth and wept, bearing precious seed; but now they share the joy which thrills us as we fill our bosoms with the sheaves that have grown

from their sowing. They without us were not made perfect, but when the "better thing" comes to us, they are perfected at last, "that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

It is well for us, as it was well for the disciples, to be reminded that we are only a part of a great army of workers for truth and righteousness, of whom some are sowers and some are reapers. This truth found expression in a second proverb which is kindred to the one already quoted. The results of spiritual labour are often so long delayed that the sower is not permitted to be the reaper. "One soweth and another reapeth." The Saviour would have the disciples remember this, lest they should be exalted above measure by the success which they were to achieve. They were merely the reapers in fields that had been sown by the labours and watered by the tears of faithful men, some of whom went to their graves mourning, We have laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought and in vain. "I have sent you," says Christ, "to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured and ye are entered into their labour."

There was special significance in reminding the disciples of this when the field in which they were to reap was the outfield of Samaria. The Saviour rises above all Jewish exclusiveness, and would have His disciples rise with Him. He recognises, and He would have them recognise, that even in the imperfect religion and shaded history of the alien people, there had been influences at work for good. The privileges of Judæa had been greater, salvation was of the Jews; but God fulfils Himself in many ways, and even those who were in comparative error and darkness had been sowing good seed, which was now bringing forth fruit unto life eternal.

In the remaining verses of the story we have the literal record of that of which our Lord had spoken in figure. Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him—some for the saying of the woman and others because they heard Him themselves, and knew that He was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. The designation of Christ which these last give in the confession of their faith is deeply significant. They call Him the Saviour of the world. The believing Samaritans were the first fruits to Christ of "the world" in its distinctive sense. They were the forerunners of the "other sheep who are not of this fold," whom also He must bring.



"Nothing," he answered quietly. "Nothing, either now or at any future time."

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAP. XXXVI.—GILBERT MAKES PROGRESS.

THE more Gilbert thought of it the more he became convinced that he had been guilty of a lamentable error in judgment in proposing to Kitty Greenwood. It is not with impunity that a man who has taken cold reason for his guide through life allows himself to be swayed by a gust of feeling, and even if Miss Huntley had never crossed his path again the day would full surely have arrived when Gilbert would have repented him of his rashness. But Miss Huntley had come, armed in all the suggestive panoply of wealth, beauty, and worldly wisdom, and this had caused lame Nemesis to put her best foot foremost—had, perhaps, as Gilbert now told himself without any circumlocution, rendered it possible for him to escape Nemesis even at the eleventh hour. The means by which she had accomplished this end have already been indicated, and it is neither necessary nor agreeable to dwell further upon them. She had an apt disciple and an easy task.

By no means so easy was that which, before the month of October was out, Gilbert had determined to undertake. It is no light matter to be a traitor to love, honour, and duty, to desert the girl of your heart without the shadow of a plausible excuse for so doing, and to brave the scorn of your friends and neighbours. Yet doubtless the thing may be done, if only all scruples be resolutely cast to the winds, and this latter feat was more within Gilbert's capacity than it had once been. He did, indeed, repeat to himself certain glib and conventional phrases, as, for example, that a mistake ought always to be corrected, no matter how, while correction remains practicable; that in Kitty's interest as well as his own it would be wise and right to terminate an engagement which had been entered into without sufficient consideration, and so forth; but these things he said rather for form's sake and because he disliked a raw style of argumentation than to quiet an uneasy conscience. Besides, it is a waste of time to seek out reasons for doing what you have already made up your mind to do. The really difficult question was how to do it. Now a lady who has thrown over her betrothed sometimes has hard things said of her; but everybody must concede that her

position is preferable to that of a lady who has been thrown over. Clearly, then, every facility should be afforded to Kitty for taking the initiative in this delicate affair. Nor would there have been much trouble about the rendering of this service to her if she had but been a little less wilfully blind. She either did not see, or did not choose to show that she saw, what any other girl must have seen in her place; her lover's evident preference for Miss Huntley's society did not, apparently, shake her faith in him for a moment; her cheerfulness, good-humour, and insensibility to neglect were as admirable as they were exasperating. The only thing that could be said for such conduct was that it made Gilbert's path a little smoother for him, by causing him to doubt seriously whether he ever could have been really in love with so stupid a woman. Yet he could not bring himself to tell her in so many words that he no longer considered her to be a suitable wife for him. To do that would have been to incur an amount of public obloquy which he dared not face, and which he could hardly expect to live down under a year or two, backed though he might probably be by all the power of Miss Huntley's riches and social influence. No! by hook or by crook, Kitty must be forced to give him his dismissal. It will be observed that he had made progress since the time when it cost him a sleepless night and much expenditure of casuistry to resolve upon cheating his brother. Then he had been sincerely desirous of effecting some sort of a *modus vivendi* with his conscience: now his sole anxiety was to save appearances.

Miss Greenwood may be acquitted of the accusation of stupidity brought against her. That she did not suspect the man whom she loved of a baseness which, if proved, would have made it impossible for her to love him any longer, is the less surprising because the evidences thereof had not been brought very directly under her notice; but she was perfectly aware that a change had come over him, that he had ceased to take pleasure in the kind of conversation which, however silly it may be in itself, is generally found pleasant by lovers, and that her total ignorance of politics, which, during the summer-time, he had been wont to laugh at and treat as a joke, had now become a vexation to him.

She was not a clever girl, but she was a modest and a sensible one; so, instead of upbraiding him, she set to work to correct the shortcoming which she judged to be the cause of his displeasure and began to read the daily papers diligently, with a view to rendering herself more fit to become the wife of an earnest politician. As the Admiral took in the *Times* and the *Daily News*, while Mrs. Greenwood (who was a Conservative at heart) took the *Morning Post*, this method of study did not tend to free her from bewilderment; and when, after carefully weighing all that she had read about the state of Ireland, she took upon herself to propound a truly ingenious scheme for the pacification of that luckless island, she was properly rebuked for her temerity.

Gilbert gave her one look of profound astonishment and then said quietly: "My dear Kitty, do you happen by any chance to know what a contradiction in terms is? You can illustrate it, at all events, if you can't define it. I grant you that it is sometimes employed effectively by public speakers; but then they don't usually make it quite as plain as a pikestaff. If you are ambitious of excelling in that line, you had better take a few lessons from your friend Monckton, who is past master in the art of humbugging his audiences."

This was only a random shot, but it went home. Kitty did not mind being snubbed, because she thought that very likely she deserved it; but not even from Gilbert would she listen to a word against her beloved Vicar.

"Mr. Monckton never humbugged anybody in his life," she declared vehemently, "and what is more, I don't believe you think it of him."

Then she jumped up and left the room, lest she should be compelled to hear more than she could bear.

Perhaps this little scene may have shown Gilbert where to look for the weapon of which he was in search. At any rate, from that day forth he never missed an opportunity of sneering at St. Michael's, its elaborate services, its guilds, its heterogeneous congregation, and the doctrines which he assumed to be promulgated from its pulpit. In this way he certainly managed to give Kitty a good deal of pain; but he might have known better than to imagine that such a device would cause her to shrink away from him. She was something of a zealot; like most women, she was intolerant of any form of faith save her own, but disposed to

be indulgent towards indifference, especially towards the indifference of men. Gilbert's attitude had hitherto been indifferent, but not hostile, and she had secretly hoped that when he should be all her own she would be able to bring a beneficial influence to bear upon him; but if, as he now gave her to understand, he rejected not only Mr. Monckton's views, but Christianity itself, it clearly behoved her to put off no longer the work which seemed to be especially marked out for her. She felt herself on firmer ground here than on the quicksands of politics, and did not fear ultimate failure, because she was sure that Gilbert was noble, virtuous, and conscientious, and that his scepticism only arose from that lack of humility which was but natural in one of his vast intellectual capacity.

Thus began a theological contest of which the inconsequence must often have been ludicrously apparent to one of the disputants, but which Kitty's patience prevented from ever degenerating into a quarrel. Gilbert could be ironical, bitter, and even covertly insolent, but he could not be brutal; and it seemed as if nothing short of downright brutality would serve his purpose.

Help reached him at length from a quarter in which help was assuredly no expression of good-will. The time was approaching for the first representation of Brian's opera, and Miss Huntley, to whom the date had been duly notified, was determined that Kingscliff should be well represented in the audience. However, Admiral and Mrs. Greenwood, after promising to be present, begged off. They hated leaving home; the Admiral had caught a cold in his head, and his wife could not trust him to take care of himself if he were left alone; so they gladly accepted Miss Huntley's offer of a bedroom in Park Lane for Kitty. Kitty herself was delighted at the prospect of this outing until she discovered that, for some reason or other, Gilbert was opposed to her taking part in it. He suggested that it might be disagreeable for her to stay in the house of a lady with whom she was not acquainted, and who was not always polite to strangers; he alleged that nothing but a sense of fraternal duty induced him to undertake what was sure to be a tiring and tedious expedition. The truth was that he objected, partly because he had of late taken to objecting to everything that Kitty wished to do, and partly because he dreaded the conclusions which Brian might draw from watching him and Beatrice and Kitty together. And yet,

heaven knows that Brian's eyes were not over quick at discovering infamy.

The upshot of it was, that when Miss Joy incidentally asked Kitty whether the matter was settled, the girl replied that she had not quite made up her mind, adding innocently, "I don't think Gilbert much wants me to go."

Now Miss Joy was neither a reticent nor a prudent woman, and for some weeks past she had been bottling up her emotions until she was like to explode with the effervescence of them. Nothing more than this comparative trifle was needed to set her free from the restraint of her better judgment.

"Want you to go! I should think not!" she cried, a fine accession of colour coming into her cheeks. "And that is just why you ought to go, and stick to him like a leech the whole time! If I were you I wouldn't leave him alone for one moment, either here or in London, or anywhere else."

Well, the moment that the words were out she regretted them, and then, of course, she had to explain, and equally, of course, her explanation did not mend matters. There was no real harm done yet, she declared; all would come right; she had spoken too hastily. Beatrice, without perhaps quite intending it, had a way of taking men up and monopolising them, and if the man happened to be conceited or easily flattered—as almost all men are—trouble was apt to ensue. Kitty did not say much, but the revelation was far more of a shock to her than her informant would have believed possible. Not once had it crossed her mind that Beatrice could be guilty of the conduct ascribed to her, still less had she supposed that Gilbert's recent coldness could be due to such a cause. Even now she did not believe the assertion which Miss Joy had carefully left unuttered. It was inconceivable to her that Gilbert could be false; it must be Beatrice, and Beatrice alone, who was to blame. That one who professed to be her friend should be trying to do her a deadly injury (for, simple though Kitty was, she saw through Miss Joy's euphemisms) was bad enough; nor was it without great difficulty that she forced herself to greet the traitress as smilingly as usual on the following day.

Beatrice appeared as early as eleven o'clock in the morning, she and Miss Joy having been driven over in a waggonette by Gilbert, and whatever may have been her sins they did not, apparently, weigh heavily upon her conscience.

"We have come to carry you off for the

day, Kitty," she announced; "so if you have any parochial duties on hand you will please to neglect them. Old women and school-children can be attended to in all weathers, but Halcombe caves are only open to the public when there is a light breeze from the north-west, and we can't expect to have many days like this in November."

Kitty did not attempt to excuse herself. She was not precisely in the mood to enjoy a party of pleasure; but escape seemed hardly practicable, added to which she was anxious to have the testimony of her own senses as to whether Beatrice was or was not the false friend that she had been represented to be.

Her senses, during the eight-mile drive to Halcombe, were more pleasantly employed than in the acquisition of evidence bearing upon that point. Gilbert, who was driving, only threw an occasional remark over his shoulder to the three ladies behind him, and they for their parts were intimate enough to be absolved from the wearisome obligation of racking their brains for subjects to talk about. Their way lay along a rather rough road, which sometimes skirted the sea and sometimes took an abrupt turn inland, passing through sleepy little villages of white-washed houses, overgrown for the most part with climbing fuchsias, dipping into deep lanes, where glossy hart's-tongue ferns clothed the red soil, and crossing hills, as west-country roads commonly do, by the simple old Roman expedient of going straight up one side and straight down the other. During the summer season Halcombe and its caverns are visited daily by herds of those holiday-makers from whom Kingscliff will never again be free, and probably does not wish to be free. All along the road you meet or pass them—four or five of them generally, packed into an open one-horse fly. Not unfrequently they sing as they go. Every now and then they pause, leap out of their vehicle with one consent, and make a furious onslaught upon the ferns, which they tear up by the roots and afterwards throw away. The course of their passage is marked by broken victuals, empty ginger-beer bottles, and fluttering scraps of greasy paper. It may be hoped that they enjoy themselves, though it cannot be said that they contribute to the enjoyment of their neighbours. But on this still, soft November day the quiet country had regained possession of itself; the last of the tourists had long since gone back to native London or Bristol, and the equinoctial gales and rains had made a clean

sweep of their traces. Soon—in a day or two perhaps—winter would set in, the yellow leaves would fall in showers, and the sun would retire behind a grey veil to show himself no more, save by faint and feeble gleams, until the return of spring. But for the moment the air was as mild as if it had been midsummer, the sky overhead was of an Italian blue, and Kitty, whose spirits, like those of ninety-nine mortals out of a hundred, depended to a great extent upon the weather, could not for the life of her help hoping that the worthy Miss Joy had discovered a mare's-nest. Miss Joy was a dear old thing, but nobody would ever think of calling her a very acute observer; and really the whole story was utterly improbable. It was not in the least like Beatrice Huntley to play so ignoble a part, nor was Gilbert at all the sort of man to let his head be turned by a little attention or flattery.

And so, when they reached the small fishing-hamlet of Halcombe, where Gilbert put up his horses and where they embarked in a roomy rowing-boat, she was ready to dismiss all her fears and was somewhat ashamed of having entertained them.

The Halcombe caves are hardly to be compared with the blue grotto of Capri; still their natural picturesqueness, their reputed vast extent and the difficulty of visiting them (for they can only be entered at low water, and not then unless the wind be off shore), have earned for them a certain local celebrity, enhanced by the usual legends which have smugglers and the crews of revenue cutters for their heroes. It was easy for Beatrice Huntley, who had the knack of ingratiating herself with all sorts and conditions of men, to draw deliberate narratives of this description from one of the stalwart rowers; and if, in his polite anxiety to interest his hearers, he made some startling assertions, these were accepted without a symptom of incredulity; for Halcombe is included in the Kingscliff division, and there are voters who dislike to be accused of mendacity, notwithstanding the direct encouragement thereto afforded by the Ballot Act and advocated by some of the admirers of that measure.

The water at the mouth of the caves being still too high to admit of the entrance of a boat, it was agreed to disembark, spread out the luncheon upon a broad, sunny rock and wait for the ebb. Many years ago there appeared in *Punch* the representation of a picnic at which one of John Leech's large-eyed, crinolined young ladies was made to

tell her Edwin reproachfully that he could not truly love her, since he had helped somebody else to the liver-wing of a chicken and had handed her the leg. Kitty Greenwood was neither greedy nor exacting; yet she could not help observing that some such marks of attention as this were paid by Gilbert to Beatrice at her expense; she noticed, too, what was more significant, that his voice in addressing Beatrice was soft and low, whereas it took a distinctly harder intonation when he spoke to herself. These were trifles; but in spite of her determination to be reasonable, she was disquieted by them, and before the repast was over it seemed to her that the sun no longer shone so brightly.

At the end of an hour they all got into the boat again, and, stooping low to save their heads, passed into the twilight of the echoing cavern. It was not very far, however, that the boat could take them, and as they were bent upon penetrating some little distance into the unknown depths, they stepped out upon a strip of shingle and lighted the candles which they had brought with them.

Now, what is a single man to do when he has to look after three ladies, all of whom require to be assisted over boulders slippery with seaweed? Having but two hands, it is evident that he can only be of use to one of his charges, and perhaps a very good and impartial man would feel bound to select the one most stricken in years; but Gilbert, instead of placing his services at the disposition of Miss Joy, attached himself resolutely to Beatrice, and Kitty, who was a little in advance, had the mortification of hearing her say, "Oh, never mind me; go and help Kitty." To which there was a muttered rejoinder too indistinct for her to catch. Naturally, she plunged forwards at once and floundered on at some little risk to her limbs—for the surface of the rocks was really treacherous—until she was stopped by a chasm over which not even a very angry lady could leap without aid. Gilbert, when he caught her up and perceived her dilemma, jumped across and, taking her hand, pulled her after him—with unnecessary roughness, she thought. At any rate, her foot slipped on landing and she came down on her knees, extinguishing her candle and receiving some slight abrasions.

"Mind what you are about!" he exclaimed sharply; "you'll be spraining your ankle or something presently."

There are limits to everybody's patience.

"Help me back again, please," said Kitty; "I shall not go any farther. You and Beatrice had better go on by yourselves."

Beatrice, who had managed to negotiate, unassisted, the obstacle which had puzzled her predecessor, entered a formal protest; but Gilbert said nothing, and Kitty, whose suggestion was adopted after a brief parley, sat down in much bitterness of spirit to await the return of her more adventurous companions. She did not care to join Miss Joy, who had already beaten a retreat to the boat, but chose rather to crouch down in a most uncomfortable attitude, grasping her candle and listening to the voices of Gilbert and Beatrice, who appeared to find scrambling over rocks and splashing into pools a very exhilarating pastime. She had to wait a long time—nearly ten minutes, in point of fact, which her imagination excusably magnified into half an hour. There was no occasion for anxiety about the absentees; they were not lost, for she could hear their laughter; but evidently they were in no hurry to retrace their steps. When at length they did approach she arose and fled before them, not wishing them to know where she had been; and presently the whole boat-load emerged, blinking, into the broad light of day once more.

And now Miss Joy, looking across the bay towards Kingscliff and becoming aware of certain atmospheric effects which might have daunted Turner, must needs demand her paint-box and sketch-book, lest the memory of that glorious golden mist should perish for want of a skilled interpreter. Possibly it may not have been mere accident that made her unusually fidgety about the disposal of her implements and caused her to declare that nobody but Beatrice knew how to arrange these to her satisfaction. Anyhow, an opportunity was thus given to Kitty by which the latter was not slow to profit.

"Gilbert!" she called softly; and as he stepped to her side, saying, "Well, what is it?" she walked on for some little distance without replying. She had thought over what she had to say to him, and very sensible and well-put this premeditated speech was; yet, when he repeated his question impatiently, she could not get out one word of it, but simply turned a pair of blue eyes, swimming in tears, upon him and murmured: "I don't think it was very kind of you to leave me like that."

He did not see her eyes: he was looking down on the ground and kicking pebbles

before him. "I understood," said he, "that you wished to be left."

"I did not wish to be a trouble to you, of course. You seemed to like being with Beatrice best, and—and you spoke so crossly, Gilbert, and you were such a very, *very* long time away, and——"

A suspicious break in the speaker's voice cut short this remonstrance. It was not a very dignified or coherent one, to be sure; but if the man had had any heart at all, he must have been a little touched by it. Gilbert was not in the least touched. He smiled in a singularly provoking manner, and remarked:

"Oh, I see! Well, my dear Kitty, I don't know what your religious principles may have to say to you about jealousy; but I can assure you that if you give way to it you will make a scourge for your own back, from which I can't undertake to relieve you. Please try to realise that you are not going to marry a country parson, or even a stay-at-home country squire. I must live in the world, I must mix with women of the world, and I must show them the civility that they expect. If that makes you jealous, I can't help it."

"I don't want to be jealous," answered poor Kitty. "It isn't your being civil to Beatrice Huntley, or to any one else, that, I mind, and I am willing to lead whatever kind of life you choose, if only I can feel sure that you always love me."

"I should have thought," said Gilbert coldly, "that I had given as strong proofs of that as you could wish for; but I am afraid you are rather insatiable. To content you I should have to put on a surplice and read the lessons at St. Michael's every Sunday; I should have to bow meekly to what you are pleased to call the ordinances of the Church, and I suppose I should never be allowed to go into society without you. If your happiness depends upon the carrying out of some such programme as that—and I suspect that it does—had you not better reconsider your position while there is still time?"

This was plain speaking with a vengeance, and Kitty was staggered and bewildered by it. She had anticipated a lover's quarrel and a reconciliation; she was offered, as it seemed, a business-like bargain which she was free to accept or decline, as she pleased.

"I—I don't think I quite understand," she faltered. "You have been so odd lately. Have I offended you?—or is it that—oh, Gilbert, do you really love her, and not me?"

"You mean Miss Huntley?" he asked. "No, I am not in love with Miss Huntley, and perhaps her name had better be left out of the discussion. The question between us is not whether I am in love with somebody else, but whether you are in love with me. You say I have been odd lately, though I am not conscious of having changed any of my habits or opinions. May it not rather be that you have changed?—or at least that you have found out that I am not the man you took me for?"

He was desirous of opening her eyes; he did not see (because his own were still fixed upon the ground) how effectually he was doing so. The girl—if he had known it—was looking at him with amazement and with something akin to horror. To deceive a loving, trusting woman is not difficult; but to shake her trust and at the same time to continue to deceive her requires more delicacy of touch than Gilbert had thought it worth while to bring to this enterprise.

"Perhaps you are right; perhaps you are not—quite what I took you for," she said in a low voice.

Yet she did not add the words which he expected and was waiting for. She did not give him his release, but turned and walked slowly back to the spot where Miss Joy was busy dashing in what looked like a hasty study of a conflagration, he following her in silence.

The colour had left her cheeks, but she was perfectly composed, and during the remainder of the afternoon she bore herself much as usual. Only, after they had started on their homeward drive, she said casually to Beatrice, "By the way, I have made up my mind not to go to London with you to-morrow. For several reasons, I would rather stay at home."

And when Beatrice wanted to know what these reasons might be, she did not state them, but simply repeated, "I would rather stay at home."

CHAP. XXXVII.—SIR JOSEPH IS PERTURBED.

As the time drew near for the submission of *The King's Veto* to the judgment of a remorseless public, all those interested in the experiment became nervous and short-tempered, with one notable exception. While the manager of the Ambiguity stormed and raved over small *contretemps* which he would hardly have noticed a month before, while the tenor wrangled with the soprano, and the leader of the orchestra tore his hair, and Phipps could get no sleep at nights without

having recourse to sedatives, Brian, so far from showing symptoms of uneasiness, grew daily more cheerful and smiling.

"I never saw such a fellow as you are!" Phipps exclaimed with pardonable impatience; "one would think that it was quite the same thing to you whether we fail or succeed. Pray, do you realise that this will make a man or a mouse of you? I can afford to come to grief; I have made my name, and if people don't like me in this line, that won't prevent them from flocking to the next play that I shall write. But you—why, it's almost a matter of life and death for you! A debutant who misses his first chance has to wait some time before he gets a second, I can tell you."

"Oh, but we shall not come to grief," answered Brian easily.

The truth was that he could not bring himself to care quite so much about the fate of this opera as his friend did. It had been transmogrified, bit by bit, until it was no longer his opera, but Phipps's play set to music, which was a very different thing. The music was pretty and the dialogue was clever, so that there was every probability of its going down; but he was unable to regard it as being in any sense the *magnum opus* which must decide whether he had a career before him or not. He had satisfied himself that his strength did not lie in that particular kind of composition; he knew that he could do a great deal better; and as for the pecuniary side of the question, that was no longer of supreme importance to him. However, it was neither confidence in his abilities nor the approaching termination of suspense that made his heart beat high and his eyes sparkle, but the prospect of seeing Beatrice Huntley once more in the course of a few short days. It was ridiculous, and he often told himself that it was so. The sight of her could only mean a renewal of pangs which absence and occupation had rendered to some extent less sharp, and a man who knows his love to be hopeless should at least take care that a hopeless business does not remain the chief concern of his life. Nevertheless, he rejoiced when he thought of the happiness that awaited him. Would she remain a week or more in London? Most likely she would; for is it not in November that ladies have to purchase winter gowns and bonnets and such things? And no doubt she would allow him to go and see her, since nothing had been said about her sister-in-law being in London, and he assumed that only Miss Joy would be in the house with her.

That this conjecture was not altogether accurate he learnt from the following note, which he found at his club one morning :

"PARK LANE, *Novr.* 3, 1885.

"DEAR SIR,—My sister and I hope that, if you are not too busy or otherwise engaged, you will give us the pleasure of your company at dinner to-morrow. You will meet your brother, who, I understand, has come up to London in order to witness the first representation of your opera, for the success of which pray accept my best wishes. Lady Clementina much regrets that her engagements do not allow of her leaving the country at present, but hopes later in the year to have an opportunity of enjoying *The Duke's Motto*.

"Believe me, dear sir, faithfully yours,
"JOSEPH HUNTLEY."

This was very civil; and if Sir Joseph had not got the title of the piece quite right, he had made as good a shot at it as could be expected of a man who never went to theatres and considered blue-books to be a far more fascinating form of literature than plays. It was satisfactory, too, that Lady Clementina would shine by her absence on this occasion. The master of the house was not likely to put himself in the way of afternoon visitors.

Perhaps Brian's impatience may have caused him to forget that in the latter part of the nineteenth century people who are asked to dine at eight o'clock are not expected to show themselves before 8.15 at the very earliest; for when he was shown into Sir Joseph Huntley's drawing-room he found it tenanted by only one person, who, from the depths of the capacious arm-chair in which he was ensconced, called out: "Is that you, Segrave? Well—here we are again, you see."

"Stapleford!" exclaimed Brian in undisguised astonishment.

"That same," replied the other. "I told you, you know, that I should be on the spot when your show opened. That's no reason for my being here to-night, you'll say; but the fact of the matter is that I've turned up in the character of the nasty man who won't take No for an answer. Clem and my people have been going on at me till, to keep them quiet, I had to promise that I would try again. Of course I know that I haven't the ghost of a chance—less now than ever—though I take it that you're as much out of the running as I am."

"I never was in the running," Brian said with something of a sigh. "As for your chance, I don't know why it should be any worse now than it was in the summer."

"Oh, you don't, eh? Haven't you heard the latest intelligence, then?"

"No; what is it?" asked Brian apprehensively, for although he had told himself a dozen times that Beatrice would be engaged to somebody before long, he dreaded the announcement which he foresaw.

"My dear chap, there's such a row in the house as never was—Clem rending her garments, and old Joe kicking up behind and before, as the poet says. It seems that no sooner had Beatrice got down to that old barrack of yours than she began to find it precious slow, and small blame to her! So what must she needs do——"

But at this moment Beatrice herself sailed into the room, and Stapleford whispered hurriedly, "I'll tell you all about it by-and-by."

This interrupted communication had conveyed to the unsuspecting Brian no inkling of the truth, and before Beatrice had been talking to him for five minutes he had forgotten all about it. It was impossible to doubt that her pleasure at seeing him again was as sincere as it was outspoken; while, for his own part, the joy of listening to her voice and gazing at her perfect profile was, for the time being, all that he asked. Stapleford, who it appeared was staying in the house, very considerably sauntered away and picked up the evening paper. Beatrice glanced after him, smiling significantly.

"Didn't I tell you," said she, in an undertone, "that he would be convalescent before Christmas?"

"But I don't think he is convalescent," Brian returned.

"Oh, yes, he is. He took the disease in a very mild form, and he has still six or seven weeks to get quite well in. Just at present he is shamming a little to please his relations, who seem to think that his is an infectious malady, and that I shall catch it if only we can be made to breathe the same air. What a bore relations are! Don't you think so? You ought, if anybody ought. I dare say you don't, though."

"I haven't a great many of them, you see," Brian remarked.

"No, to be sure. But here comes one who is a host in himself."

Gilbert greeted his brother quite affectionately. "My dear fellow, I have been meaning to write to you for ever so long,

but if you knew what an army of idiotic correspondents this election business has let loose upon me, you would forgive me for neglecting my friends."

"Everything must be forgiven to a man who is engaged to be married and has a contested election on his hands," said Brian good-humouredly. "And what have you done with Kitty?"

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, the old story! She promised to come with us, but at the last moment parochial claims proved too strong. The poor, frivolous world mustn't expect to win in a struggle against St. Michael and All Angels. The Admiral has caught a cold in his head, and Mrs. Greenwood won't leave him for fear he should forget to put his feet in hot water at night. They sent you all sorts of messages."

Phipps was now announced; then came Miss Joy; finally Sir Joseph, muttering apologies. Sir Joseph, Brian thought, had an anxious, harassed look—to be accounted for, possibly, by the fact that he, too, was a candidate for parliamentary honours, and that he did not feel quite so certain of re-election as he had done in former contests. He gave his arm to Miss Joy, Stapleford took Beatrice, and the remaining three men, on reaching the dining-room, disposed of themselves in the only manner possible, that is to say, that Brian had to take a chair between Stapleford and Phipps, which was not precisely the position that he coveted. However, with so small a party present, he would not have gained much by having Beatrice for his neighbour, and as a matter of fact, the conversation was general from the beginning of dinner to the end.

He took his part in it without finding it particularly interesting. Mindful of the reproach which he had incurred once before for sitting silent at a larger gathering in the same room, he endeavoured to do his duty, sustained by the hope that this evening might end as agreeably for him as that had done. There was no reason why it should not, he thought, for how could he anticipate that when, at the expiration of two long hours, he reached the drawing-room again and was, so to speak, in sight of land, he would be button-holed by his host and forced to listen to a deliberate analysis of the state of political feeling in the country from that experienced observer? Sir Joseph's views were doubtless sagacious and entitled to attention, but they did not receive any; and it may have been because he noticed how intently his victim was gazing at the far corner of

the room whither Beatrice and Gilbert had retired that he said,

"Well, there is your brother's case; it is an instance of what I was saying, that Conservatism only requires to be popularised. A few months ago his return, from what I heard, was almost a certainty. I doubt very much whether it is so now. We have got a first-rate man, Mr. Giles, to oppose him, and I should not be at all surprised if we carried the division. I have a slight acquaintance with Mr. Giles; indeed, it was from him——"

Sir Joseph paused and stroked his chin. "I hardly know whether I ought to put such a question to you," he said, speaking in an altered voice, and turning a troubled face towards Brian, "but have any—er—rumours about your brother reached you?"

"None whatever," answered Brian wonderingly; "I haven't been in the way of hearing much Kingsliff news."

"Ah, indeed? Well, of course it is a safe rule to disregard gossip, and no doubt at election times, when a man is more or less before the public, many things are apt to be said which are best left unnoticed. At the same time, it is not so easy for those who have a deep personal interest in the matters gossiped about to be indifferent, and I must own that what Mr. Giles told me has caused great pain both to my wife and myself."

"About my brother?"

"Well, yes, and about my sister. Mr. Giles treated the whole affair as a joke. I need hardly say that he has no idea of making political capital out of it, though possibly some of his adherents may be less scrupulous. But to me it is no joke that my sister should be spoken of as having flirted with an engaged man to the extent of very nearly, if not quite, causing a rupture of his engagement. I consider it discreditable, whatever her ulterior intentions may be. In any event such a marriage would not have been exactly—— But no matter about that. As I say, I consider that, whether she marries your brother or not, she will have brought discredit upon herself and upon us."

"I don't believe a word of it!" exclaimed Brian, rather roughly.

Sir Joseph glanced at him. "That is to say that you don't believe these two people to have been guilty of the conduct imputed to them? You are, perhaps, right to allow them the benefit of any doubt that may exist upon that point, and probably you do not feel yourself so nearly concerned in their

proceedings as I do. But as to the fact of their having given grounds for gossip, there cannot, unfortunately, be any doubt at all. It is the common talk of the place. Mr. Giles says that the only persons who appear to be ignorant of it are the Greenwood family."

Brian made no immediate rejoinder. It was all very well to declare that he did not believe this report, but he did believe it—he had reasons quite apart from the tittle-tattle of Kingscliff for believing it—and it was as if this stout, respectable, commonplace man had planted a dagger in his heart. That Gilbert should be a traitor was not surprising; he had never really recovered his trust in Gilbert, though he had ceased to think bitterly of him. But that Beatrice was unworthy of the love which he had given her, and which, despite her unworthiness, he could not recall, was a hard thing to admit. Yet the admission had to be made. Blows of that kind stimulate the action of the brain when they do not arrest it, and he saw quite clearly that she was without excuse. It did not seem to him to be proved that she would marry Gilbert. She might—and indeed that would be very characteristic of her—intend to throw him over, after preventing a marriage which she thought likely to turn out unhappily. But, whatever might be her motives, the fact must remain that she was trying to bring dishonour upon a man whom she treated as a friend and misery upon a girl for whom she professed to feel sincere affection. "She is utterly heartless," he thought sadly; and it may be that this judgment upon her had been in his mind once or twice before, though it had never until now found expression. To Sir Joseph he only replied, "I am very sorry to hear what you tell me, but I am afraid I can do nothing."

"H'm! I am a peaceable man, Mr. Seagrave; but if a brother of mine were to behave as your brother is behaving, I should have a word or two to say to him—a word or two to say to him. As for Beatrice, I have thought it my duty to speak to her, and have been met, as I expected to be, by a reminder that she is her own mistress now. However, she has agreed to return to the country with me and to stay a week."

There was a solemnity and even something of a subdued commiseration in Sir Joseph's accent as he made this announcement, such as may occasionally be noticed in the voice of a judge when pronouncing a heavy sentence upon a convicted felon; but

Brian did not know Lady Clementina very well, and so missed this touch of humour.

His only desire now was to get away as soon as might be. He shook himself free of Sir Joseph presently and advanced towards Beatrice, who was still deep in conversation with Gilbert, intending to make some excuse to her and retire. Stapleford intercepted him, with as near an approach to an ironical laugh as so good-natured a man could compass.

"You have been enlightened by the virtuous Joseph, I see. Fine spectacle, Joseph, when he gets up on his hind legs. Did he tell you that your brother's conduct was 'distinctly discreditable'?"

"I should not have been inclined to contradict him if he had," answered Brian shortly.

"Oh, no; you would think it discreditable in a man to break his word under any circumstances; and so it is, for that matter. Only, you know, it isn't exactly that that rouses the righteous indignation of Clementina and her prince-consort. I expect, for instance, that they would have found plenty of excuses for me if I had thrown some young woman over for Beatrice's sake."

"You are rather cynical; it seemed to me that he was honestly distressed," said Brian. He added, half-involuntarily and somewhat feebly, "Do you believe that she—that Miss Huntley knows what she is doing?"

Stapleford made a grimace.

"I should say that Beatrice knows as well as most women what she is about. After all, she is a woman; she isn't an angel, though I dare say I may have taken her for one once upon a time."

Apparently Beatrice's assertion that he was in a fair way towards recovery was no vain boast.

Brian passed on to the recess in which she and Gilbert had ensconced themselves.

"I have come to say good night," he announced, when she looked up at him inquiringly; "I am rather busy, as you may imagine, and it is getting late."

She held out her hand, without offering any remonstrance.

"Till to-morrow, then," she said. "We shall be in our places before the overture strikes up, you may be sure. Perhaps you will come and receive our congratulations after the first act."

"Or your condolences," he answered, and nodding to his brother, turned away.

Congratulations or condolences, it mattered little enough to him now which he might

earn. Fortune had done her worst, and he could afford to smile at any future assaults that she might have in store for him.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—"THE KING'S VETO."

THE manager of the Ambiguity Theatre had had a short but singularly lucrative career. He had never shrunk from costly experiments; he had known how to bait his hook with the novelty and variety which are so essential to theatrical success, and he had always triumphantly landed his public. It was therefore safe to predict that a first night at the Ambiguity would be well attended; and indeed when Brian, who arrived rather late on the evening announced as "destined to mark the dawn of a new epoch in the annals of dramatic representation," reached the pretty little playhouse, he found it thronged from floor to roof. Boxes, stalls, pit, and gallery were alike as full as they could hold; in various parts of the house he noticed friendly and familiar faces; almost immediately opposite to him sat Beatrice, who favoured him with a smiling signal of recognition. Miss Joy was beside her; behind them were Gilbert and Stapleford; and in the background could be discerned the gloomy countenance of Sir Joseph Huntley.

It was from the back of a stage-box, occupied by Phipps and sundry other friends, that the young composer took this survey of his judges. Phipps, who had hurried off to the theatre immediately after a dinner for which he had had little appetite, and who was looking pale and nervous, hailed him, as usual, with a mixture of admiration and remonstrance.

"Never saw such a fellow in all my born days! Drops in casually at the last moment, as if he had happened to remember that there was a new play on, and thought perhaps it might amuse him to have a look at it. Not particularly keen about being there for the overture, you know; has heard it already, in fact. Well, I'm not bloodthirsty, and as a general thing I shouldn't care to attend an execution; but I should like to see you hung, Segrave, I should really! It would be a sort of apotheosis of the self-satisfied man, total indifference to the words or ways of the rest of creation raised to its highest expression."

Brian did not think it worth while to explain how very little self-satisfaction had to do with his calmness, or how far he was from being indifferent to the words and ways of some of his fellow-creatures. He seated himself close to the door, declining the front

place offered to him; at the same moment the conductor of the orchestra raised his *bâton*, and conversation was hushed. In truth, he himself was a little surprised that he should feel so cool. His senses were curiously numb; it seemed to him that this evening was the conclusion of a chapter in his life; he wanted to get it over and see what was beyond. The chapter had been a fiasco, and its *finale*, whatever that might be like, could not possibly mend it. Yet he had taken particular pains about this overture, feeling somewhat more of a personal interest in it than in any other portion of the opera. For the overture, at any rate, was all his own; there was no flavour of Phipps about it, save such as was inseparable from the character of the whole composition. He listened to it now phlegmatically enough, noticing only with a dull kind of satisfaction that the orchestra was doing him full justice; but when it came to an end and there burst out from all quarters of the house a sudden and spontaneous tumult of applause, his heart gave a great bound. He was not such a stoic as he had imagined himself, after all. To hear another man cheered and clapped by an audience some hundreds strong is the commonest thing in the world; there is nothing exciting about it, unless it reaches positively rapturous heights, and even then one's excitement is apt to be tempered by doubts as to whether he has done anything to deserve it. But very different are the sensations of him to whom this uproar is addressed. It may be worth much or it may be worth next to nothing; it may be merited or unmerited; but few indeed are the mortals whose blood does not course wildly through their veins when for the first time the plaudits of an assemblage of their fellow-men fall upon their ears. Readers of Brian Segrave's history will not, surely, be so cruel as to laugh if it must be recorded of him that his inward ejaculation, as the curtain rose upon the first scene of *The King's Veto*, was, "I haven't lived altogether in vain, then."

The first act was designed—as perhaps all first acts should be—to put the audience in good-humour and stimulate its curiosity. It opened with the coronation of Conrad, King of Democratia, a ceremony which admitted of much magnificence of costume and scenery and gave occasion for the introduction of a stirring chorus. Some smart dialogue between the youthful monarch and his ministers upon the subject of their bill for a sweeping extension of the franchise had been turned

to account by the author, who knew well that nothing delights the British playgoer more than a hit at contemporary statesmanship. His colleague and the *prima donna* scored decisively by a plaintive song in which the latter, as Phyllis, lamented the inferiority of birth which separated her from her royal lover, and the curtain fell upon the King's resolve to exercise his right of veto and the consternation of his responsible advisers.

The fate of a piece—or all events its success—is seldom a matter of certainty before two-thirds of it have been performed; nevertheless, the very warm reception accorded to this first act was perhaps sufficient to justify Phipps in declaring that nothing but a miracle could prove fatal to *The King's Veto* now. He was greatly elated, and generous withal in his elation, saying, "I don't know whether you could have done as well as this without me, Segrave; but I'm quite sure that I could never have done as well without you."

And Brian, though no longer carried out of himself as he had been by that first tribute of applause, was yet able to respond in the manner expected of him with something like heartiness, and felt a good deal more fit than he had done an hour before, to face the necessary ordeal of visiting Miss Huntley's box. He found only Miss Joy and Sir Joseph with her, the other two men having gone out to smoke, and when her companions had delivered themselves of some complimentary remarks, for which it is to be feared that they obtained but little gratitude, she made him take the chair directly behind her, turning round so as to face him.

"I am so very, very glad!" she exclaimed. "I knew you would be victorious; but I was a little bit frightened, all the same. Swine, you know, don't appreciate pearls, and when I saw all this crowd I couldn't help being afraid that the swine must be in an alarming majority. I was quite wrong, though. Far be it from me to call them names, after their splendid behaviour! I should like to shake hands with them all round!"

"Oh, but it is too early to talk about victory yet," objected Brian. "Besides, the glory, such as it is, belongs to Phipps. It is really his piece, not mine."

"What absurd nonsense! Mr. Phipps, indeed! A funny little man who writes funny little plays, which, I grant you, are amusing enough in their funny little way, but which nobody out of a lunatic asylum would ever dream of calling works of genius. Don't you see that your music has triumphed

in spite of him, not because of him? He was within an ace of making you ridiculous several times, and if he had done that I would never have spoken to him again!"

There was a delicate pink flush upon her cheeks; her clear eyes had an unusual light in them; she seemed to be sincere; and, after all, why should she not be? Brian had never doubted that she liked him and wished him well, nor had her dethronement from that high pedestal upon which his imagination had placed her anything to do with the too flattering estimate which she had been pleased to form of his abilities. Her presence was sweet to him, and so was her praise, exaggerated though it might be.

"I am glad you like the music," he said simply.

"Of course I like it; nothing could be more charming. Only I don't think you must do this sort of thing again; it was all very well as a stepping-stone. I don't set up to be a competent critic, but from the first I have known that you have genius; even an ignoramus can discern genius." She paused for a moment, and then asked, "Do you remember that evening, ever so long ago, when I slipped into St. Michael's, and you were playing the organ and never knew I was there?"

"Yes," he answered sadly; "I remember it very well, and all that you said. Miss Joy was outside in the churchyard, transferring a flaming sunset into water-colours. Afterwards we met my poor old father."

"Yes, and you made him angry by talking Radicalism. Wasn't it then that I ventured to compare you and your brother to Jacob and Esau? And was I so very far wrong, after all?"

"Is he not rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times," murmured Brian. He spoke involuntarily; but when he looked up and saw her eyes turned questioningly upon him, he coloured a little. Perhaps, though, she did not understand his allusion, for she went on:

"You see!—you see! And now you have embraced Jacob, just as poor Esau did, and you are content to be an outcast, and all is for the best in the best of possible worlds."

Then the curtain rose upon act the second, and she turned quickly to Brian, saying, "Stay where you are; Jacob has found some friends on the other side of the house; he won't come back while you keep possession of his place."

This was pleasant hearing for Brian. Assuredly she could not be in love with a man

of whom she spoke in that tone, and there began to shine upon him the glimmer of a faint hope that he had misjudged her. The threadbare simile of the moth and the candle came into his mind and gave him comfort. There are women who attract men for the simple reason that they cannot help it; it is neither fair nor reasonable to treat attractiveness as a crime. "Haven't I singed my own wings?" thought Brian; "and is she to blame for that?" For to-night, at all events, he would try to forget what Sir Joseph had told him. If he had been worshipping a false goddess during so many months, it was a small matter that he should continue to worship her for a few hours. So he surrendered himself to the delight of sitting close to her, watching the pleasure which she derived from his composition, and of listening to the comments which she threw back to him from time to time over her shoulder.

Now the music of the second act was in no way inferior to that of the first, nor was Beatrice sparing of her panegyrics upon it; yet, as the action of the piece advanced, it became evident that, in spite of her disparaging criticism upon Mr. Phipps, she was a good deal interested in his plot. The scene in which Phyllis was made to renounce the King, notwithstanding his protestations and reproaches, seemed to please her greatly.

"Why, the man is as stupid and unjust as if he were a fact instead of a fiction!" she exclaimed. And when the same astute maiden was represented as joining the Socialist plot for the assassination of her lover, intending all the time to save him by sacrificing her own life and that of his chief enemy, Miss Huntley abruptly shifted her chair, bringing herself almost face to face with Brian. "So that is your notion of a heroine!" said she triumphantly. "You admit that she is justified in deceiving everybody, and even in compassing the death of a scoundrel. You admit that all is fair in love and in war."

"Oh no, I don't," answered Brian, laughing. "I decline to be responsible for Phipps's morality; and, indeed, I suspect that Miss Phyllis is only setting the decalogue at defiance because the play couldn't be made to work upon any other terms."

Yet he could not help being glad to hear her making what sounded so very like an excuse for herself. If she had been guilty of deception, it was something that she should be persuaded of the integrity of her own motives. Not precisely in that way had

he reasoned the night before; but circumstances alter cases. He did not at the moment think it possible that she could be pleading love for Gilbert in extenuation of any treachery that she might have employed towards Kitty Greenwood. Perhaps if he had been alone with her he would have ventured to ask her point-blank what her designs were, but such a straightforward course was out of the question with Miss Joy close at hand. Moreover, Sir Joseph and Stapleford had now resumed their places, and were plying him with kind and congratulatory whispers.

During the second *entr'acte* Gilbert reappeared, and then Brian rose. "I think Phipps will want me to go behind with him and say what is civil to all these eminent *artistes* who have been doing so well for us," he remarked. "Besides, I do feel grateful to them."

But you will come back again, won't you?" asked Beatrice.

"Yes, if you will allow me," he answered, and left the box, carrying away with him a much lighter heart than he had brought.

Phipps was in high good-humour. Brian found him surrounded by a bevy of admiring friends, whose views as to the respective merits of author and composer may not have been identical with those of Miss Huntley; but he disengaged himself at once to clap his colleague on the back.

"Well, old fellow," said he, "you were right to be confident. I suppose you knew your own value better than I did; but I must own that I never anticipated taking the public by storm in this way. We're all right now; and I don't think I'm too sanguine in saying that we may look forward to a six or eight months' run."

An equally hopeful and jubilant spirit reigned behind the scenes, whither Brian presently repaired. Everybody was smiling, for everybody foresaw that *The King's Veto* would provide those engaged in it with bread and butter for some time to come, and there was no one who had not a pleasant word for the young man to whose talents this cheerful prospect was chiefly, if not entirely, due. The manager drank his health in a glass of champagne, and said, with a certain solemnity, "Mr. Segrave, your fortune is made, sir."

Success of all kinds, from winning the battle of Waterloo down to shooting a woodcock, is enjoyable, and there must be something very wrong with the mental or bodily health of a man who fails to enjoy it. Brian,

though not unduly elated (for he was well aware that the writing of such operas as this, whether it led to fortune or not, could never lead to true fame), enjoyed it all the more, perhaps, because his mental health had only just been re-established. He remained chatting with the manager until long after Phipps had returned to the front, and the last act was well advanced; and when, conformably to his promise, he re-entered Miss Huntley's box, the drama which was being enacted on the stage had reached a climax which those who had followed it with interest so far should have found highly exciting.

But, alas! it was only too obvious that Beatrice did not find it so—that her attention was concentrated on the working out of another drama, in which she herself was engaged, and that she was so absorbed by her part as to be unconscious even of Brian's proximity. She had turned her head away from the stage; her eyes were not attracted by the really brilliant and well-contrived representation of a masked ball which was being displayed there, nor her ears by the swinging, melodious waltz music which subsequently achieved so signal a success that barrel-organs are grinding it in all parts of the United Kingdom at this present day. Gilbert, leaning forward with his elbows on his knees, was talking eagerly to her, and she seemed to be pleased with what he was saying, for her parted lips were curved into a smile, and every now and again from beneath her lowered eyelids she shot a glance at him, which was doubtless aimed to reach his heart. Miss Joy was watching her with a comical expression of distress and discomfiture; Stapleford, apparently more amused than indignant, was staring straight before him; in the back of the box Sir Joseph was sleeping as peacefully as if he had been in the House of Commons.

Possibly Brian saw nothing more than he ought to have been prepared to see; possibly there was nothing in Beatrice's present attitude and demeanour inconsistent with that theory of involuntary fascination which he had formulated on her behalf at an earlier period of the evening; but a theory which can be made to fit one set of circumstances decently well often fails altogether to adapt itself to another. Besides, Brian was in love, which is a state of mind very unfavourable to the calm application of theories. "Who is being cheated here?" was his inward comment upon the scene; and there was little consolation in replying, "Everybody." Gilbert might or might not be a dupe, but in

any case he was a deceiver, and so, in any case, must Beatrice be.

She caught sight of him by-and-by and said something to him, which he did not hear, after which she began once more to pay attention to the play, which was now almost over. But neither the prolonged applause which followed the fall of the curtain nor the warm felicitations of the friends who sat around him could arouse an echo of gratitude in Brian's sick heart. There was a call for the authors; Phipps, on the opposite side of the house, could be seen bobbing and grinning like a marionette; then Stapleford seized Brian by the shoulders and pushed him forcibly to the front of the box; and so the whole business came to an end. Our poor hero had passed through a variety of emotions in the course of the evening, but at the finish he found himself very much where he had been at starting, with such added bitterness of spirit as naturally arose from the consciousness of having been fooled.

Beatrice, as she was leaving the box, paused for a moment beside him. "You don't look very triumphant," she remarked.

"Do I not?" returned he. "Perhaps I don't feel so."

She frowned and bit her lip. She seemed to be going to say something, but apparently changed her mind and passed on. On the threshold, however, she halted, stepped quickly back to him—for he had not moved—and said: "I am going away on Thursday; will you come and see me to-morrow?"

"I will call, since you wish it," replied Brian coldly.

"Since I wish it? I should like to say good-bye to you before I leave, certainly; but my happiness is not so bound up in seeing you again that I should care to drag you to Park Lane against your will. What is the matter with you?"

"I will tell you to-morrow, if you like," answered Brian desperately.

She looked him straight in the face, pressing her lips together. "Very well, then," she said; "you will find me at home at five o'clock. I am not afraid of anything that you may have to say to me; but I hope you will think before you speak and remember that there are limits to the privileges of a friend."

With that warning ringing in his ears, he left her and submitted to be borne away by Phipps to a supper-party, of which the joyousness can hardly be said to have been augmented by his presence.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE PRIVILEGES OF FRIENDSHIP.

WHEN a man or a woman says, "I am not afraid," it is courteous to believe the assertion, but safe to conclude that it is made rather with the intention of frightening somebody else than of testifying to the speaker's intrepidity; for courage has no more need to proclaim itself than virtue. Beatrice Huntley did not succeed in frightening Brian, even though he understood her warning to mean that if he presumed too far she would cease to be his friend. On the other hand, she dreaded his visit a good deal more than she would have done, had she been in possession of that priceless blessing, a clear conscience. Her nerves, ordinarily as steady as a rock, gave her no little trouble that day, and, as a natural consequence, were a source of trouble to others. Sir Joseph was driven discomfited from her presence at an early hour and trotted off to his club, convinced that he had better leave the girl to be dealt with by a capable member of her own sex; Phipps, who dropped in complacently after luncheon, ready to accept the compliments which he conceived to be his due, departed, after a very short stay, with mortification writ large upon his features and the recollection of some amazingly unjust and ironical criticisms in his mind; even Miss Joy did not escape scot free, but came in for one or two snubs so sharp that she withdrew to her bedroom, where, being a foolish and soft-hearted person, she melted into tears.

Having thus created a solitude for herself and given orders that no one was to be admitted, unless Mr. Segrave should call—"Mr. Segrave, remember, not Mr. Gilbert Segrave"—Beatrice spent the afternoon in wandering restlessly about the room, staring out of the window at the dismal, fog-enveloped park, and trying to fix her attention upon books and newspapers, all of which struck her as being equally devoid of the faintest human interest.

Nervousness and irritability are not likely to be lessened by lack of occupation; yet when Brian, punctual to the appointed hour, was shown into Miss Huntley's luxurious sanctum, he was accosted by a lady who turned towards him a countenance wreathed in smiles and, without rising from the low chair in which she was reclining by the fire-side, held out her hand to him, saying lazily: "Hasn't it been a horrid day? I haven't stirred from the house and I was just drop-

ping off to sleep. How nice of you to come in and wake me up!"

"You asked me to come," returned Brian curtly.

"Did I? Oh, yes, I remember; and didn't we have something very like the beginning of a quarrel last night? You were rude, or I thought you were, and as we couldn't very well wrangle in public, we agreed to fight it out afterwards. Well, suppose, on second thoughts, we don't fight it out? Suppose we conclude peace, instead? I never can screw myself up to the point of quarrelling in cold blood."

But this system of tactics was of little avail with a man who was very much in earnest, who had thought over what he had to say and who meant to say it. "Why do you try to put me off?" Brian asked. "Is it because you don't want to quarrel with me, and because, as you told me last night, a friend must not strain his privileges farther than they will go? But it seems to me that I should be a poor sort of friend if I held my tongue now, rather than run the risk of displeasing you. I think, when you asked what was the matter with me, you could have answered the question for yourself; I think you must know that, however dull I may be, I am not quite blind. And even if I were, there are plenty of people able and willing to open my eyes—"

"Stop a moment," she interrupted. "I will allow, if you like, that a friend is sometimes entitled to ask for explanations; but then he must have shown himself worthy of them. For my own part, I should never think it worth while to explain myself to any one who could not trust me. One knows how that sort of thing always ends. You may satisfy him to-day, but he will be dissatisfied again to-morrow; and so it goes on until, some fine morning, you find that your stock of patience is exhausted. I prefer to anticipate a foregone conclusion."

"I don't think I am the kind of friend that you describe," said Brian; "I am not given to being distrustful; but I won't deny that I distrust you now. After that, you can answer me or not, as you think best; but it isn't a great deal that I ask of you. If you will simply tell me that all this is untrue, that shall be enough—though, of course, I had rather that you told me a little more."

"Your moderation does you credit; only you are not quite as lucid as you might be. What is it that I am to admit or deny?"

"I thought, perhaps, you would not force me to put such a hateful question into words.

Is it true or untrue that you are trying to induce Gilbert to break off his engagement?"

"And if it were true?"

Brian hesitated. "I won't believe it!" he exclaimed. "I won't believe until you admit it."

"Depart in peace, then; I haven't made the admission."

But this was scarcely satisfactory. "Won't you just say that it is untrue?" pleaded Brian.

"No; why should I? I don't recognise your right to drive me into a corner and hold a pistol to my head."

"What pistol? I have nothing to threaten you with; for I suppose it can't matter much to you whether I am able to go on thinking of you as I have always thought or not; but it matters everything to me. I can't go away without any answer at all and calmly hold my judgment in suspense until I see what will happen."

"Why not? It seems to me that that would be a very correct and sensible attitude to take up. Why can't you adopt it?"

"Because I love you!" he burst out suddenly. "I have loved you ever since the first day that we met, I think; though I have never had any hope, except for a short time long ago, when I didn't quite understand what a great gulf was fixed between us. I understand that perfectly well now, and besides, my chance would have been no better if I had been an important personage, instead of an insignificant one. Through all your kindness to me you have never given me the slightest excuse for supposing that you could care for me in that way. I didn't want to tell you this; but I thought——"

He paused and glanced appealingly at her, but she only made a slight movement of her head, as if inviting him to go on.

"Well, I thought that if you knew the truth you would not wish me to have the misery of doubting you when you could remove all my doubts with a word."

"But are you sure that I can?" she asked in a low voice.

The room was quite dark now, except for the firelight, and she had drawn her chair back, so that he could not see her face. There was a short interval of silence, after which she resumed: "I won't pretend to be surprised at what you have told me; I have sometimes thought that it might be so, although I was not certain. I am glad you don't accuse me of having led you on, as Stapleford and others have accused me, and I am sorry if you have ever been made unhappy through me. But this is what I

think about it: you are dreamy and imaginative; you would be sure to take any woman that you fell in love with for a paragon, and women are not paragons. At all events, most of them are not, and I belong to the majority. You would have been dreadfully disappointed in me if——"

"No, I should not!" interrupted Brian eagerly. "I know you have faults, like everybody else; I could even mention some of them."

She laughed a little. "Could you? But you don't seem to be very tolerant of them; and, you see, you are ready to suspect me of all kinds of iniquity. That comes of setting up too high an ideal."

"You call it iniquity, then," he cried; "you allow that it would be iniquity. That is all I wanted you to say. No, Miss Huntley, I haven't set up too high an ideal. I don't know that I can explain myself; but in my own mind it is quite clear that it wasn't really you whom I suspected. If this thing had been true—and there was a great deal to make me think it so—the evidence of my own senses, besides what Sir Joseph told me, and Stapleford—if it had been true you wouldn't have been yourself; you would have been a deceitful, heartless woman, who, for the sake of vanity or ambition, or perhaps of something that she might dignify by the name of love, did not hesitate to betray her friend and disgrace herself. You see," he concluded with a sort of laugh, "it couldn't have been you whom I suspected."

"Ah," she said, "you couldn't love a woman of that description."

"No, I think not; I hope not. Certainly I should be ashamed of myself if I did."

"Come!" said Beatrice, rising and standing over him, with one hand resting upon the mantelpiece, "you have paid me a compliment—for I suppose it is a compliment to a woman to fall in love with her, even though that sentiment may be grounded upon an illusion—and the least that I can do in return is to restore you to a healthy state of mind. Joseph and Stapleford and the evidence of your own senses have not misled you; I have done and am doing my best to break off the engagement between your brother and Kitty Greenwood. More than that, I believe that I have as good as succeeded. More than that, I am utterly unrepentant, and I would do it all over again. I hope that is explicit enough to satisfy you."

There was a long pause. Brian also had risen to his feet, and was standing close to her, but he made no reply.

At last she asked abruptly, "Well, have you nothing to say to me?"

"Nothing," he answered quietly. "Nothing, either now or at any future time."

"This is to be final, then? If we meet again we are to cut one another dead?"

"No; not unless you desire it. I take it that you will become my sister-in-law, and in that case it would be better that we should be upon speaking terms, wouldn't it?"

"You foresee everything. Yes, no doubt it would be more convenient that we should remain upon speaking terms, supposing that you will condescend so far as to speak to me. You have been nicely deceived in me, have you not?"

"I have only myself to blame for that," he replied gravely.

"What magnanimity! I should have thought that you would prefer to condemn me; that seems to be such a natural and easy process with you. But, after all, one readily pardons a person whom one despises."

By way of reply he took up his hat and bowed.

"Good-bye," she said, ringing the bell. And so they parted, without shaking hands.

When Beatrice was left alone she went to her davenport, unlocked it, and took out a photograph, which she had purchased nearly a year before from a Kingscliff artist. It represented Brian Segrave, seated in a very uncomfortable attitude, upon a sharp rock, behind which was a nebulous background, traversed horizontally by some white, woolly appearances, which, when you were told of it, you perceived to be the waves of the sea. Hung upside down they did duty for the clouds in a summer sky, and had figured in one or the other capacity behind the backs of most of the leading inhabitants of Kingscliff. Beatrice gazed steadily at this work of art for several minutes before she tossed it

into the fire, and pressed it down with the poker among the glowing coals until it was consumed. Then, with lips compressed and her chin in the air, she left the room and, mounting the staircase, knocked at Miss Joy's door.

"Dear old Matilda," she said on being admitted, "I have come to beg your pardon. I was cross and rude to you to-day, and I am afraid I distressed you."

Miss Joy jumped up and flung her arms round the girl's neck. "No, no!" she exclaimed; "it was I who was too ready to take offence. But, Beatrice dear, I have been so unhappy—so worried!"

"Worried about what, you old goose? But I know, and I don't want you to tell me. Matilda, you won't throw me over, will you, come what may?"

"Never!" cried Miss Joy emphatically. "I don't always understand you, my dear, and I don't always think you in the right; but, right or wrong, I always love you, and always shall."

"Ah, Matilda, that is a very foolish and immoral kind of friendship. When you think a friend in the wrong you ought to pull a long face and straighten your backbone and say, 'I have been deceived in you, but I do not reproach you. Farewell!' However, I think I like the foolish and immoral friends best. Matilda, what should you say to going up the Nile?"

"My dear child, would it be safe? And—would it fit in with your plans?"

"I have no plans; and I think we should be sufficiently protected by Mr. Cook and the British army of occupation. Still, Algiers or Madeira or Cyprus would suit me equally well. We will wait to see the result of the general election, Matilda, and then we will be off. How glad I shall be to say good-bye to my friends!—to the wise and moral ones, I mean."

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

By FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

ADMIRATION for beauty is natural for unspoiled souls, but the analysis and exposition of any of its forms, whether sculpture, music, painting, or architecture, are invariably wearisome; and the rarer the beauty the more tedious the discussion. When one has felt the power of the masterpieces of art, and can recall the impression

of them "on memory's pictured wall," the most impassioned description, even Ruskin's, is a meagre substitute, if not an impertinence.

Nothing is more fugitive and unseizable than the secret of the charm in style and construction of the tales of Hawthorne; there is no adequate expression of the no-

tions of ideality, simplicity, freshness, and grace which they awaken; and there is no analogy in the arts, unless it be in the sensations we experience in the hall of antique sculpture in the Louvre. Still, Hawthorne's genius is not Greek, except in purity of form, in the exclusion of the superfluous, and in tranquillity and finish; his conceptions are rather romantic, and might be better symbolized by the work of later artists, if there were any equal in feeling and skill to those of the golden age of Greece.

Mere purity of English and the power of forming musical sentences in natural sequence are not so uncommon. There are generally some half-dozen writers in a generation whose style is well-nigh faultless—writers who equal or surpass Addison in force and idiomatic ease. Witness the English of "Henry Esmond," of John Henry Newman,

of Washington Irving, of certain chapters of "Modern Painters," and of certain essays of Matthew Arnold.

The art of Hawthorne borrows somewhat of the dramatist in situations and characters, of the novelist in picturesque narration, of the historian in recalling the manners and ideas of the past, and of the poet in casting upon scenes, events, and persons, the mystical light which sets them in relief, which brings them near yet leaves them just out of reach; so that in effect they are free from finite conditions, contemporaneous at once with Edipus and Ulysses, with Dante's Beatrice, with Prospero and Shylock, with Chaucer's Pilgrims, and the hero of Bunyan's dream.

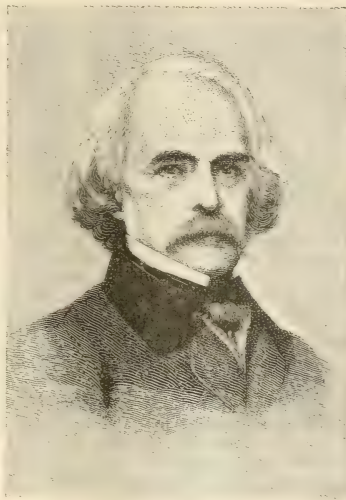
To the ordinary reader the simplicity of Hawthorne appears mere baldness. There is never a rhetorical period or overcharged epithet or adjective, and no trace of the effort to shine which so frequently passes for brilliancy of style. In some aspects his genius is shown by what he has omitted, and

by the subtle suggestion of what is left unsaid. It would have been very easy to have vulgarized any one of his tales by "affluence of diction," by "picturesque details," by bright conversations that lead to nothing, and by "exhaustive analysis." Characters and scenes are done with few strokes—with Nature's own economy of Force.

But the genius of Hawthorne, great and rare as it is, is not more remarkable than the fact of its appearance in Salem, the first resting place of the Puritans, the scene of the trials for witchcraft,

and the first seat of American commerce with the east.

The visitor to-day finds Salem a pleasant town of some twenty thousand people, a little north of Boston, lying near the sea, upon a harbour which it shares with its neighbour, Marblehead. The main streets are broad and well-built, shaded by magnificent trees, with a few brick houses a century old, and some of wood, that are nearly as ancient as the town. On the harbour side the bare wharves are rotting or crumbling, and the basin is empty where once came ships laden with teas, spices, ivory, palm oil, and gold dust. Boston fifty years ago drew away Salem's commerce, as her own is now drawn away by New York. The harbours of Massachu-



Nathaniel Hawthorne.

setts are on the wrong side of the dangerous coast of Cape Cod. South-west of the town is a group of irregular, melancholy, grey-brown hills, bare of trees, and relieved from desolation by clumps of barberry bushes, whose pendent scarlet berries in autumn give an almost pathetic charm to the scene. For on the chief of these gloomy hills the gallows for witches was set up, and the blood of its victims may have reappeared many times in these mute witnessess.

The history of the Puritans, among its other impressive lessons, shows the danger of dwelling exclusively on one class of texts in Scripture. There are two scriptural views of life and nature which when rightly considered are not opposed but complementary. It is true "our vile bodies" are soon to be "food for worms," but it is just as true that we are "sons of God," "made in His likeness," and but "a little lower than the angels." The Puritan saw nature and man only under a curse; he was blind to beauty in scenery and in art; poetry as a source of inspiration and joy was unknown to him. The preaching and literature of the colony dwelt on the darkest traits of human nature; and as if this were not enough, the spiritual leaders filled the minds of the people with superstitious dread by dwelling on the threatening "wonders of the invisible world." In modern times Satan, if not a figure of speech, is at least a distant or intangible force. With the Puritans he was a foe in the household that literally dogged every step. Cotton Mather once flung his inkstand at the devil, who intruded on his studies; and the sheets of his sermon, splashed with ink, are now in the keeping of the Mass. Historical Society—not precisely a proof of the actual encounter, but a curious memorandum of self-deception or imposture. The power of evil spirits to make themselves visible was everywhere believed. My grandmother told me that her mother, riding home from a prayer-meeting in North Brookfield, Mass., saw a demon behind her, perched on the crupper of her horse. She prayed aloud and switched the horse, whereupon the demon slid off and disappeared. The stories I heard when a boy from old men and women prove that belief in the supernatural powers of witches was still lingering fifty years ago. The stories were of the well-known sort—of lamed horses, of milch cows dried up, of obstinate cream, and of children tormented. Among the less enlightened a common subject of conversation was the judgments of God following the sins of indi-

viduals and families, such as the sudden death of swearers and sabbath-breakers, and the overthrow of fortunes built on wrong or crime.

Under the shadow of this superstition and of these gloomy doctrines the youth of Hawthorne was spent. There was a great change in the community beginning about the time he reached manhood—a change which was the precursor of the literary awakening, which I have elsewhere called "The New England Renaissance;" but his impressionable soul was never free from the melancholy influence that had darkened his early years. In a large number of his stories there is an atmosphere which is portentous; if there is sunshine we feel that the barometer is falling; if there is gaiety its tone is sinister; if there is repose it presages some catastrophe. Of the many elements in his being, the strongest and the one that has most deeply marked his works, is that derived from religious doctrines and current traditions. His diary, which he began in youth as a record of events, impressions, and fancies, is remarkable for the number of psychological problems and other foundations for stories, speculations upon the results of a concealed sin under given circumstances, or upon the development of some habit or congenital tendency. These *sprouted* in his mind as apothegms did in Emerson's, and were meditated in his solitary hours, in his walks by the sea or through the woods at night. Only a small proportion of them were expanded in his works.

In his boyhood, dwellings of the colonial period were still standing, some of which served as the model for "The House of Seven Gables." And what histories they had! They were haunted by legends of Indian wars, of Quaker persecution, of returned buccaneers, and of hapless crones accused of witchcraft. Salem was then a busy port, and there were tales of mystery, of slave ships, privateers and pirates, coming from far-off seas. Hawthorne's father had been a shipmaster, his grandfather a privateersman, and his great-grandfather a stern and implacable judge in the witchcraft trials. The father died at Surinam when the boy was four years old. The mother appears to have been wise and kind; and her son was brought up to enjoy the reading of the best literature. Bunyan, "The Faerie Queene," Milton, Pope, Thomson, Shakespeare, and Froissart, were his favourite books. Later he went to live for a time in Maine with his mother's brother, who owned a township of

wild land seven miles square. There he gained robust health, with a knowledge of woodcraft, swimming, and skating, and all the sports which hearty boys love. There, too, he acquired the fondness for solitude and meditation which clung to him through life. At an early age, and much against his will, he went to Bowdoin College. Three friends, made while there, influenced his character and career—Lieut. Bridge, U.S.N., who guaranteed the publication of his first successful book; Longfellow, who wrote in the *N. A. Review*, warmly praising it; and Franklin Pierce, who when President of the United States appointed him to a lucrative office. He was not eminent as a scholar, but his translations and themes were in beautiful English. Not caring for either of the learned professions he had no choice but to become an author.

He returned to Salem after graduation in 1825, where, three years later, he wrote and published anonymously his first romance, "Fanshawe." As a first attempt it is interesting, showing the sources from which his mind had been fed; but as a story it is colourless and lacks constructive skill. His life at this time was more solitary than ever. He often took his meals alone, and he rarely showed himself to the townspeople, but walked for miles by night along the picturesque coast from Gloucester to Nahant. For some years he wrote short sketches and fantastic stories. Some of these he burned, (although it is probable their features or ideas were used in constructing later ones), and some were printed in magazines. In due time a volume was made of them, entitled "Twice-Told Tales," which owed its existence to his friend Bridge. Then it was that Longfellow wrote, "It comes from the hand of a man of genius. Everything about it has the freshness of morning and May. The book, though in prose, is nevertheless written by a poet." And truly the praise was merited. "The Gray Champion," "The Gentle Boy," "The Minister's Veil," "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," the "Legends from the Province House," and others, are stories which none but a genius could have conceived; and their simple, exquisite style reveals the master in every sentence. They show his mind stored with colonial history and legend, brooding over the mysteries of the soul and the problems of existence, and haunting as often the shadows as the sunlight of nature. "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" was the original suggestion of a romance of earthly immortality for which he afterwards made

many sketches, but which he never completed. "The Minister's Veil" was the precursor of "The Scarlet Letter." "The Gentle Boy" first attracted the attention of Miss Peabody, who afterwards became his wife. The recollection of these romantic stories is one of the most delightful memories of my youth. They have an inexpressible charm, like glimpses of fairyland.

Let us endeavour to look at the actual man at the beginning of his career. He exhibited the strong traits of mind and body derived from a line of sturdy ancestors. He was tall, broad-shouldered, and muscular. His head was massive and set upon a neck like a column. His hair was very dark and abundant, brushed back at the temples, while a lock hung over his high and broad forehead. His eyes, of bluish grey, were deeply set under heavy brows; they were exquisitely beautiful, softly fringed, generally mild in expression, but capable of lightning flashes on occasion. His cheeks and chin were shaven, and his mouth, covered in manhood by black moustaches, expressed firmness and reserve. His bearing showed self-possession and refinement, but did not invite intimacy. Few men ever came near enough to be his friends; still he did not repel by *hauteur*, he rather withdrew from shyness. In the shyness, however, there was no hint of awkward self-consciousness; he simply chose to keep himself aloof. His eyes gained power with his years, and he read the souls of men as few have done since Shakespeare.

There were two Hawthornes. The one was an athlete and fisherman, a story-teller and boon companion (but only with the chosen few), a man of practical sense, interested, like his father's family, in common affairs, talking and writing like a farmer or mechanic. The other Hawthorne, and perhaps the true one, was sensitive to all impressions of nature, fond of poring over legends and over the treasures of English literature, living a life of romance in a world of his own. The two Hawthornes had little in common except reserve to the most of mankind. The one whom his cronies knew wrote no books and haunted no realm of mystery; he was an oarsman and angler, and good for a couple of bottles. Some genuine letters from this practical Hawthorne were printed not many years ago in a Boston newspaper, at which every lover of "The Scarlet Letter" was shocked; they might have been written by Smug, the joiner, for all the style, imagination, or sentiment they displayed. The ideal Haw-

thorne had no confidant or adviser, showed his sketches to none, nor breathed a word of his designs. He wrought in silence and alone, consulted no books, followed no models, made no quotations, and shut himself in an upper room, accessible by a trap-door, furnished only with a table and one chair.*

To this ideal Hawthorne were given "the vision and faculty divine;" and to him past and present were the same. The Boston which saw the gleam of Hester Prynne's scarlet emblem was as real to him as the streets of his native Salem. And Salem could become to him as remote and dismal as when Giles Corey, for refusing to plead before the court, lay gasping under the weighted plank, the *peine forte et dure*. The woods of Massachusetts had been mostly felled before our author's time, and the sylvan character of the scenery was but a tradition; but he had known the virgin forests in Maine, and he could reclothe the bare landscapes around him, and give freshness to the scenes of his romances. In some chapters the reader fancies himself under primeval trees, inhaling the breath of cedar and pine, walking over russet leaves or mossy paths, and hearing no sound but the thin notes of the wild birds.

Hawthorne's writings during the first ten years brought him very small returns, and he was pinched with poverty. He was glad to accept a salary from S. G. Goodrich, well known fifty years ago as "Peter Parley," to edit for him a magazine of history. He was promised £100, but got far less. His pay for stories from this broker of brains was from three to five dollars each! less than the wages of a copyist. The practical Hawthorne then called a halt to the ideal brother. Something was to be done for bread-and-butter. The democrats were in power, and through friends he sought employment under the Government. After some delay he obtained a subordinate office in the Boston Custom House, worth £250 a year—a place that no one would think of offering to a literary man to-day. In two years the Whigs returned to power, and Hawthorne was removed; but meanwhile he had lived prudently and saved a little money.

He next joined the community at Brook Farm, near Boston, of which high hopes were entertained. There was hard work and plenty of it, but there was not much leisure for literary labour, and men who

toiled in the fields or the shops found that their brains were inert when the hour of rest came. The ideal life, in which there was to be a proper balance of exercise with thought and conversation, was unattainable. The association was pure and reputable, and embraced many brilliant men and women, but it did not prosper; and when the main building was accidentally burned the company dissolved. His impressions of this mode of life may be read in "The Blithedale Romance," but that book does not give, and does not pretend to give, an account of the community.

He was married in 1842 to Miss Peabody, to whom he had been affianced for some years. It was a happy union, from which three children were born: Julian, who has gained some fame as a novelist; Rose, who married Mr. Lathrop, a literary man of eminence, editor of Hawthorne's works; and Una, who died unmarried. Hawthorne's first years of married life were spent in Concord, in the old manse where, a few years before, Emerson had written his early essays; and the description of this venerable house, prefixed to the "Mosses," may be cited as a specimen of the romancer's fresh and exquisite style. I do not know a chapter by any modern author which is superior to this, considered as a piece of English. His references to Emerson show his mental attitude as that of an artist; they show also that he had no sympathy with the philosopher, the reformer, the abolitionist.

"Mosses from an Old Manse," a new collection of original and brilliant stories and sketches, was published in New York, appealing, it was hoped, to a wider circle, but in a pecuniary sense its success was only moderate. By this time, however, the reputation of the author among discerning readers was established. There was not another living writer in that field from whose brain came such imaginative and powerful conceptions, so varied and yet so resembling, so shadowy and yet so impressive and true.

In 1845, after the election of President Polk, Hawthorne hoped to be appointed postmaster at Salem.* But the local influences were not in his favour. To the little world of Salem he could say—

"Thou'rt not my friend, and I'm not thine."

He was never shown any consideration by the townspeople, and in return he took little pains to conciliate them. In the posthumous

* This statement is made by one who knew him well in Salem, and does not refer to the house in Concord, where he afterwards lived.

* The British reader needs to be informed that the postmaster of a large city or town in the United States is an important person politically, and receives a handsome salary.

letters already mentioned there were passages which showed intense hatred of certain leading men who had opposed him. He had held aloof from "society," and chose his friends from the humbler class. The social aristocracy was then generally Whig; the anti-slavery men were apart in a respectable minority; and a pro-slavery democrat, such as Hawthorne avowed himself, was held in abhorrence by both the other parties. I do not mean that he favoured slavery in itself, but that he considered it a small evil compared to the danger of a rupture with the slave-holding States. He never changed this view, not even after the aggressive designs of the South were evident, and civil war was in preparation.

He was thwarted in his first choice, but he obtained the place of Surveyor of the Customs at Salem, which was fairly well paid, and which he retained about three years. On leaving office he set himself at work to write "The Scarlet Letter." His sole dependence during the six months in which he composed it was some £30, which his wife had saved from his salary, aided by the earnings of her pencil and needle. Mr. Fields, the publisher, had faith in Hawthorne's genius and in his future success. He kept himself informed of his friend's progress, and knew how to manage with his inborn shyness. When the manuscript was finished Hawthorne told him that it was something either very good or very bad. It proved to be the golden bridge to the author's modest fortune and to his world-wide fame. The title piqued curiosity without betraying the secret. The introduction caused a fierce discussion in the political newspapers, being written when the author was smarting under the feeling of resentment at the loss of office, and containing a realistic picture of the indolent and incapable "fossils" whom he found in service at the Custom House. The portraits were only too life-like, and as the subjects were well-known people, belonging to the influential families, they must have felt as naked as Marsyas. This was the only instance in which the "old Adam" had any share in the ideal romancer's work.

From that day he was famous. The romance was on every table, and the story was discussed in every company. The newspapers made frequent allusions to it, and the reviewers found they had something to do to account for the phenomenon of the new Puritan romance. And then it was found that magazines and annuals had long contained his stories and sketches, all marked

by the same delicate traits, instinct with the same beauty and strong with the same human interest. Where was the omniscience of criticism? If the author had died before "The Scarlet Letter," where would have been the justice of time?

The change in his fortunes and the splendour of his fame made no change in his intellectual or social habits. Isolation from society had been the necessary condition for his success. His conceptions came to him in silence and he brooded over them in solitude. He was at no time a literary lion; he was not to be captured or flattered; he shrank from crowds and refused to be *fêted*. The life of prosperous towns, whether as small as Salem or as large as Boston, is fatal to individuality. Grace and polish are permitted by the proprieties, but originality is a deadly sin. Imagine Jean Paul Richter, Carlyle, or Heine at an æsthetic tea! and the consternation of the blue-stockings at the first stroke of irony!

His next important work was "The House of Seven Gables," written in Lenox, a beautiful town among the hills of western Massachusetts. It is not necessary to compare this romance with its predecessor; it is sufficient to say that it fully sustained the author's reputation and gave new hopes for his future. He removed next to West Newton, near Boston, where he wrote "The Blithedale Romance," already mentioned, and soon after bought a house in Concord, which he altered and enlarged to suit his taste, and called "The Wayside." Two other books appeared about this time, "The Wonder-book" and "Grandfather's Chair," both written for children, as their titles indicate. The first is a version of several classic fables (Pandora, Midas, The Gorgon's Head, &c.), treated with singular felicity and made attractive to young readers. The colouring is romantic, as in all of Hawthorne's stories, and the style is easy and natural. "Grandfather's Chair" is a collection of stirring incidents and episodes in the history of the Colony, somewhat resembling Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather." Both volumes were extremely popular.

Franklin Pierce was candidate for President in 1852, and Hawthorne with sincere reluctance consented to write a life of his friend to help on the campaign. Pierce had been a member of Congress and a general in the war against Mexico, but he was not especially eminent either as a soldier or civilian, and the task of his biographer was not an easy one. The biography was apparently of

some service—although the Whigs declared it was the greatest fiction the author had written—and Pierce, feeling that he owed a debt of gratitude, would have given his friend a foreign mission. But Hawthorne was not rich enough to accept an appointment as minister, and preferred the place of consul to Liverpool, then worth about £2,500 a year. Even this he declined at first, but subsequently reconsidered his decision.

The pressure of official business prevented any effective literary labour, and nothing was accomplished of any moment (beyond memoranda in his note-books) until he left the consulate. His duties were extremely irksome, and he was kept in perpetual uneasiness by the attempts in Congress to deprive him of his fees and put him on a limited salary. A literary man in the consular service of the Republic cannot look for repose. He must move in society for which his small income is insufficient to maintain him on equal terms, and he is perpetually harassed by demands on his time, and especially on his purse, by those of his countrymen who for any reason find themselves stranded for want of money.

Hawthorne might probably have remained in office through the administration of Buchanan (who succeeded Pierce), but he resigned in 1857 and went to Italy in January, 1858. His life in the land of art and song was pleasurable, and he planned several romances, but the air was enervating and everything led to repose. "The Marble Faun" was sketched in Italy, but was not written until his return to England. For some unexplained reason the title of the English edition was changed to "Transformation;" but the admirers of the author in the United States hold to the fine and suggestive name he gave it. "The Scarlet Letter" is wonderful for its atmosphere, its characteristic local colouring; it is a perfect mirror of colonial times as regards scenery, manners, and ideas; but "The Marble Faun," which equally bears the marks of the author's individuality, is equally faithful to all that is beautiful in Italy, and suggests the indescribable charm of antiquity, the lingering traditions of the golden age. It is one of his three great romances, and perhaps the greatest, as it was the last. He left unfinished sketches entitled "Septimus Felton," "The Dolliver Romance," and "Dr. Grimshaw's Secret," none of which, as they stand, add to his fame.

He sailed to the United States in June, 1860, about a year before the Civil War broke out. He was deeply affected by the situation of affairs, and was unable to set himself at work with anything of the old spirit. He believed that a separation was inevitable, and the only thing to contend for was to retain as many of the Northern Slave States as possible. His anxiety is evident in all that he wrote, and it was the opinion of his friends that it shortened his days. He brought out two volumes of selections from his English note-books, entitled "Our Old Home," and he had begun "The Dolliver Romance," but he did not live to complete it. His friend ex-President Pierce induced him to take a trip to Plymouth, New Hampshire, hoping to revive his spirits, which were depressed by many causes, chiefly by the sudden death of Mr. Ticknor, of the firm of Ticknor and Fields, his publishers. The two friends drove to New Hampshire in a carriage and stopped for the night at a hotel, where, without warning, Hawthorne was found dead in his bed. This was May 19, 1864. He was buried a few days later in the cemetery of Concord, the funeral being attended by a large number of literary men. Mr. Fields has left a beautiful and sympathetic account of it in his "Yesterdays with Authors," and Longfellow's touching poem upon the occasion will recur to all readers.

"There, in seclusion and remote from men,
The wizard hand lies cold,
Which at its topmost speed let fall the pen,
And left the tale half told.

"Ah, who shall lift that wand of magic power,
And the lost clue regain?
The unfinished window in Aladdin's tower
Unfinished must remain!"

The fame of most novels is of short duration, seldom extending much beyond the generation whose tastes they reflect, and whose manners they would perpetuate; the ideal creations of romance have more vitality. Most novels are built up of a multitude of details, the result of observation, so that a novelist like Dickens might say, "Genius is only patience and attention." But no amount of patience and attention could have conceived and wrought "The Scarlet Letter." Roger Chillingworth and Hester Prynne could not have been created from the most ingenious combination of traits and peculiarities. They are vital conceptions developed from within. They and Dimmesdale are fatally bound together, and not even the author could have controlled their conduct and destiny after having formed them: they must

be developed and led to the crisis of the tragedy according to the laws of their being. The story is a pure creation, like the formation of a crystal.

Hawthorne has his place among writers endowed with poetic and constructive imagination, a limited number in all the ages. Lowell calls him "a John Bunyan-Fouqué;" but the comparison, though suggestive, fails somewhat in application. "The Pilgrim's Progress" belongs chiefly to the spiritual realm, and "Undine" to fairyland, while the chief romances of Hawthorne have their scenes in the actual world, and *might* have been literal narrations of human experiences. His genius suggests the occult influences without invoking the aid of miracle, or taking us from our firm footing as reasoning men.

It might have been supposed from his ancestry, his inherited traits, and his surroundings, that his romances, if he produced any, would have been full of storm and stress, startling in plot, violent in action, and highly coloured in style, but of all modern writers he is the one whose language is most temperate, whose movements are most measured, and whose taste is most refined. When one thinks of his inborn energy and his proneness to tempests of wrath, this gracious and equable style affects us like the tense restraint of the fiery Rubinstein playing a melody *pianissimo*.

Theodore Parker says (in substance) that the noblest man has in him some of the finer feminine traits, as the noblest woman has something of man's firm qualities. Hawthorne had much of a woman's delicacy and sensibility as an offset to his unusual power. This is evident in the character of his heroines. He not only knew the creatures of his brain, but entered into their feelings, and represented their speech and action with a subtlety which affects us like the airy traits of Shakespeare's Miranda and Juliet. The most cursory reader feels this, although he may not be able to account for his impressions.

The genius of Hawthorne is shown in no special detail; it is not one thing or another, but the whole conception of the plots and the characters. There is no field in his books for collectors of "elegant extracts" unless they are willing to transfer entire scenes. The reader follows with his spontaneous admiration without being able to select a description or a sentence which, more than another, moves him to say "how beautiful!" I must repeat that it is only in presence of

certain works of ancient art, some Faun of Praxiteles or Venus of Milo, that one experiences a similar feeling of restful admiration. The truth of line and the naturalness of pose and expression appear inevitable; one cannot think of their being otherwise; their beauty and grace must have always existed; they are no longer *works* in our eyes, but must have been spoken into being.

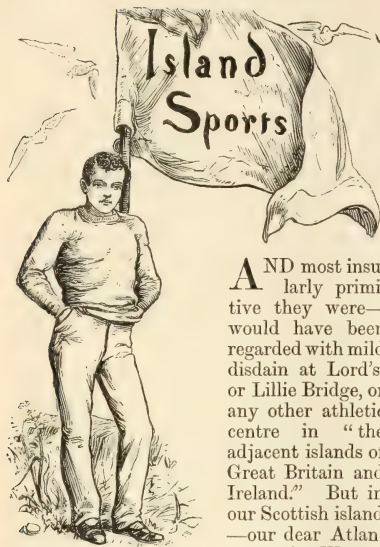
The obvious drawback in too many of Hawthorne's stories is their prevailing sombre tone. There are occasional scenes glowing with light, like parts of a landscape touched by rays that stream through cloud-rifts; but his mind was possessed of tragic conceptions, and his fairest characters are decked for sacrifice. This bent came partly from his contemplation of the gloomy life of the old Puritan colony as it was in the days of his ancestors, and partly from his solitary habits, and his natural tendency to melancholy.

While the memory of a writer is fresh, something of his personality mingles in our estimate of what he has done; but the time comes when his amiability or his moroseness is forgotten, and his works are judged purely by their merits. What would it matter to-day whether Dante had been Guelph or Ghibeline, whether Milton had been Puritan or Cavalier? And what will it matter a hundred years hence what view Hawthorne took of the American civil war, provided only his romances retain their charm? At this time, in thinking of the terrible cost at which the union of the States has been preserved, we cannot wholly forgive men like Hawthorne and Carlyle, who were willing to see that union shattered. Could they have lived to see the grand result of the struggle, the magnanimity of the victors, and the return of fraternal feeling, they would have been forced to confess their shortsightedness.

The bitterness engendered by the war is passing away; errors of judgment like Hawthorne's will be excused; and the time must come when the people of Boston, and of Salem and Concord as well, will bethink themselves of erecting proper memorials of the author whose fame sheds lustre upon them all. If Boston honours its great writers as Antwerp has honoured its great artists, there will be in its public squares many statues in bronze or marble in memory of the brilliant men who for the last half century have made its name illustrious; and of that remarkable group no one is surer of enduring fame than Nathaniel Hawthorne.

OUR ISLAND SPORTS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."



AND most insularly primitive they were—would have been regarded with mild disdain at Lord's, or Lillie Bridge, or any other athletic centre in "the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland." But in our Scottish island—our dear Atlantis of the West—

we thought them very grand indeed. All our rank, wealth, beauty, and fashion, migratory and resident, turned out to look at them, while our aboriginal working population had for weeks beforehand been exercised in preparing for that one day of play. A heavenly day it was, such as makes this our Golden Island as beautiful as any southern paradise.

"Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns,
And bowery hollows crowned with summer seas."

Some of the party had watched its dawn from a peak three thousand feet high, having started at one in the morning in the dim moon-set, rowed across the bay, and climbed the mountain by starlight, just in time for a gorgeous sunrise, descending thence triumphantly to breakfast, and professing themselves "ready for anything."

Which we elders scarcely were, for you can't go to bed at two and rise at seven, with a party of young Alpine climbers on your mind, without feeling a trifle sleepy afterwards. But we roused ourselves, and enjoyed fully the drive along the shore, and up the beautiful "String" road, which winds like a thread over the hillside, visible for

miles. Along its usually solitary line were moving all sorts of equipages—spring-carts, dog-carts, waggonettes—objects of surprise and admiration to one who remembers when almost the only mode of locomotion on the island, except "gude shanks-naigie," was a sort of rude cart without any springs at all. To be jolted in it along this String road was a martyrdom compared to which the longest walk became a luxury.

We had thought that to sit still for two hours in a comfortable carriage would be a desirable rest for our mountaineers. Not a bit of it! They never seem to know what rest is, except when asleep in their beds. They kept jumping out at every available instant, to relieve the horses, they said, but also, I believe, to get rid of their own exuberant vitality. And every five minutes they turned to look tenderly at the lofty peak whence they had just descended, and remark with patronising calmness of every beautiful view that was pointed out to them, "Oh! we've seen it before—at five this morning." Truly, to watch the sunrise from a mountaintop makes a person intolerably conceited for a week after.

So thought those who fain would go and never can, but must watch mountains from the humble plain for the rest of their days. Only, what a good thing it is to have a mountain to watch, and eyes to see it!

The—village shall I call it? as it consists merely of a road-side inn, a farm, and a few scattered cottages—had never till now arrived at the dignity of having sports at all, and felt itself important accordingly. There was quite a bustle in front of the little "public." Its yard was filled with vehicles, and before its door were rows of white-covered tables, inquirers being informed that accommodation could only be had "outside." Inside, the comfortable-looking landlady and pleasant-faced lassie, who had to do everything between them, seemed overladen with responsibility, but yet prepared to meet it all.

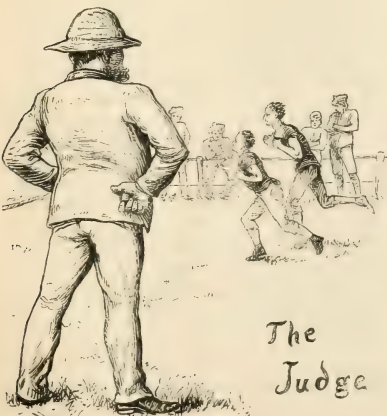
So half of us relieved them by walking off with our provision basket, and eating our dinner in peace by the side of a burn, leaving the others, who preferred luxury and hot meat, to make the best of it; which was better than they expected, for they met us half an hour after with cheerful countenances,

declaring they had dined capitably. And dinner, let me confess, in our dear island, where food is limited and appetites are unlimited, is a very important thing. I remember once, coming back from a long walk which made one ready to "eat one's hat," as they say, being met by an agreeable smile of true Highland politeness and the regret that the fish we had ordered "wadna be caught." There was only one egg in the house, though the hen "clucked as if she was thinkin' to lay another." Could we wait? We did wait, but the hen changed her mind, and finally we had to dine off porridge and sour milk, consoled by a promise to kill "half a sheep" for us to-morrow. Whether the other half was to be left running about the mountains till required, did not transpire. We took boat next day to the mainland.

But this happened thirty years ago. Since then, our island has advanced in civilisation most miraculously—sometimes most painfully. Astonishing were the toilettes we followed down the farm-yard lane which led to the field, where in a large level plateau the sports were going on. Fashionable polonaises



Throwing
The Caber.



The
Judge

and jackets, hats all feathers and lace, wiggle-waggle dress-improvers, and barbarous high-heeled shoes we saw in plenty; but where was the bright-tinted petticoat and short gown?—the white mutch with the plaid drawn over it?—the tartan and the kilt? Gone, all gone! Not a single trace of the old Highland costume could we discover, and we mourned over our Islanders fallen from their high estate of picturesque simplicity, and melting into the light of common day.

Still, the natural beauty of the scene could not be spoiled. Our artist, leaning against a gate, took it all in, despairing to set it down—the horse-shoe circle of spectators keenly interested, the accidental groups moving outside, and the sunshiny sleepy repose of the mountains beyond, each standing in his place through gloom or shine. No "Lord's" or "Lillie Bridge" could rival them.

The honest ground was the only seat provided for everybody, except a rude platform covered with a bit of brilliant, but not too artistic, carpet, where were placed, *pro tem.*, the musicians—a harp, cornet, and violin—who gave us "Who'll be King but Charlie?" "A wee Bird came to our ha' door," "The Auld House," and other known tunes, with a pathos and energy, as well as skill, often wanting in much grander bands; and when they subsided into modern music they did equally well, though it was rather funny to hear the

Iolanthe and *Patience* airs in our far-away island.

But, except ourselves, no one seemed to listen much; all were absorbed in the high jump then going on. Youth after youth, lithe and wiry, though scarcely so graceful as our southern athletes, cleared the pole, almost as high as themselves. At each success there was a hearty shout; at each of the few failures a good-natured laugh. Evidently the competitors were all showing off under the eyes of their "ain folk," which much increased the excitement.

It reached its pitch when a long line of young men were tied by the leg in twos and twos, to run the comical three-legged race, which always delights children and the child-like populace. None sported the brilliant, if rather limited running costume familiar to English athletes, but wore just their ordinary coloured shirt, and trousers tucked up to the knee; yet there were some fine Greek forms among them, which our artist hastily sketched. And when, at the sound of a pistol shot, they all started, wild were the shouts, in Gaelic and English, that followed them; and loud was the cry, half howl, half cheer, which rang across the field, when they all fell together, a writhing mass of legs and arms, in front of a winning-post. One couple lay there some minutes, and when unbound were seen to be examined so anxiously that a whisper of "Leg broken" ran round the admiring circle, and an ardent disciple of St. John's Ambulance Society was just about to advance, proffering "first aid to the wounded," when the young man rose up and walked away.

Putting the stone and throwing the caber are performances exclusively Scottish. Only Highland thews and sinews, frames hardened by mountain air and porridge, and innocent of beef and beer—Hodge, poor fellow, is too apt to overeat as well as overdrink himself if he gets a chance—only such brawny fellows as these could have "putted" so accurately and so far a twenty-pound lump of solid granite, or poised with such amazing steadiness and then thrown over in a double somersault, a huge pine-tree that might have served as walking-stick to the "monster Polypheme." One man (I believe a game-keeper—and if so, woe to the poacher who had to wrestle with him!) "putted" the stone again and again; another, grey-haired, but Herculean still, balanced the caber, and ran along with it for a few yards before throwing it over, in a way perfectly marvellous to our Saxon eyes.

By this time, the excited throng of natives

had been increased by a good number better dressed and calmer minded—tourists and holiday folk. It was amusing to notice what really charming costumes had been fished out of portmanteaus and chest of drawers in those tiny white "letting" cottages, which dot every corner of the island, and where whole families who have discovered, and, alas! are discovering more and more every year, what a delightful island it is, contrive to stow themselves away for the summer. No gorgeous silks or satins appeared: the dresses were chiefly of coloured cotton, or pure white brightened with a "Liberty" sash; while many a pretty face smiled from under a three-half-penny Zulu hat, decked with a bit of bright colour, or a bunch of real heather. The young men too—does a young man ever look so well as in his grey shooting clothes, his bonnet and his knickerbockers? devoting himself to a simply-dressed girl—not a "young lady"—who brings an almost child-like element of frank enjoyment into the natural charm which draws men and young women together, and will do to the end of time? And if it ends in something deeper, well! which is likely to be the best and safest love, that born in a ball-room or on a Highland moor?

The children too were especially happy. I noticed half-a-dozen groups of slender damsels with short frocks and long tails, who may grow up to be the belles of the next generation. And there was a boy about twelve, who went about the field dressed in the roughest of clothes, with his beautiful bare brown legs and feet shaped like an Antinous, and a face that might have been that of a young duke.

And when the aristocratic element really came upon the scene, it still further exemplified the fact, that the higher you go up in the social scale the simpler are your manners, and the less you "bother" about your clothes. By-and-by, the band having vacated the tiny platform, it was occupied by three ladies, very quietly attired, and two gentlemen in shooting costumes. The former had a rough garden seat provided, the latter sat dangling their legs over the wooden framework, but all five seemed thoroughly to enjoy the scene; especially the hundred yards race which now came off, accompanied by shouts of "Noo, Thomas!" "Noo, Donald!" "Well done, John!" Everybody seemed to know everybody and to call them by their Christian names. And no Pythian or Olympian games could have been watched with greater excitement, while Hymettus itself could not

have furnished a lovelier background or more picturesque setting to the scene than those soft grey mountains, melting away into the bright blue sky.

"Our artist" was delighted, and eagerly set down every scratch she could, while "our author," afraid of forgetting something, begged from two or three friends the smallest scrap of paper to make notes on, and at last received out of a little girl's pocket an old envelope, which was literally "worth its weight in gold."

"Look! there's a lady sketching us," said one of the platform party, happily ignorant of the other enemy silently standing behind.

"Never mind. Let her do it! Which lady?"

"One in pink—very much pink! I must hide, or she'll be sure to take my likeness," said one young fellow, pretending a fit of shyness. "I can't stand it. I must run away."

"Nonsense, stay where you are," commanded a pleasant-voiced little lady. "We'll all sit still, and let the artist do what she likes."

Which she did, and there they are, spectators of the final race, at least so far as they could be done.

The commanding little lady began chatting to the people round the platform. "And how do you do, Mr. —? and is your wife quite well?" stooping over to shake hands with a very homely person, who blurted out an awkward "Yes, ma'am," and was reproved by another man adding pointedly, "Thank you, your Grace, his wife and daughter are just behind."

Who were at once brought up and shaken hands with by "her Grace," who seemed to know everybody, as of course everybody knew her. Simple in dress and frank in manner, the Duchess among her own island people, to whom she was evidently *the* Duchess, the only Duchess in the world, was a pleasant sight to see, and her own evident enjoyment added to that of those about her.

The final show was a horse-race, not at all of the Derby and Ascot type. The competitors were chiefly farm-horses, ridden bare-backed, and the gyrations they made, and the difficulty there was in getting them to start at all, or to keep the assigned course when they had started, proved a source of intense amusement. But there was certainly no betting, no making of "books," for the races; it was all honest down-right fun. The Duchess, a notable horse-woman, who may

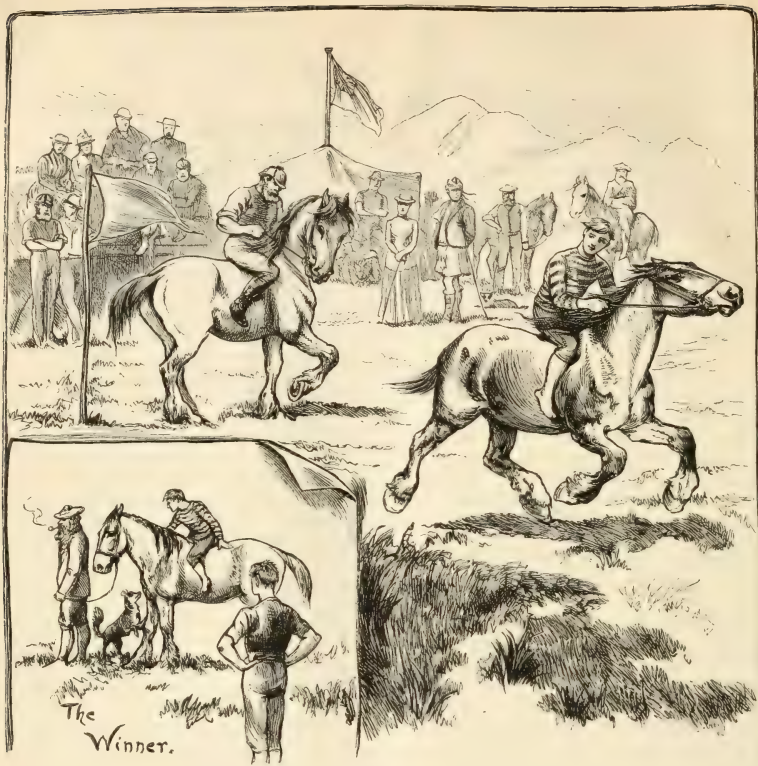
be seen all over the moors, following the Duke on a shooting pony, was not among the least amused of the spectators.

"Her Grace" is not one of the fashionable beauties, and I never heard whether she is clever or not; but with the afternoon sun shining on her cheerful face under the neat hat, with her simple, pretty muslin gown, and her kind words and smiles for everybody about her, our Duchess was really a credit to her strawberry leaves. Her Islanders, in their sturdy, independent, yet truly Highland devotion, evidently thought so. They neither intruded upon her, nor stared at her, but every one when addressed by her unhesitatingly put forth his right hand, which she as frankly accepted.

And now the afternoon sun began to slant westward, and various groups were seen to sit down and attack bags of biscuits or "cookies," or retiring across the fields in search of tea, the only beverage available, for the Duke wisely discourages the sale of alcoholic drinks throughout the island. Consequently it is, for a whisky-loving race, a tolerably sober island. You may go about it at any hour of the day or night and never meet a drunken man or woman. Nor, though it is scarcely a wealthy community, do you ever witness in it that squalid poverty, that total degradation of manners and morals, which, alas! is not wholly confined to towns. We also, spurred on by hunger, began to think we would omit the end of the sports, and be beforehand with the world in getting tea at the all-important inn. Already symptoms of frolic being over and work begun appeared in the shape of a lovely herd of cows brought in to be milked, which the farmer, the same burly old fellow with whom the Duchess had shaken hands, hastened to see after, turning back more than once to shout in an anxious voice, to a slim and stylish and ultra-fashionable young lady, "Annie! Annie! dinna forget to take up the bull."

Highland bulls are proverbially mild of nature, yet we quickened our pace up the lane to the inn-door, where, by great favour, the landlady condescended to give us tea down-stairs, the parlour up-stairs being made ready for the Duchess. A very dainty tea-table it looked, when we dared to peer in—bread and butter, scones and cakes, jam and honey—as we knew to our cost, when, asking for honey, we were told that there was only one tiny pot to be had, "and the Duchess had got it."

We did not grudge it to her. We only



hoped she would enjoy her tea, for she deserved it. She had spent a whole afternoon in sharing her people's pleasure, making others happy and herself too, let us hope—for these things are always mutual.

One of the strongest impressions left by these Island Sports of ours, was the relationship between the lord of the soil and his people, a sort of feudal friendship, existing for generations, and riveted by the present generation into a tie of respectful devotion, often most touching to see. Every face brightens when you speak of the Duke and Duchess, whose yearly arrival at their ancestral castle and at the two smaller houses which they have on the other side of the Island, is hailed with enthusiasm. "The Duke knows personally every tenant he has," was said one day. And as for the Duchess, when after years of waiting, her Grace came that year with a little Lady Mary, a nine-months-old baby, there was not a mother

on the Island who did not seem as proud as if the child had been her own.

It is the personal relation, the power to see the master's face and shake the mistress's hand, to interchange all the small charities which are so great a bond between rich and poor, avoiding patronising on the one hand, and subserviency on the other—it is these things which make the tie between land-owners and land-labourers so pleasant and so secure. But the duty, a duty as momentous in its degree as that from child to parent, parent to child, must be accepted as such, not only believed in but fulfilled.

Would that this lesson could be taught in another island, within a few hours' sail of this happy island of ours! one which ought to be, so great are its possibilities, "first flower of the earth and first gem of the sea," yet which is—we all know what! Is there no noble or gentle blood in Ireland, people of "the ould stock," for which the genuine

Irishman, like the Highlander, has an almost blind attachment, which would warm to the sod? feeling that to live even a portion of every year among one's own people, does more to calm the popular mind and win the national heart, than hosts of legal enactments; that a resident landlord is better than a whole staff of constabulary, and a kindly-faced woman like our Duchess, going about shaking hands with rough men, would likely have more power over them than any rabid demagogue?

Demagogues could not exist in our Golden Island. It has but one enemy—that accursed foe which a man puts into his mouth to take away his brains. But to-day at least it was absent. After our harmless tea in the inn parlour, watching various other families enjoying the same innocent meal on the benches outside, we drove home through the still twilight, congratulating ourselves and the island on one fact, that throughout all the sports we had seen no sign of a single drop of whisky.

SOME PHASES OF ANIMAL LIFE.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A.

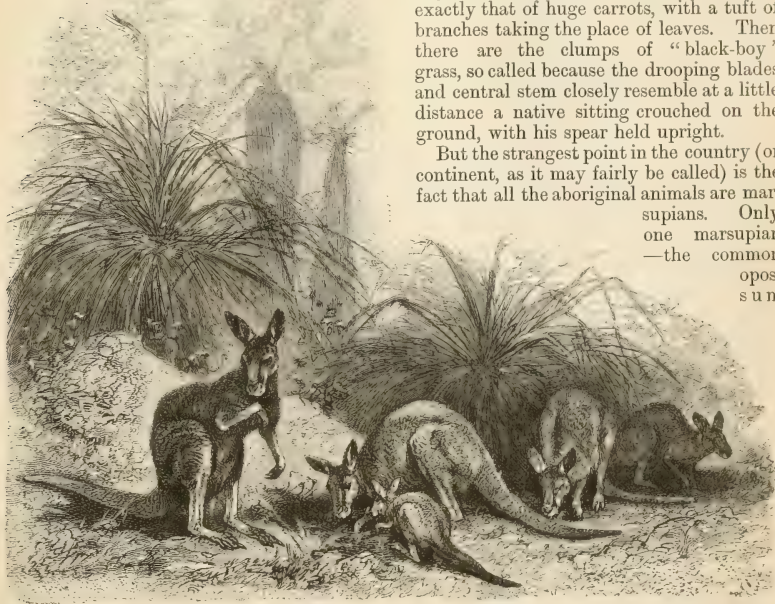
III.—MISCELLANEOUS.

WHAT a strange land is Australia! The original discoverers must, when they first landed upon its shores, have almost thought that they had found a new world.

Look, for example, upon the scene which is depicted in the illustration, and you will note that such a tableau is absolutely without parallel in any other part of the world.

The vegetation is, to our eyes, as fantastic as that of the *Vrilya* in Lord Lytton's "Coming Race." Putting aside other strange vegetation, there are trees whose outline is exactly that of huge carrots, with a tuft of branches taking the place of leaves. Then there are the clumps of "black-boy" grass, so called because the drooping blades and central stem closely resemble at a little distance a native sitting crouched on the ground, with his spear held upright.

But the strangest point in the country (or continent, as it may fairly be called) is the fact that all the aboriginal animals are marsupians. Only one marsupian—the common opossum



Kangaroos.

—has survived in any other part of the world; but in Australia a pouchless animal would be as great an anomaly as a marsupial in England.

I need scarcely explain that when the young of the marsupiana are born they are of exceedingly minute dimensions, and quite incapable of coping with the many trials of the world. They are therefore transferred to a pouch, or "marsupium," which is formed by a fold in the skin of the abdomen, and there they remain until they are strong enough to get their own living.

As this pouch has to bear a considerable weight, especially when the young are nearly large enough to lead an independent life, it is supported by two bones that project from the front of the pelvis. These bones are, in fact, ossified tendons, and it is a remarkable fact that they exist even in the male, although he, of course, needs no pouch. They are also found in the duck-bill, which not only has no pouch, but actually lays eggs like a bird.

Several of these marsupians, especially the petaurists, bear a close resemblance to certain animals of the Old World, and in consequence, when English colonists began to oust the natives and settle in the country, they bestowed on most of the animals the names of those creatures with which they were familiar. So we find, according to that very accommodating nomenclature, badgers, cats, wolves, mice, rats, squirrels, monkeys, and bears.

Fortunately there was one animal for which they could find no analogy, and therefore retained its own name of "Kangaroo" (*Macropus*). This is, moreover, the typical example of the marsupians, and has therefore been placed in our present group of phases of animal life. There are many species of kangaroo, and I shall therefore only give a few lines to the Great Kangaroo (*Macropus major*), the adult male of which is popularly called the "Old Man," or "Boomer."

It attains very large dimensions, a hundred and sixty pounds being the average weight of a fine specimen, and its total length between seven and eight feet. Its mode of progress is peculiar, though not unique, as it is paralleled by the jerboas of the Old World and all the hopping birds.

The fore legs are very small, being seldom used for progression, and, in fact, acting the part of hands, as we see in the squirrel and other rodents. The normal mode of progression is by leaps, sometimes only extending for a few inches, but, when the animal

is fleeing from an enemy, covering several yards. On one occasion the tracks of a hunted boomer were measured, and each leap was found to cover "just fifteen feet, and as regular as if they had been stepped by a sergeant." One of these animals ran for eighteen miles and swam two miles, the entire chase occupying about two hours.

On level ground high-bred horses and dogs in full training can be tolerably sure of running down a kangaroo; but if the animal can make its way to broken and rocky ground, especially where the trunks of fallen trees beset the track, it can mostly make good its escape.

When brought to bay it is as formidable an antagonist as the stag itself. It has no horns, but it has hind feet, and at the tip of the fourth toe there is a claw of great length, shaped like a bayonet, and scarcely less formidable. A single kick from this weapon will rip up a dog as if the animal had been struck with a sharp sword, and even an armed man does not like to approach it in front.

Generally, when at bay, the kangaroo stands upright, resting its back against a tree, so that the dogs cannot attack it from behind. The hunter, however, takes advantage of this habit. He trains his dogs to make false attacks on the animal in front, without coming within range of the terrible claw; and while its attention is engaged in front he slips behind the tree and strikes his long hunting-knife into the body of the kangaroo.

Not many years ago the kangaroo swarmed like the bison in America. But now great cities have sprung into existence where, scarcely fifty years ago, not even a hut was to be seen, and the black men and the kangaroo were masters of the land. The time is not very far distant when sheep and cattle will have taken the place of the kangaroo, and Australia will only know her most characteristic animal by reputation. The kangaroo and the bison will alike fall victims to advancing civilisation.

The kangaroo is not thought to be a very intellectual or affectionate animal. But, towards the end of 1886, the kangaroo showed itself in an unexpected light.

A number of these animals were sent from Australia to Philadelphia, United States of America, *via* Liverpool. There they were transhipped into two vessels bound for America, as no single ship could accommodate the fifteen large cages. Among them were a pair called "Jack" and "Flora."

Unfortunately they were separated at Liverpool, much to the sorrow of Flora, who continually called for her mate, and could not be induced to take her food for some days. On the voyage two little ones were born, or rather grew, sufficiently to poke their heads out of their mother's pouch.

Now we will quote the account of an eyewitness: "The ship bearing Flora was the first to arrive, and the batch of kangaroos were at once sent to Philadelphia. The other load of kangaroos arrived at Philadelphia a week later. Flora seemed to scent the coming of her mate, and when the cage containing him was carried into the museum, he heard Flora's voice and answered her. Flora's joy knew no bounds, and she leaped about her cage in the wildest excitement, ever and anon stopping to gaze out from behind the bars to see if Jack had come. The keeper, to prevent Flora from injuring herself against the bars of her cage, was obliged to bring her mate up-stairs and put him in her cage.

"Never was a more impressive scene enacted between two animals. They embraced, licked each other, and rubbed their noses in expression of affection, forgetting all about their babes. Finally, the father saw them and tenderly licked their faces, while the little things hopped from their mother's pouch, as if to extend to him a friendly greeting. Jack, Flora, and the two babes are now the happiest animals in the world, and the keeper vows that he will never separate them again."

HERE, in our next picture, is an animal which has a peculiar interest for us. This is the Ibex (*Capra ibex*), sometimes called the Steinbok, *i.e.* Stone-buck (occasionally given at fuller length as Bergsteinbok, *i.e.* Mountain Stonebuck). It is also known by the name of Bouquetin.

All the ruminant animals which we have hitherto noticed have been inhabitants of the plains, but, as its German name imports, it is essentially a denizen of the mountains, and, like the chamois, owes its very existence to its surefootedness on precipices which man, with all his appliances, can scarcely surmount.

It lives in little bands, seldom exceeding six or seven in number, and being under the leadership of one experienced male. One of these bands is represented in the illustration as descending from their rocky fastness, the leader being in front, and alert to detect danger.

The adult male can at once be distinguished by the enormous size of his horns,

which, in an old specimen, are sometimes so large that they almost appear to overbalance the animal. Formerly it was thought that when the ibex was closely pressed by hunters, it could leap off a precipice head downwards, break its fall by means of its elastic horns, and make its way off in safety. But, inasmuch as the females would just as much need to escape the hunters as the males, and yet do not possess these "buffers," it is very evident that, like the tusk of the narwhal and the beard of man, they are simply a masculine ornament.

Those who have seen them in their almost inaccessible retreats say that their activity is almost incredible, the animals flinging themselves against the face of an almost perpendicular and apparently smooth precipice, which looks as if it could afford no more footing than a brick wall, and by a succession of bounds from imperceptible irregularities, reaching the summit with perfect security.

It has rather a wide range of territory, being found in the alpine regions of Asia and Europe. The Asiatic specimens are, as a rule, larger than the European. Its special interest to ourselves consists in the fact that it is almost certainly the stock from which our domestic goat has been derived.

HERE, again, is a group of animals which are so familiar that few of us realise what wonderful beings they are.

Among sportsmen a Stag is valued according to the number of projections, or "tines," upon its horns, or antlers, as they ought properly to be called. Yet how few of those who follow the staghounds trouble themselves about the extraordinary character of the antlers by which they know whether or not a stag may be hunted! Were they permanent, like those of cattle, goats, and sheep, there would be little wonderful about them. But every set of antlers falls off in the spring, and however large and complicated it may be, is replaced by a fresh set in the following autumn. Let us follow a set of antlers through their growth, and suppose them to belong to an adult stag at least six years old.

In February the antlers fall off, and hardly have they been shed, than nature at once takes measures for replacing them.

At the spots on which the former horns had rested, a round knob begins to grow, covered with a peculiar skin, which, from its rough exterior, goes by the popular name of "velvet." This velvet is filled with arteries

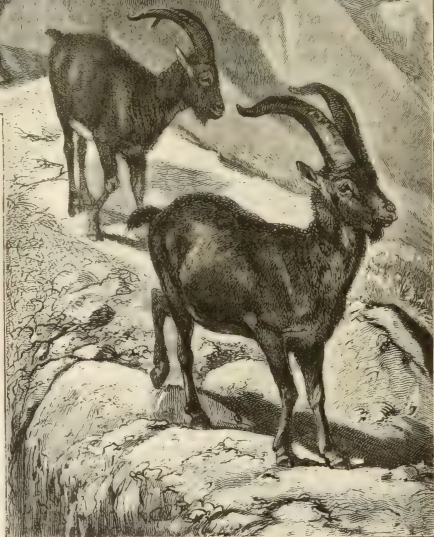


and veins, and from its interior surface the horn is secreted. The horn is, in fact, bony matter, having a much denser consistency than the bones of the limbs.

The velvet grows with wonderful rapidity, and on account of the great volume of blood which is forced into it, is extremely hot to the touch. It is also amply supplied with nerves, so that it is extremely sensitive.

Here is another beautiful provision of nature. If the velvet be injured the growth of the horn is hindered, and therefore the stag is warned by the sense of pain not to strike its budding horn against any hard substance. Consequently, as long as the velvet is on the horns, the animal can be approached with safety. In fact, it is in very much the same condition as a lobster which has lately cast its shell and is only clad with soft integument.

About September the horns have attained their full development, and must be freed from the velvet. This is done in a very simple manner. The horns having reached



Mountain Stonebucks.

their complete form, no more bony matter is needed for them, and it is accordingly deposited at the base, where it forms a thick, bony ring, called technically the "burr." As the burr increases in size, it encircles the blood vessels and gradually diminishes their

diameter, until at last it cuts off the supply of blood altogether.

Before the burr has done its work, the velvet would bleed copiously if it were wounded. Now, however, the supply of blood being stopped, the velvet begins to shrink and become dry, and can be rubbed off against the trees. At this period, a stag is anything but a pleasing object, the still

bleeding velvet hanging in strips from the horns.

What a wonderful chemistry is that of nature, which from mere grass-blades can extract sufficient bony matter, not only for the skeleton, but for the weighty antlers! In the great Irish elk, now only known in a fossil state, the horns actually weighed more than the whole of the skeleton, and



Stags.

yet were annually renewed. "All flesh is grass," and so is all bone.

Not until its sixth year does the stag attain its fully formed horns. Their object is simply as weapons, wherewith the stag fights for the possession of the females, the victor driving his vanquished antagonist out of the herd. In these encounters the horns are frequently broken. Were they permanent, the finest stag of the country would be placed at

a disadvantage, and unable to compete with a much weaker antagonist. But, as they are renewable, the crippled stag has only to wait until the following year, when he will be furnished with a new and effective set of weapons, and can take his proper place at the head of the herd.

THAT the domesticated animals are, like the cultivated plants, descendants of a wild

and useless ancestry is a well-known fact. Even that the camel must at one period have wandered the country at will is certain, though the epoch of its freedom is far beyond history. Few animals have undergone a more complete change of character and habits than the ass of the present day as it is seen in Europe. We are, and often with good reason, accustomed to look upon it as a down-trodden, broken-spirited slave, unworthy to serve the rich, and by a sort of pre-

scription belonging to the costermonger and his class.

There is little to remind us of its ancestry, and to tell us that it is descended from the wild ass (*Asinus hemippus*), a creature whose name is proverbial for speed, cunning, and love of liberty. Canon Tristram well points out that in the original Hebrew, Ishmael is spoken of as a "wild-ass man," whose hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him. The



Wild Asses.

same translation is given in the Revised Version.

No metaphor could be more forcible even at the present day. The animal is spread over a considerable portion of the earth's surface, some varieties living in the plains, while others, as in the illustration, prefer the lofty mountains. These animals are by some authors considered as distinct species, but I believe that the very slight differences of structure by which they are distinguished can be accounted for by influence of the localities in which they live.

The untameable character of the wild

ass is forcibly expressed in the Book of Job.

"Who hath sent out the wild ass free ?

"Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass ?

"Whose house I have made the wilderness,

"And the salt land his dwelling-place.

"He scorneth the tumult of the city,

"Neither heareth he the shouting of the driver.

"The range of the mountains is his pasture,

"And he searcheth after every green thing." xxxix. 5—8. Again, in Jer. ii. 24,

"Thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways, a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind in her desire; in her occasion who will turn her away?"

Both these quotations are from the Revised Version.

Even at the present time the chase of the wild ass is a favourite sport with those who can afford it, and to kill one of these wild, active, and wary animals is a feat that covers the successful huntsman with glory; and now and then a very young animal has been captured, but is of no use for the service of man.

The black stripes which run along the spine and across the shoulders are well-marked in this creature, but reach their full development in the zebra of the plains. In Burchell's zebra, the stripes only occupy the upper portion of the limbs, instead of reaching to the pasterns, and in the quagga they do not touch the limbs at all, and only extend as far as the flanks.

In the domesticated ass we find only two traits of character which remind us of its wild ancestry. One is the survival of its untameableness in the obstinacy for which

the ass is proverbial, and the other is its exceeding cunning.

It is well known that if a number of horses and an ass be confined in a field, and they make their escape, the ass is sure to be the liberator. Indeed, scarcely any fastening, except a lock, will baffle an ass that wants to open a gate. When well and tenderly treated (but not spoiled), the ass becomes quite a pleasant companion, affectionate, intellectual, and displays none of the obstinacy which is the only refuge of its ill-used relative.

CLOSELY allied to the celebrated chinchilla are two natives of America, one inhabiting the north and the other the south. The one is called the Prairie Dog (*Spermophilus ludovicianus*), and the other the Viscacha (*Spermophilus viscacha*). These creatures are almost identical in appearance and habits, and therefore need not be separately described. They gather together like rabbits, each having its own burrow. Their colonies are often of great extent, and in them the earth is so honeycombed with burrows, that it is not safe to ride through them except upon a horse which is to the manner born. The strangest part of their economy is, that the burrows are not only tenanted by the legitimate owners, but by an odd little long-legged owl (*Athene*, or *Speotyto cunicularia*), as well as by rattlesnakes. The snake is evidently an intruder, not to say usurper, but that the owl and prairie dog live together on friendly terms, there is abundant evidence.



Prairie Dogs.

The "dog towns," as these colonies are popularly called, are of very great extent, and present a most singular aspect. It is not easy to approach them without being detected, but a telescope will do much to annihilate distance.

At the mouth of each burrow there is a mound composed of the excavated earth, and on the tops of these mounds the prairie dog loves to sit upright, scanning the horizon, and keeping a sharp look out for danger. If it should take alarm, it gives a short dissyllabic bark, sounding like the word "Wen—cho," with a strong accent on the second syllable. In one moment the whole of the animals have disappeared, having plunged head foremost into their burrows. Presently they begin to poke their noses out of their burrows, and if they find that there is no need for fear, they gradually resume their former positions.

Although the animal is a rodent it has gained the name of dog from its barking cry.

I have often heard the bark and watched the creatures engaged in burrowing. Mrs. Montagu Turnbull had some years ago several prairie dogs. She had a large and deep

pit sunk in the ground and lined with boards, so that the animals could not escape. The pit was then nearly filled with earth, so that the prairie dogs lived practically the same life which they would have led in their own country.

When unmolested, the prairie dogs increase as fast as the rabbit does, as is shown by the following extract from an American newspaper:—

"The prairie dog is a standing menace against the future prosperity of the grazing districts of the State. Draw a line from the Red River south of Colorado, and you mark the front of the greatest immigration army ever dreamed of by man. From this line westwards, for two hundred and fifty miles, every square mile is infested by these devouring pests. They thickly inhabit a section of the country two hundred miles long, and two hundred and fifty wide.

"The advent of the white man has but increased their numbers, as man has destroyed the wolves, badgers, rattlesnakes, panthers, and other animals which prey upon the prairie-dogs. They eat the grass in summer and the grass roots in winter, and the consequence is, that what was but a few years ago the finest grazing region in America is fast becoming a verdureless desert. It is no exaggeration to say that £2,000,000 does not exceed the value of the grass annually consumed by the prairie-dogs in north-west Texas."

A REGULAR BAD UN.

BY THE REV. FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, M.A., AUTHOR OF "SENT BACK BY THE ANGELS," ETC.

I.

YES, Sammy's a sad un,
A radical he;
A regular bad un,
As ever you see.
His riot and tearing
And banging about
Is really past bearing—
It's wearing me out.
And rambling and roaming,
And larks in the lane—
Your cleaning and combing
Is labour in vain.
And as for his pinner—
It's ruin, I vow;
Clean on for his dinner—
And look at it now!
And scrubbing the tiles, ma'am,
And dusting the things,
It ain't worth your whiles, ma'am,
For mud as he brings.
And growing, and poking
His toes through his shoes!
Without any joking
We ought to be Jews.

Whatever's unlawful—
Oil, blacking, or ink—
I tell you it's awful
The things as he'll drink.
Then lost, and run over,
And choking, and fights—
My life ain't no clover
A-getting such frights.
It's mischief and shindy
Week, Sunday and all—
That hole in the windy
Was him and his ball.
And then there's his dad, ma'am,
A-taking his part,
And spoiling the lad, ma'am,
With toffee and tart.
No use now—not any—
A-climbing my knees!
And axing a penny!
Hear that, if you please!
You're allus a-stuffin'
And spoiling your tea;
No penny, you ruffin,
No penny from me.
It's a rod I'll be buying—
I'm sober, I am;—

I've set him off crying!
 Ah, mother's pet lamb!
 Look here now! what's this, lad?
 Then give me a kiss, lad—
 My own little Sam!

II.

A change in the house, ma'am—
 A sad un—you'll find;
 All still as a mouse, ma'am;
 I'll draw up the blind.
 No, no! I ain't fretting—
 He doeth all well!
 But, as for forgetting—
 Ah, mothers can tell!
 Yes, these is my riches,
 My jewels and gold—
 The jacket and breeches
 I made him of old.
 I brush 'em and air 'em,
 And lay 'em out right,
 As though he would wear 'em
 O' Saturday night.
 But no little Sammy
 Comes running anon,
 A-calling out, "Mammy,
 Just look at 'em on!"

When the housework is ending,
 Tow'rd's three of the clock,
 I still sit a-mending
 Some little grey sock.
 And sometimes—through thirsting
 And longing so sore—
 I *hear* him come bursting
 And banging the door,
 And jump up to hold him,
 And feed on his smiles—
 Oh, how could I scold him
 For soiling the tiles!
 All the gold ever minted
 I'd gladly give o'er
 To see his foot printed
 In mud on the floor.
 There's the bed where I laid him,
 My precious I night,
 And the quilt as I made him,
 So cosy and light.
 And now as he's lying
 Down under the mould,
 I'm waking and crying
 A-thinking he's cold.
 I know as it's blindness—
 Rebellious I am;
 The Shepherd in kindness
 Has folded His lamb.
 But oh! how I miss him,
 And hunger to kiss him,
 My own little Sam!

EXPERIENCES OF A METEOROLOGIST IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

By CLEMENT L. WRAGGE, F.R.G.S., F.R.Met.Soc., ETC.

PART II.—THE ADELAIDE PLAINS.

I WAS anxious to establish an observing-station by January 1st (1884), and during the fortnight subsequent to my arrival on December 6th (1883), I was occupied roaming about the city and suburbs in search of a house with premises adequate to my wants.

Come then, gentle reader, and mentally follow me in my rambles. Ere sallying forth, however, we must don silk coats and sun helmets, or, if we choose, the bushman's "wideawake"—for the blasts of the hot north-east wind are blowing from the interior like breath from some furnace; the atmosphere feels intensely scorching and dry; apples on the trees wither in such gusts, and ducks go shambling on the hot ground in most ludicrous fashion. Strange contrast after the equable temperatures and moisture experienced during the voyage!

This north-east wind presages the approach of a cyclonic depression from the west, as we shall hereafter understand, and the heated air from the plains of Central Australia is rushing southwards, being drawn towards the centre of the coming disturbance.

Let us take our stand on an adjacent knoll and survey the land. Some six miles to westward, glittering in the strong sunlight like a sheet of burnished copper, is the Gulf of St. Vincent, an arm of the Southern Ocean. We just espy the tawny sand-hills bordering the sea, and if we examined them we should find great banks of grit in ripples and curves of great mathematical beauty, with tracks of saurian lizards winding hither and thither. Generally speaking, the country is a plain from the Gulf ten miles eastward. There the Mount Lofty Hills, with curious rounded spurs and

deep intervening gullies, very fertile, bound the view. Of great geological interest is this plain. The seaboard portion is formed of rocks, stratified during the Cainozoic period, and since it will be interesting to learn something more respecting its formation, let us peer for a moment into the vistas of remote antiquity. In an æon long past, ere the foot of the aboriginal trod this southern land, the Mount Lofty range evidently formed the coast-line. Geologists say it was then a noble mountain chain, some nine times higher than at present, upheaved in ridges and crumples by foliation of the earth's crust caused by the throes of a cooling and contracting planet. This twisting and crumpling formed the beds of the now beautiful glens which slope towards the plains. But weathering agencies were at work in that remote period; winds and storms, far more energetic than now, came up from the west and commenced the work of wearing down; the upper reaches of the mountains were eaten away by denuding forces, the softer parts of the overlying strata going first—thus were formed new inclines and channels, stealthily carved out by the impetus given to rain-wash. Hence, in the course of ages, the hard core of pre-Cambrian or palæozoic rock was formed, the bulk remaining a monument of resistance to corroding influences, so that the Mount Lofty range is now a mere stumpy ridge compared with its ancient greatness; still it is over 2,000 feet high, and its old crust strikes under the plains to the ocean floor. Thus masses of disintegrated debris were deposited at lower levels, and ultimately at the bottom of a shallower sea, making a tertiary deposit, and these layers have since, by upheaval, become the Adelaide plains. This for geology.

Three miles from the foot of the hills lies pleasant Adelaide, surrounded by grand reserves or "park lands," skirted with belts of the native gum-tree. It was founded by Colonel Light in 1836, and named by him after the queen of William IV. The towers of the new post-office, town-hall, and numerous churches, for which Adelaide is famous, are tinted with that peculiar mellow glow so often seen in an oriental city, and give a decidedly Eastern touch to the picture. In front winds the River Torrens, separating the business portion from North Adelaide, the fashionable quarter. This latter contains St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral, the bishop's residence, and many beautiful mansions of local aristocracy. Between the city and the

hills are the popular suburbs of Norwood and Kensington, connected by tram-lines with other places named in honour of the old country, all embowered in luxuriant vegetation. On the slopes we see Magill, smiling amid acres of well-stocked vineyards. Farther south lies Glen Osmond at the foot of the range, and there nestles Mitcham, a great fruit and flower district. Glancing again towards the coast in a south-westerly direction we see Glenelg, the call-port of the P. and O. steamers, and a favourite watering-place. It is situated on Holdfast Bay, at the place where the first Governor of the Colony, Sir John Hindmarsh, R.N., landed in December, 1836, to take possession. An old gum-tree now marks the spot. Turning north-west, and moving on a short distance, we make out Port Adelaide, with its fleet of wool ships, eight miles from the city, and there go the broad-gauge trains running to and fro. Evidently our lines are cast in pleasant places: but let us away and take a tram-car to town. Passing charming villas, with windows carefully closed to keep out the hot wind, and then the cricket oval, near a fine reserve planted with grevilleas, figs, and pines, amid native timber, we cross the Torrens by a massive iron bridge. A spacious lake fills the channel, and features characteristic of Australia unite with those special to Southern Europe and the East, while anon, with the outriggers and pleasure-boats, the scene resembles the Thames at Kingston. The foliage of the dull-coloured gum contrasts with the sombre tints of the cypress and delicate green of the weeping willow, while the graceful fronds of the date-palm lend a special charm. Bamboo reeds fringe the water's edge, and English sparrows infest the bushes. There is the Rotunda, also, where bands discourse sweet music, and well-kept by-paths wind gracefully round about. We are now in King William Road. A long avenue of plane-trees in full leaf of summer lines the way, and against a sky, intenser than Italian blue, floats the Union Jack in Government House domain. Passing Parliament House, we enter King William Street, forty-one yards wide, the chief thoroughfare of Adelaide, and are struck by its beauty. It resembles a boulevard of Paris. Splendid buildings are on either side, and warehouses and shops filled with the luxuries and commerce of the world. Here and there are rows of the Moreton Bay fig, with its broad evergreen leaves. All is activity; hansom cabs, tram-cars, water-carts, and carriages give a dash of London life, and cries

of evening-paper boys are heard far and near. Passing several Chinese, Afghans, and Moormen, with a stray native pleading for "sax-pence" or a bit of tobacco, on we go towards the Post and Telegraph Office. It is a magnificent edifice of freestone, the terminal point of the famous trans-continental wire which hourly brings the latest news from the old country. Thousands of miles of wire radiate in all directions, connecting the colonies, and with a labyrinth of telephones call vividly to mind St. Martin's-le-Grand. The clock in the Victoria Tower (150 feet high) chimes the quarters, and the hour booms out in a rich tone, the counterpart of "Big Ben."

Hastening onwards, we determine to do the round of the city ere nightfall. By foot, tram, and cab we succeed, and return to our lodgings at sundown. For the moment we ask, Can this be Earth? The great red glow streams forth from the west in appalling grandeur, bathing the landscape in tints so unearthly as to call forth notions of wonderland and life on some other planet. We sit by open window after tea, and while courting the merest breath from the gulf and admiring the wondrous glow that now belts the horizon with blood-red light, awful to witness, are tormented by an army of flies and mosquitoes.

Adelaide is laid out to perfection. No other place can surpass it in this respect. It is nearly in the form of a square and is bounded by splendid esplanades—North, South, East, and West Terraces respectively. The streets are unusually wide, beautifully kept, and are at right angles to each other. Many contain charming avenues, and the Moreton Bay fig (*Ficus macrophylla*) seems the favourite tree for this purpose. Then there are magnificent public offices, great squares with cooling fountains, and spacious gardens, where trees of other countries thrive luxuriantly. Besides those already mentioned, I may name the olive and oleander in abundance, the graceful *Schinus molle*, a native of Peru, *sterculia*, tamarix, Norfolk Island pine, tropical cordylines, and many others giving remarkable instances of the congenial conditions offered to alien flora by the Australian soil and climate, and of the ease with which they become reconciled to their new home. In fact, after a peep at the famous Botanic Gardens, with the Museum of Economic Botany, which, under Dr. Schomburgk's able management, have become the fairyland of the southern hemisphere, it is impossible to resist the impression that the Australian continent as a whole is Nature's great reserve,

where every known plant, from the Arctics to the Tropics, finds some suitable habitat wherein to continue the struggle for existence.

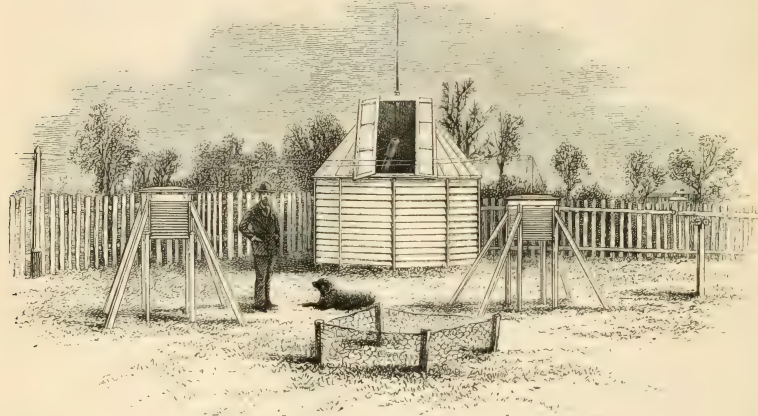
Then there is the railway-station, whence trunk lines start for Victoria and the "Far North." Here trucks may be seen crowded with produce from the agricultural and squatting districts and stacked with mallee wood cut from the Murray scrub. The former line traverses the Mount Lofty Hills by great engineering skill, and will soon be open right through to Melbourne and Sydney. The latter is rapidly pushing on, and in course of time will be extended right across to Port Darwin on the north coast. Then we saw the cattle and produce markets, and the fine Institute, Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery on North Terrace. Then past the new University, in the distance glimpsed the Asylum for the Insane, embowered in a mantle of green, and we admire the commodious hospital, built in the Italian style. Nor must we forget to mention the Zoological Gardens, well stocked with beasts, and ably directed by Mr. R. E. Minchin. Finally, we took our "nobbler" with host Ford at the well-known "York." And yet but a tithe of the chief features of Adelaide can be detailed in our summary. The various clubs, assembly-rooms, hotels, government offices, and banks, equal to any in Lothbury, can barely be referred to, and we are content to know that with the comforts and conveniences of civilised life we are almost as well provided as in great London itself. Land, we hear, has sold for £300 a foot.

Verily it is hard to realise, as one surveys the three thousand and odd acres covered by this enchanting place, with the fine macadamised roads converging from all directions, that not sixty years ago no human habitation was there but native "wurleys," where "black fellows" demolished their grubs and roast lizards unmolested; that within eighty miles is still the primitive bush of New Holland, bordering the Murray—the home of the kangaroo, and where luckless bushmen die from sheer exhaustion. Does it not speak volumes for British enterprise?

Next day we take the eastern suburb—Kent Town, Marryatville, Norwood, Kensington, and East Adelaide, and even reach Burnside, beautifully situated on the braes of the range, in full view of the glowing sea. We note the fine colleges of St. Peter and Prince Alfred, and especially noble specimens

of the tall poplar, very homelike. One looks in vain for signs of commercial depression, from which, we are told, the colony is suffering. All seems prosperous and happy—a very Utopia. The air is still intensely hot, about 97° in shade, though the wind has veered to north-west. We enter a green-grocer's shop and gladly make a purchase. Luscious strawberries from gardens in the hills, cherries, currants, and other English fruits are here displayed. The architecture of the numerous pleasant villas is decidedly striking to the English eye. Most of them are built of palæozoic rock obtained from a quarry at Glen Osmond; others are of limestone. The majority have no upper floor, and are roofed

with corrugated zinc. To every house of any pretension is attached an elegant verandah, elaborately ornamented in iron-work, and painted blue, brown, white, or green, according to taste. The effect is remarkably pretty. Such verandahs and balconies are frequently covered by festoons of luxuriant climbers, tropical and other kinds—such as *Dolichos lignosus*, *Boussingaultia basseloides*, passion-flowers, tacsonias, ipomeas, jasmines, many and more. Many are fitted with Japanese blinds, painted with all the art of Dai-nipon, and blinds of dark green linen are fixed on windows to mitigate the glare and heat. Gay-plumaged parrots, the sulphur-crested cockatoo, laughing jackass, and native magpie are



Torrens Observatory.

favourite pets, inhabiting pretty cages or merrily hopping round about. And the gardens of these villas are little Edens. All trees previously mentioned are found, with oranges and lemons, forming sweet-scented groves in great plenty. The spiny crests of the Norfolk Island pine, the rich contrasts of red and white oleander in full bloom, blue plumbago, Queensland fig, tufts of pampas, clumps of bamboo, dracena, agave and aralia blend together in lavish bowers—just ravishing bits of scenery. Intermingling are roses of all kinds, geraniums, petunias, verbenas, calceolarias, carnations, ixias, English hawthorn, and forget-me-not, and other shrubs and plants in full bloom far too numerous to mention. Great shells from

the Barrier Reef, *Tridacna gigas*, ornament the grounds, and miniature fountains and statuary add to the effect. Most houses have plots of orchard and kitchen garden, where British fruits and vegetables attain perfection.

Such dwellings usually contain from four to eight rooms, often furnished with great taste. We enter many for sale or to let. The kitchen is always counted as a "room," and each house contains a zinc shower-bath, with water supplied from reservoirs in the hills. Minton's ornamental tiles are in common use; so are electric bells—in fact, all the comforts of civilised life are to be had. Rents are high, £70 and upwards being charged for a six-roomed villa. If we have de-



Mount Lofty, from the Torrens Observatory.

scribed in some measure the average homes of well-to-do colonists having business in Adelaide, the dwelling of the artisan is not much inferior in point of comfort. It is a neat cottage-villa, with tiny verandah covered by a lush of creepers. A gay parterre and vegetable block are attached, in which the occupier takes a deep pride. The rooms of such houses, although ventilated, are miserably small, and to inhabit the kitchen, infested with swarms of flies, on hot-wind days is about as bad as sweltering in a steamer's stoke-hole in the Red Sea. And of course there are slums and back-ways dark—where are they not in populous centres? but from such a round the impression is formed that want and beggary are unknown, that the settler near Adelaide is happy and contented, a man of thrift and prudence, delighting in the pleasures of his home's pure atmosphere, and prospering accordingly. He is strong and robust, for the climate is salubrious and hot winds purify, though very trying, and sometimes fatal, to infants. His medicine is the gum-tree, whose leaves and oil conduce to health, and Bosisto's name is blessed in many a household. Some native woods, when burning, exhale delightful perfume, similar to that in Indian

bazaars, and the streets are redolent with sweet odours. Meat is very cheap, and other provisions even cheaper than at home. All these things we have noted on our tablets.

Suddenly we shudder; the sky is darkening, and a great murky sheet spreads up from south-west, threatening to envelop everything. Temperature has fallen many degrees, and the air is now comparatively chilly. The centre of the cyclonic disturbance, which approached with a "brickfielder,"* has just passed by, the wind has veered to south-west, and is now blowing in "busters" from the Southern Ocean. A dust storm is coming—'tis Australian snow. A few minutes and it is upon us, sweeping past in terrific volume. Whirlwinds of blinding dust tear down the streets, and objects are hidden by a pallium thicker than cloud-fog on Ben Nevis. I think of Mr. Omond carrying on my work there in the depth of winter. How would he like this? Soon it may rain as the dust-clouds lift. We now push on, more eager than ever to start an observatory to note these remarkable changes with the precision of science.

At length came Christmas, with its round

* The Colonial name for the dry, scorching north wind.

of festivity; Christmas Eve in Adelaide. The streets and verandahs are gaily decorated with boughs from the gum-trees, tamarix, shea-oak, fronds of the tree-fern, and branches of the date-palm. V.R. gas-jets and prince's feathers illumine the shops, replete with every delicacy. Chinese lanterns in strange devices are here and there, and later on comes the electric light. Vehicular traffic is suspended, and in Rundle Street is a sight not easily forgotten. All are there, one surging multitude in summer attire—the seamstress, the clerk, the merchant, the bushman with moleskins, paters, maters, infants, children—one jolly, good-natured crowd. There go a band of emigrant girls lately arrived, "old chums" and "new chums" mingle together, fellows are down from Barossa diggings, hand clasps hand, and away they go, bound for a "shout" at the nearest hotel. Yonder are kerbstone philosophers—gentlemen with lung-testers, strength-testers, galvanic batteries, and vendors of ices and divers nostrums, all yelling their trade in stentorian tones. 'Tis a merry time. Trips to the cooler hills,* strawberry picnics, bathing-parties, and cricket matches rapidly succeed during Christmas week. All is festivity and joy.

Thus in these rambles have we gained a

* Temperature averages 10 degrees lower on Mount Lofty than at Adelaide, but of this more in Part III.

larger experience of Adelaide ways than can here be detailed. The population of the city alone approaches forty thousand, or sixty thousand within a ten-mile radius from the post-office. Many are Germans, most esteemed colonists; Chinese also are numerous. The Adelaideans as a body are a kind-hearted, ingenuous people, the embodiment of colonial hospitality and good-will. No subjects more loyal has our beloved Queen throughout the Empire. Her joyous anniversaries are strictly observed as public holidays, and made the occasions of general festivity; even mites of children attempt the National Anthem on their penny whistles.

Just after Christmas I secured a two-story-house, with land, at Walkeroot, a pretty suburb two miles north-east from Adelaide, near the banks of the Torrens, and forthwith christened it the "Torrens Observatory." On January 1st, 1884, I commenced observations with the same instruments used at Ben Nevis and Fort William, and these have been continued by myself or assistant to the present day. Later in the year I established a station in connection on the summit of Mount Lofty, for investigating climatic problems and vertical barometric gradients, following the lines I adopted in the Highlands. The results obtained are remarkable. I shall specially refer to them in Part III.

THE STARS: ARE THEY SUNS?

By PROFESSOR R. GRANT, LL.D., F.R.S.

FIRST PAPER.

THE spectacle presented by the starry heavens has in all ages attracted the attention of mankind. What may be those innumerable bodies which light up with their glory the celestial vault? Whence does it arise that while some stars are conspicuous for their lustre, others shine by a light so faint that they are barely visible to the naked eye? What may be that star of surpassing splendour which sometimes adorns the western sky after the sun has gone down, at other times heralds with its dazzling lustre the morning dawn? What may be the distances, magnitudes, and movements (if any) of those myriads of bodies? What can be learnt respecting their physical constitution, and in what relation do they stand to man and the terrestrial body which constitutes his dwelling-place in the universe? Such are some of the questions which occur

to the thoughtful contemplator of this wondrous spectacle.

Before entering upon a consideration of the question which is intended to form the groundwork of our remarks, it may be well to take a general survey of the more obvious phenomena presented by the stars. One of the first impressions produced by the magnificent spectacle of the stellar heavens is the apparently innumerable multitude of luminaries which are everywhere visible to the eye. This, however, is a pure illusion. Some astronomers have devoted special attention to counting the number of stars which may be seen with the naked eye, and the result has been that even to persons gifted with more than ordinary powers of vision there are not so many as four thousand stars at any time visible above the horizon. But a very different result presents itself when the heavens

are surveyed through a telescope. Countless numbers of stars then come into view which were previously invisible, and the more powerful the telescope used, the greater the number of stars revealed to observation, until finally the conclusion is arrived at that the number of stars visible in the heavens is limited only by the optical capacity of the instrument which the observer may employ in his survey. A familiar illustration of this is furnished by the well-known group of stars known as the Pleiades. Surveyed with the naked eye this interesting object is seen to consist of only some six or seven stars; but when observed with an ordinary opera-glass the entire field of view is filled with a beautiful congeries of distinct stars. The great astronomer, Sir William Herschel, who far surpassed all other astronomers in the profundity of his explorations of the stellar heavens, has left upon record some striking results of his observations illustrative of the immense multitude of stars which a powerful telescope is capable of revealing. It may be proper to remark that when the stars are surveyed even with a telescope of moderate capacity they are seen travelling in quick succession through the field of view of the instrument, an optical illusion attributable to the diurnal revolution of the earth upon its axis. Herschel, while engaged in surveying some regions of the Milky Way, found that in the short interval of a quarter of an hour as many as 116,000 stars passed through the field of his telescope. On another occasion he estimated that in forty-one minutes there passed in review before him the immense number of 258,000 stars.

The modern system of astronomy supposes the sun to be placed in the centre of the solar system, while the planets, including the earth, which is regarded as a planet, revolve in orbits of various magnitudes around it. Placed at an amazing distance beyond is the sphere of the fixed stars. It was argued by the opponents of Copernicus, who propounded this system about the middle of the sixteenth century, that if the earth really revolved around the sun, the stars if viewed at intervals of six months, or when the earth was at opposite extremities of a diameter of its orbit, ought by reason of their altered distance to present a notable difference of aspect in the two positions. To this Copernicus is said to have replied that the orbit of the earth is a mere point in comparison with the inconceivable distance of the fixed stars. This

doctrine once admitted, it followed as a necessary consequence that the stars must shine by a light inherent in their structure, for it was impossible that they could be visible at such a distance if they shone merely by the reflected light of the sun. This conclusion was strengthened by the varying aspect which the planets present when viewed in different parts of their orbits. A striking illustration of this was afforded by the planet Mars. When it approached nearest to the earth it almost rivalled Jupiter in lustre, but when it was travelling in the remoter parts of its orbit it dwindled away in brightness so as to resemble only a star of the second magnitude. It was an obvious sequel then to the Copernican theory that the innumerable luminaries which adorn the stellar vault are bodies shining by an intrinsic light.

But a great advance had yet to be made in astronomy before the Copernican system of the universe could be generally accepted as the true interpretation of the phenomena of the heavens. The ancient philosophy as expounded in the writings of Aristotle still continued to exercise a dominant influence in all the great seats of learning in Europe. In accordance with the dogmas of this school it was possible to explain the phenomena of the physical universe by the application of abstract principles based upon purely ideal considerations of the natural fitness of things. Thus it was affirmed that the celestial bodies are perfect and immutable, and that consequently their movements must be performed either in circles (which they regarded as the most perfect of curves) or in a combination of circles. Hence originated the famous theory of epicycles which formed the groundwork of the ancient astronomy. It was reserved for Kepler to expose the baselessness of this theory by his grand discovery of the elliptical form of the planetary orbits. It was impossible, however, to persuade the adherents of the reigning philosophy that the earth which is opaque, and which they imagined to be placed immovable in the centre of the universe, is in reality a celestial body revolving like the resplendent planets, Mercury and Venus, in an orbit round the sun. Galileo, by means of his beautiful telescopic discoveries, destroyed for ever the illusions of the schoolmen. It is difficult to realise in the present day the enthusiasm with which the announcement of these discoveries was received throughout all Europe. Turning upon Jupiter his tiny instrument, the fruit of his own inventive

genius, he perceived that the planet presented a round disc like the sun or moon, and was attended by four satellites revolving round it. Here then was a most interesting relation of affinity established between the planet and the earth. Equally interesting was the appearance presented by Venus when viewed with the telescope, the planet, as in the case of the moon, exhibiting a succession of phases depending on its position with respect to the sun and the earth. It was manifest from this circumstance that the planet was an opaque body like the earth, and was indebted to the reflected light of the sun for its resplendent lustre. The moon wore by no means the smooth uniform aspect which the advocates of the reigning philosophy affirmed to be an essential characteristic of all the celestial bodies. On the contrary, the entire surface exhibited irregularities of structure as in the case of the earth. It was possible in many instances to discern the long dark shadows cast by the more elevated regions, while a little beyond the boundary of light and darkness there might be seen isolated specks of light, indicative of lofty mountain tops which had already caught the rays of the rising sun, while the plains beneath still lay buried in darkness. The sun too, instead of exhibiting the uniform aspect which it presented to the naked eye, was diversified by dark spots of irregular form and magnitude, which when examined from day to day were found to be in a condition of perpetual change.

The telescopic discoveries of Galileo communicated an immense impulse to an idea respecting the stars which had already occurred to the minds of scientific men, namely, that the innumerable stars which light up the stellar vault are so many suns rolling in the illimitable regions of space at an inconceivable distance beyond the limits of the solar system, and rivaling the sun in magnitude and splendour. Every advance made in stellar astronomy since the time of Galileo has served to confirm this grand view of the stars.

The sun, which exceeds the earth in magnitude more than a million of times, is the great central body whence is diffused light and heat to the various planets revolving round it. Justly might Copernicus call it the torch of the world. To us inhabitants of the earth, the sun is of all the celestial bodies more especially an object of paramount interest. It is due to the benign influence of this luminary that man and all kinds of animals exist upon the earth; that

trees, plants, and flowers decorate with their glory its surface; that seas, lakes, and rivers minister to the wants of man and inspire him with a sense of the beautiful in such a multiplicity of forms; that clouds distil fatness upon the earth, and that the winds of the atmosphere waft over the earth's surface the watery vapour which brings in its wake fertility and gladness. In these and a thousand other channels is the beneficent influence of the sun seen to operate. Need we wonder then that, in the earlier stages of man's history, there have been nations which have prostrated themselves down before the sun as the object of their profound adoration, as the most appropriate emblem which their imaginations could conceive of the supreme source whence is diffused so abundantly all that is good and all that is beautiful in nature?

And yet this glorious object of creation, when viewed by the light of modern physics, appears destined to share the fate of all created things. Like a clock that is wound up and then runs its course, the conditions of its physical constitution do not imply more than a definite period of activity. At the close of that period its functions as a sun will cease, although millions of years may elapse before such an eventuality will occur.

Allusion has been made to the doctrine of the ancient philosophers respecting the immutability of the heavens. The science of astronomy has effectually exposed the fallacy of this idea. New stars have appeared from time to time in the heavens, and changes of brightness, both irregular and periodic, have been established in the case of a great number of stars by the researches of modern astronomers. One or two examples will serve to illustrate this important fact.

In the time of Hipparchus, the great astronomer of antiquity, about the year 130 A.D., there appeared a new star in the heavens. Pliny states that the apparition of this extraordinary phenomenon was the motive which induced Hipparchus to undertake his stupendous work of recording the positions of all the stars visible in the celestial sphere, in order that future astronomers might ascertain the changes which in the lapse of ages were occurring in the stellar heavens.

The earlier annals of Europe contain records of similar phenomena which had been observed in different ages. Coming down to more modern times, we find that in the year 1572 a new star of extraordinary splendour suddenly appeared in the constellation

Cassiopeia. Tycho Brahé, the celebrated Danish astronomer, who lived in the time of the apparition of this star, and who carefully observed it during its visibility, has left upon record a mass of valuable details respecting it. The star was first seen on the evening of the 11th of November, 1572. It surpassed in lustre the brightest of the fixed stars and even the planet Jupiter, although the latter was then in the position most favourable for observation—indeed it was considered to almost rival Venus in brightness, and, like that planet, could be seen by some persons in the daytime. It continued to shine with undiminished splendour throughout the remainder of November. Henceforward it shone with a gradually fainter lustre, and finally ceased to be visible in the month of March of the following year. The generation which witnessed this marvellous phenomenon had hardly passed away when another new star of equal splendour appeared in the constellation *Serpentarius*. This star appeared in the autumn of 1604. When first seen it surpassed the brightest stars of the first magnitude, and even the planets Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, which were all in its vicinity. Some observers were of opinion that it was almost equal in lustre to the planet Venus. Like its prototype of the preceding century it soon began to decline in brightness, and ultimately disappeared towards the close of 1605. Some remarkable apparitions of a similar kind have been observed in the present century. So late as 1866 a new star was perceived in the constellation of the Northern Crown. When first seen (in the month of May) it resembled in brightness a star of the second magnitude, but it rapidly became fainter and finally ceased to be visible in the month of October of the same year. Sometimes a new star has appeared in the midst of a nebula, and after astonishing astronomers for a few weeks or months by its presence, has gradually faded away and ceased to be visible. There is a nebula in the heavens called by astronomers 80 *Messier*. Seen with a telescope of considerable power it is resolved into a beautiful globular cluster of very minute stars. On the 21st of May, 1860, a new star was perceived in the nebula. It then resembled in brightness a star of the sixth magnitude, but, as in other similar cases, it became fainter and soon ceased to be visible. Quite recently, in the autumn of 1885, there appeared a new star in the well-known nebula of *Andromeda*. As in the preceding instance, it resembled, when first seen, a star

of the sixth or seventh magnitude, but like that object too, it soon faded away and ceased to be visible.

Many stars which occupy a permanent place in the heavens have been discovered to be subject to a change of brightness. In some of these cases the fluctuations of brightness are irregular, in others they have been found to be periodical, passing through a cycle of changes of brightness in a given time. Of the former class a most interesting example is furnished by the star *Eta* in the Constellation *Argo*. From the time of *Halley* (1677), when it was classed as a star of the second magnitude, it has been found to be subject to a succession of changes of brightness. In 1837 it appeared as a star of the second magnitude. In the beginning of 1838 it exhibited a sudden increase of brightness surpassing all the fixed stars with the exception of *Sirius*, *Canopus*, and *Alpha Centauri*. Afterwards it diminished in lustre, dwindling down to the brightness of a star of the first magnitude. In April, 1843, it again increased in splendour, inasmuch that it now surpassed *Canopus* and almost rivalled *Sirius* in brilliancy. It subsequently diminished in lustre, and in 1863 it equalled in brightness only a star of the sixth magnitude.

Of the second class of stars, those which undergo periodic variations of brightness, there are many interesting instances. We shall confine ourselves to one illustration. The star in question is situated in the Constellation *Cetus*. It is generally invisible to the naked eye for about five months. It then gradually increases in brightness until it resembles a star of the second magnitude, and after remaining in this stage of brightness for fifteen days, it gradually gets fainter, until after the lapse of three months it again returns to the state of complete invisibility. It passes through the cycle of its various phases of brightness in a period of little more than three hundred and thirty-one days. More than a hundred of such stars—variable stars, as they are called—have been already discovered by the persevering labours of modern astronomers, and the number is continually receiving accessions from fresh discoveries.

Reference has already been made to the discovery by *Galileo* of spots on the sun. These phenomena have been watched by astronomers in each succeeding generation, and the interesting conclusion has been arrived at that the frequency of the spots on the sun's disc is periodic, completing the cycle of its

changes in about eleven years. The researches of modern astronomers have furthermore established the important fact that the exterior surface of the sun is surrounded by an envelope of incandescent gaseous matter consisting mainly of hydrogen. From this envelope, which has been termed the chromosphere, there are to be seen frequent outbursts of glowing gas, to which the name of prominences has been given. Careful observations of the chromosphere have established the existence of sudden outbursts of this incandescent gaseous matter ascending to a prodigious height above the surface of the sun, and travelling with an inconceivable velocity through space. The phenomenon of the eruption may last several hours, in some instances it lasts even days. The velocity of the erupted matter has been ascertained in one instance to amount to one hundred and fifty miles in a second, and the height attained by it before it begins to dissipate or return to the sun's surface is not infrequently fifty thousand miles. This may serve to give some idea of the awful hurricanes which are constantly taking place on the sun's surface.

We are here presented with an interesting bond of physical affinity existing between the sun and the stars. The researches of astronomers have abundantly established the existence of physical changes occurring in the stellar regions, and the results of especially modern astronomical inquiries have furnished overwhelming testimony in support of the existence of physical changes perpetually occurring in the sun. Here then we have one of the many great facts derivable from the science of astronomy in support of the doctrine that the innumerable stars of the celestial vault are so many distant suns, and that the sun is no other than a star.

We see also in these changes, which have been demonstrated by observation to be perpetually occurring in the sun and the stars, a complete refutation of the absurd doctrine of the ancient schoolmen respecting the celestial bodies, as being eternally immutable bodies of a smooth round structure, without any trace on their surfaces of physical changes such as we see on the earth. In this connection how admirably does Galileo remark :—"If the earth were a smooth round body, what else would it be but a most unblest desert, void of plants, of animals, of men, and of cities; the abode of silence and inaction; senseless, lifeless, soulless, and devoid of all those ornaments which make it so diversified and so beautiful?"

It appears, then, that the heavens abound in phenomena indicative of changes perpetually affecting the great bodies of the universe. Whether it be the resplendent orb which diffuses its genial life-sustaining influence over the planetary system, or whether it be the innumerable luminaries which send their light from afar athwart the illimitable regions of space, the observations of astronomers furnish unequivocal proof of the occurrence of such changes. It is interesting to trace the gradual development of our mental conception of this great law of nature. Things which at one time seemed to typify permanence and strength we afterwards come to look upon as objects of creation merely endued with a somewhat longer term of existence than the insect which flutters about for a few short hours and then dies. The monarch of the forest may for ages defy the fury of the blast, but the day is approaching when he too must succumb to the same inevitable law of nature. Countless generations yet unborn may contemplate with admiration and awe the waters of the great river as they fling themselves over the lofty precipice, displaying so impressive a symbol of irresistible power; but the rocks which vainly strove to stem the mighty stream will one day cease their warfare, and the thunder of the waters will be hushed into silence. Nay, the everlasting hills, which for ages have reared their proud crests to heaven in defiance of the warfare of the elements, and which we have been accustomed to associate in our minds with all that is enduring in nature, may one day, as we gather from the teachings of science, constitute the bed of the ocean. And now we are led by observation to conclude that even the great bodies of the universe have also the lineaments of a transient existence impressed upon their structures.

Are there, then, no ideas of fixedness associated in our minds with the marvellous discoveries which the researches of astronomers have unfolded to us respecting the celestial bodies? To this we would reply that there are. In the investigation of the unalterable laws which govern the ever-changing phenomena of the material universe, and in pursuing those laws to their remoter consequences, the earnest inquirer discovers an inexhaustible field of intellectual contemplation which renders him proof against the bewildering influence of the infinite variety of objects which meet the untutored eye. The same remark, it may be stated, is manifestly applicable to human life, with all its vicissi-

tudes and seeming contrarieties. Is life but a flitting panorama, with no principle of fixedness that we can lay hold of? Is it merely a frail barque tossed upon the ocean of time, with no sheet-anchor to preserve it from being finally engulfed in the ocean of everlasting change? In this case also a beneficent remedy is available. There are im-

planted in us ideas of eternity and unchangeableness which no apparent contrarieties are capable of affecting. Truth is eternal. The principles of moral right and wrong are unalterable and eternal. The hope that is in us is eternal, and will ever be present to guide and support the right-minded inquirer as he pursues the arduous journey of life.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

By WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER L.—THE LEYTONS.

SIR JAMES LEYTON was a rich stock-broker, with a fine house at the West End. But he preferred comfort to ostentation, and made less show than many men who were far worse off. Although he liked now and then to have a few celebrities to dinner, the society he most affected was that of people of his own class. He had two sons, the elder of whom was married and his partner. Sidney, the younger, who had graduated at Cambridge and spent a year in Germany studying political economy, was now making the tour of the world, preparatory to becoming a student at the Middle Temple and entering public life, for Sir James believed that his second son was a genius, and would some day be a statesman. The knight was nearly seventy, but hale and well preserved, and his long white hair, ruddy countenance, and rather jaunty carriage made him one of the most conspicuous figures in the neighbourhood of Capel Court. The dame was ten years younger than her lord, and looked no older than her age. Her hair was only just beginning to turn grey; her complexion was high; she was stout without being corpulent; of good presence; and her general appearance bespoke a well-fed body and a contented if not an indolent mind.

Lady Leyton gave Vera a warm welcome, in part, perhaps, because she was so agreeably surprised. She knew that the girl had been brought up in a peasant family, and her idea of a *paysanne* was a broad-set young woman with big red hands and wooden shoes, sheepish in look and rough in manner. But here was a veritable young lady, with a refined and winsome face, becomingly if plainly attired, and, whatever else she might be, anything but rough in manner.

"I am very glad to see you, my dear,"

she said, kissing her. "You must be very tired, I am sure. You had better go up-stairs and take off your things. Come, I will show you to your room myself. The odd man will take up your boxes. I am glad you have brought your maid. It will be a comfort to have somebody you can talk to in your own language, won't it? Mr. Artful, you will stay and take dinner with us, of course. Sir James will be at home in an hour, and you can tell him all your news, you know."

But the lawyer begged to be excused. He must go home and report himself to Mrs. Artful. He would see Sir James at his office in the city to-morrow.

Vera was shown into a bedroom the like of which she had never seen before, or even imagined, and the entire house seemed to her a very temple of luxury. For the Leyton establishment, albeit not on an extravagant scale, was exceedingly well mounted. Nothing in the way of comfort was wanting that money could provide, and the servants were trained to perfection. But the extreme deference with which they treated her and their mistress annoyed Vera. It ran counter to all her ideas of equality and human dignity that her fellow-creatures should address her with bated breath and downcast eyes, as if she were a superior or even a supernatural being.

She had often heard M. Senarclens speak of *bourgeois* families who lived luxurious lives, and whose chief concern was their own personal comfort, and this seemed to be a typical family of the class. At dinner, although there were only Sir James, Lady Leyton, and herself, they were waited on by two men-servants.

"Why could not these men be doing something useful," thought Vera, "cutting down trees in the forest, or working in the fields? A girl could very well change our

plates and hand round the *legumes*. And what a degradation! If I were a man I would rather break stones than earn my bread by standing behind another man's chair and helping him to eat."

The current of her thoughts was turned by Sir James, who had received her with great kindness, speaking of her father and grandfather.

"A shrewd old gentleman was your grandfather, Miss Hardy," he said; "none shrewder in the City of London. Quite the architect of his own fortune; made it all himself, just as I have done. Your father was very different, though. He and I were always good friends, but I do not think he could ever have made a fortune."

"He did better than make a fortune," replied the girl. "He devoted himself to a great cause."

"A great cause?"

"Yes, the redemption of Italy."

"Ah! I understand. Yes, very true. But if your grandfather had not made a fortune he could not have gone abroad. He would have had to stay at home and work. So you see that your grandfather's fortune helped to redeem Italy. Even a great cause has need of money. Very little can be done without money in this world, Miss Hardy."

This was a consideration which had not occurred to Vera before, and it suggested a new use for her fortune. She might devote a part of it to the redemption of oppressed nationalities. Rome, for instance, was still under the domination of France, and when the social revolution foretold by M. Senarcens came to pass—

"However," went on Sir James, after being helped to some more claret, "you will not be without money, thanks to your grandfather. The estate has greatly improved since your grandfather's death. I have seen to the investments myself—they are all in the soundest stocks. None of your doubtful foreign loans or bogus trading companies for me. All Indian Consols and British railway preference stock. Yes, Miss Hardy, you will be very rich. Your income will be more than a hundred thousand a year. What will you do with it?"

"Make as many people happy as I can," answered Vera, who had the vaguest possible idea as to the "purchasing power" of the sum in question.

"That means you will give it away, I suppose," said Sir James drily. "I do not think you will, though. You will think very differently three years hence; and political economists

say that there is nothing more demoralising than promiscuous giving."

Vera made no answer. She did not understand political economy, and it was evident that Sir James Leyton did not understand her. Shortly after dinner Lady Leyton, observing that her young guest looked tired, and remembering that she had been travelling all day and all night, suggested that she had, perhaps, better go to bed; and on this hint Vera, who could hardly keep her eyes open, was only too glad to act.

"She is not at all what I expected," said Lady Leyton.

"Why, what did you expect?"

"I feared she might be coarse and uncultured. But she is really quite clever, and when she has learnt to use her knife and fork properly, and one or two things of that sort, will be quite presentable. She not only knows French quite well, which in the circumstances is not to be wondered at, but I think also German and Italian."

"She seems to have rather wild ideas, though."

"I do not know much about her ideas, but she has a very scanty wardrobe. I must take her to-morrow to Madame Florissant, and order her some new gowns. I was thinking——"

"Yes," said Sir James, seeing that his wife hesitated. "You were thinking——"

"That it would be nice if Sidney——"

"Could help Miss Vera to take care of her fortune. You are quite right. She will require somebody to take care of it; why not Sidney?"

"He cannot be long now."

"He may be here any day. But I don't think I should say anything to her, if I were you."

"Oh dear no. But I will watch. And I should not be surprised if Sidney were to fall in love with her at once, and she with him. He is young, and the girl is graceful and good-looking. All we have to do is to keep possible rivals as much as possible at a distance."

The next day the ladies went to Madame Florissant's.

"You will be able to speak to her in her own language," said Lady Leyton.

So there was held a polyglot conversation, Madame Florissant and Vera speaking French, Lady Leyton English. The dressmaker wanted to attire Miss Hardy in the height of fashion, which was just then anything but æsthetic. Vera demurred.

"But you will look so odd if you are not



A HIGHLAND FUNERAL.

A STUDY IN BLACK AND WHITE. BY W. LOCKHART BOGLE.

dressed like other people," urged Lady Leyton.

"I would rather look odd than hideous," was the reply, "but I do not think I shall look so very singular. Could you not do something like this, Madame Florissant?" and taking a pencil and a piece of paper, she outlined, in a few rapid strokes, a costume which, though not a wide departure from the prevailing mode, avoided its worst features, and was pretty and becoming.

"It is not bad," said the dressmaker, "not at all, but it is not what people are wearing. Still, if you like, I will make your costumes *comme ça*."

"I do like," answered Vera, rather peevishly; and though some further objection was offered, she got her way.

"It is quite true," thought Lady Leyton; "she is a strange girl, and has some wild ideas, very wild. She will have to be managed."

"Where are the poor?" asked Vera, as they drove homeward. She had read somewhere a vivid description of the extremes of poverty and wealth to be found in London, and rather expected to see the streets crowded with beggars.

"There are not many poor in this neighbourhood," said Lady Leyton; "they live more in the East, and about Fulham and there. A great deal is being done for them just now. My husband subscribes to several City charities; and when Mr. Softly—that is our clergyman—mentions any deserving case, I always give him something."

"Are they very poor—those people at Fulham and the East? Do you ever go amongst them?"

"No, my dear, I leave that to the leisured and the young. I have neither the strength nor the time."

Later in the day they drove in the Park, and Vera was astonished beyond measure at the number of splendid equipages, fine horses, and well-dressed people she saw, and wondered more than ever what the poor of London were like in that mysterious East which she had not yet seen.

CHAPTER LI.—VERA IN LONDON.

WHEN Vera gave Georgette Senarclens an account of her new home, she mentioned among other things that Monsieur and Madame Leyton were very religious, that they had prayers four or five times a day, by which she meant grace before meat, and morning and evening family worship. But this inference though natural—Vera having

arrived on a Saturday evening and retired early—was mistaken, the practice in question being confined to Sundays, for Sir James was a firm believer in the conventional duty that by strict attention to his religious duties on the first day of the week a man may compound with heaven for over-worldliness and, perhaps, a little sharp practice in business, on the other six.

Lady Leyton, like her husband, was strictly orthodox, and except when the weather was too hot, or too wet, or too cold, or she did not feel quite strong, an assiduous church-goer. On the Sunday after her arrival Vera, as in duty bound, accompanied her hostess to morning service, and her ladyship was gratified to see that she paid great attention and listened with seeming interest to Mr. Softly's interesting sermon, in which he sharply rebuked the sin of discontent and showed that everybody had very much to be thankful for. Lady Leyton said she quite agreed with him, and when they were comfortably seated in the brougham asked Vera how she liked "our Anglican ritual."

"Very much," said Vera, not quite knowing what "Anglican ritual" meant, but making a shrewd guess; "the singing was beautiful, and the church is a very fine building. But I thought it was a Protestant church, Lady Leyton."

"So it is. Why should you think it is not?"

"I was once in a Catholic church at Sion and they seem so much alike."

"Well, the service at St. Saviour's is very musical, if that is what you mean. But we are Protestants, all the same—the Church of England, you know. You shall read the Thirty-Nine Articles, and you will see for yourself. Were you never in an English church before?"

"Never."

"Then you were brought up as a Dissenter. I am sorry for that. I don't like Dissent."

"I don't know what you mean by Dissent," said Vera looking puzzled. "I think you would like the church to which I went when I was at school—there is not much church-going at La Boissière—a Calvinistic church."

"Precisely. It is not an Episcopal church. You had no bishops, I mean."

"No," said Vera smiling. "We had no bishops."

"Then it must be as I say," returned Lady Leyton positively. "You have been brought up as a Dissenter. The church you attended was not an Established Church."

"I beg your pardon," said Vera, now beginning to understand what Lady Leyton was driving at, "it is an Established Church—the public church of Canton Vaud."

"And it is Calvinistic?"

"It is Calvinistic."

"Dear me, how very strange! In Canton Vaud, then, I should be a Dissenter. However, that is no reason why you should be a Dissenter here, my dear. You must be instructed. After luncheon you shall read the Thirty-Nine Articles, and I will lend you a little book which I am sure you will like. It is called 'Our Church.' You will find its teachings quite in accordance with the New Testament."

So Vera spent the afternoon in reading the Thirty-Nine Articles and the New Testament. She had not opened a Bible since she left school, and then only as a class book, and she found much in its pages that touched both her conscience and her heart. She came to its perusal with a fresh mind, it took her out of herself, strengthened her good resolutions, and re-kindled that reverence for the character of Christ which she had felt in her childhood when her father told her the story of His sufferings and His death, for Philip Hardy was a revolutionist of the type of Mazzini, not of Proudhon. In the teaching of Christ and His disciples Vera saw a striking resemblance to much that she had heard from M. Senarcles, and albeit the historian was no believer in external religion, it seemed to her that both in his principles and his life he came much nearer to the Christian ideal than the respectable Protestants among whom her lot was now cast. She wondered what the Rev. Mr. Softly (who, as Lady Leyton had told her, was very popular in society) would make of such passages as, "If thou wouldst be perfect sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor," and "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world," and what would have been made of them by a preacher of the Primitive Church.

But whatever might be the shortcomings of the knight and his lady in the matter of religion, they treated her with all kindness and consideration. As the days went on, moreover, the strangeness of things wore off and Vera fell unconsciously into the ways of her new home. She liked London. The bustle, the immensity, and the variety of the vast city delighted as much as they amazed her. The National Gallery, which Lady

Leyton took her to see, was a fresh world to her, an earthly Paradise. The theatre was another. And there were other diversions. Mrs. Reginald Leyton (the elder son's wife) had her down at Richmond, took her to boating and garden parties, introduced her to her friends, and made much of the beautiful heiress. When Vera returned to town there were drives in the Park, visiting and receiving visits; Lady Leyton took her for a few days to Hastings, and Vera wandered for the first time on the sea-shore, and listened to the music of the waves. When she had time she painted, and several hours every week she worked in the studio of a celebrated artist. It was only occasionally that she gave a thought to Switzerland and M. Senarcles, but always when she did so her conscience accused her: she owned to herself that she was in danger of forgetting the noble lessons her friend had taught her, and proving recreant to the cause in which he had once welcomed her as a promising recruit. So far from devoting herself to the reform of society and the redemption of the disinherited, she did nothing but amuse herself and was fast becoming as selfishly *bourgeoise* as Lady Leyton, who had hardly a thought that did not centre in herself or her family. At such times as these Vera would resolve to take an entirely new departure, to go amongst the poor, or do something equally heroic, on the very next day; but the morrow brought so many distractions, diversions, and amusements, that it seemed impossible to carry her design into effect. It was either her painting lesson or her singing lesson, or tickets had been taken for the opera, or some new play, or she had agreed to go out for a drive, or accepted an invitation to afternoon tea, and her good resolutions were forgotten almost as fast as they were formed. In other words, she was only a girl. M. Senarcles had not succeeded in turning her either into a socialist philosopher or a fanatical philanthropist.

Vera had neither forgotten Balmaine nor her promise to see Cora, but she could not recall the latter's address, and for some reason for which she was unable to account or hesitated to acknowledge, even to herself, she delayed for a long while asking Alfred a second time where his cousin was to be found. At length she mustered up courage to write to him; and in due course came the answer, very polite and proper, altogether *comme il faut*, yet disappointing. It seemed to lack something. He wrote without

warmth, said very little about her, and hardly anything about himself. She threw the letter from her with a sense of annoyance and irritation, and then felt vexed with her own annoyance. Why should she feel annoyed? What difference did it make to her how he wrote? Then she took up the letter and read it again. He was glad to hear that she was well and enjoying herself, and that she liked London, and he felt quite sure that his cousin (whose address he enclosed) would be delighted to see her. That was all, and there could not easily have been less. Vera little knew what severe restraint Balmaine had put upon himself in writing that letter—how hard he had found it to write so formally and coldly; how, looking upon his love as foolishness and herself as hopelessly beyond his reach, he was resolved to give his passion nothing to feed upon, and to treat her—and so far as possible think of her—as no more than a mere acquaintance.

"Perhaps," she soliloquised, after a long reverie, in the course of which she more than decided not to go near Cora, "he is in low spirits or indifferent health. I will see his cousin."

So the next day she wrote to Cora, asking when it would be convenient for the latter to receive her. Cora, in a very cordial letter, named an hour at which she was nearly always at home. When Vera told Lady Leyton that she was going to call on a friend in Bloomsbury Square, her ladyship offered her the brougham, but doubting whether it would be kind, and feeling sure that it would be in bad taste to flaunt a fine equipage in the face of a poor friend, Vera declined the offer, rather to her hostess's surprise. Taking Gabrielle as an escort she went by omnibus. She pleased Cora and Cora pleased her, and they were not long in becoming friends. They naturally talked a good deal about Alfred, and if his ears did not burn that day they ought to have done, for the two young women praised him to the skies, the one for his goodness to his mother and herself, and his high qualities generally, the other for his exertions in finding her, his disinterestedness in refusing reward, and his wise and kindly counsel.

While they were talking, a lady of some thirty years old, wearing a widow's cap, entered the room. Cora introduced her as Mrs. Maitland (who had lately lost her husband), her kinswoman, and the lady of the house. Though this lady's features were plain, she had gifts more precious than beauty—a winning smile, a gracious manner, and, as Vera

thought, the most beautiful eyes she had ever beheld. Mrs. Maitland was a good soul, full of love for her fellow-creatures, who spent nearly all her time in visiting the poor, and the greater part of her modest income in relieving their wants.

"I must warn you that Mrs. Maitland is a terrible beggar," said Cora, smiling; "she is always wanting money for the poor, and begs of everybody she knows."

"You exaggerate, my dear. I beg of nobody I meet for the first time, unless I am out on a regular begging expedition, and not even then unless I have reason to believe they can afford something."

"I am sure I shall only be too glad to give what I can," said Vera, eagerly. "In two or three years I shall have my money, I shall be rich, and then I will give you as much as you want. But I should like to do something—to work, I mean. There is nothing so easy as being generous when your grandfather leaves you a fortune."

"Perhaps you would like to go with me on one of my rounds, Miss Hardy," answered Mrs. Maitland, "and then you would see for yourself where the poor of London live and how they live."

Vera declared that this was what she had wanted to do for a long time, and it was arranged that on the following Thursday they should visit in company Mrs. Maitland's district in the East.

Vera went away sorrowful, for her visit reminded her of M. Senarclens' teachings and her own almost-forgotten good resolutions. The day was dull, too, and she could not help making a mental contrast between the sloppy streets, gloomy buildings, and sombre air around her, and the towering Alps, the azure lakes, and the clear sky of the mountain land where she had lived so long, and whither, at times like these, she yearned to return. Vera, in fact, was in melancholy mood, and rather home-sick, and she asked herself whether, despite the attractions and undoubted advantages of London, she had chosen the better part, whether the lot of a Swiss peasant was not more to be desired than the position of a great heiress.

A few days before Miss Hardy's visit to Cora, Sidney Leyton came home from India and Egypt, the last countries he had visited. A good-looking young fellow, with a blonde complexion, a long beard, a face burnt to the colour of a weather-stained brick, he was full of life and energy, the scenes he had witnessed and the people he had met. His mother was almost absurdly proud of him;

Vera, whom he greatly amused, liked him, and he made the house busier and brisker, as well by his own high spirits as by the additional visitors which his presence attracted. The young fellow was a great rattle, and an incessant talker. If words could achieve distinction, Sidney Leyton was assuredly destined for great things. Vera, as he confided to his mother, pleased him.

"She is a monstrous fine girl," he said, "and so awfully clever, you know. Not at all like other girls—got ideas of her own, and that."

"And she will have more than a hundred thousand a year, your father says," added Lady Leyton significantly.

"Exactly so, *mater*," replied the young fellow pleasantly; "but, do you know, I am not at all sure whether I would like to sell myself for the money."

"Sell yourself?"

"Dispose of my liberty, I mean. I would rather be free a little longer. I don't want to put my head into the matrimonial noose just yet."

"Not a gilded one?"

"Not even a gilded one, offered by so charming a girl as Vera Hardy."

"But your father and I are anxious for you to settle down, Sidney; and the opportunity seems almost providential. You acknowledge that she is a fine girl, and, though, as you say, she has some strange ideas, I think she would make you a good wife. And consider her fortune! With Vera's money and your talents, my dear boy, you might be anything you liked."

"Prime Minister, for instance," returned the young man with a laugh. "I understand. My father wants me to go into Parliament and save the nation; but, taking everything into consideration, I think I would rather be an Australian stockman or a Texan cowboy, than enslaved to a constituency and talked to death by wild Irishmen."

"Oh, Sidney!" gasped Lady Leyton. She was dying to see her son in Parliament, and his sentiments appalled her.

"That is what it comes to, I assure you. The House is all very well for young lords and old fogies; but, for my own part, I would far rather be roving round the world than filing in and out of a division lobby. The game is not worth the candle; and if it is all the same to you, mother, I will keep both my personal and my political liberty."

When Lady Leyton, in some distress of mind, reported this conversation to her husband, he seemed amused.

"Don't be uneasy," he said; "you must always take fifty per cent. off what Sidney says; and he is a good deal deeper than some people think. He knows on which side his bread is buttered. I am afraid your son has been chaffing you, my dear."

"But why? I don't understand——"

"He wants leaving to his own devices; and I think you had better do as he wants. Sid has got his head screwed on the right way, and is quite as much alive to his own interests as you are."

CHAPTER LII.—THE FAR EAST.

"Be sure you are back in time for dinner," said Lady Leyton to Vera, the night before the latter's proposed excursion to the Far East. "I think I told you that we shall have the Lord and Lady Mayoress."

"Yes," replied Vera with a slight smile, "I think you did."

She had heard this momentous news at least six times on as many consecutive days. The Leytons were about to give a grand dinner in honour of their son's return from his grand tour. A strong contingent of aldermen and other civic notabilities were expected, and the Lord and Lady Mayoress had been pleased to signify their intention of gracing the party with their presence.

Vera had promised to be with Mrs. Maitland in good time, so she breakfasted alone, and left Grosvenor Square in a hansom cab at the unearthly hour of eight. She smiled to herself as she looked at the closed blinds and remembered that the cows at La Boissière had been milked four hours before, and shutting her eyes saw in imagination the sun rising above the majestic Mont Blanc, and filling with rosy light the valleys of Vand, and heard the *yodeling* of the herdsmen and the songs of the village maidens as they drove the kine to the mountain pastures. What a change in her life and her destiny a few short months had wrought! It seemed only the other day that she was being rated by old Père Courbet, and hearing words of wisdom from M. Senarclens, for she still believed the historian, though perhaps with a less fervent faith than of yore, to be not alone one of the best, but one of the wisest of men. And now she was rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and driving about London in a two-wheeled carriage!

She found Mrs. Maitland and Cora waiting for her, and without loss of time they started on their journey.

"I am not going to take you to any very dreadful places," said Mrs. Maitland. "My

work lies principally among the struggling poor—those who want a little help and are worthy of it. The desperate cases and the worst neighbourhoods I leave to the men visitors; they are no fit places for us women.”

“It is true then, there is a great deal of misery in London?”

“Words cannot describe it, Miss Hardy. I often see sights that nearly break my heart, cases which I am utterly unable to relieve.”

“You mean that you want money, yet London is so rich. I——”

“It is not altogether want of money,” said Mrs. Maitland; “though God knows if we had more of it we could do more good. There are cases in which all the money in the world could do no good. You cannot help those who will not help themselves. What can you do with people who would rather live in filth and penury than do honest work and live cleanly lives; with mothers who make their children beg—and worse than beg—and spend their wretched earnings in drink?”

“Are there such women?” asked Vera horrified.

“My dear, there are thousands of parents in London who would sell their children into slavery, or for any purpose whatever, either for money or drink. But such people are beyond hope. They should be shut up in prison and forced to work, and their children taken from them. It is not right for the State to stand by with folded arms and let children be brought up to become a curse to themselves and a danger to society. But do not think the London poor are all of this class. Many, very many, are the victims of pure misfortune; they struggle bravely to earn their bread, and bear their privations with heroic fortitude. And they help each other, you have no idea how much. They are far less selfish than the well-to-do.”

“The well-to-do are worse than selfish,” exclaimed Vera indignantly; “they are criminal. How can they let such infamies exist? There are wealth enough and food enough in London for all. Why then should any want?”

“That is a question more easily asked than answered,” replied Mrs. Maitland sadly; “it is one I have often put to myself. But I should not say that the well-to-do are criminal. They do not know, or they have not realised, how much want there is in the world. And many have neither time nor money to spare, or think they have not. They are struggling, not to make a living but to keep up a position. Families who spend two or three thousand a year would

look upon it as a dire calamity to be reduced to an expenditure of fifteen hundred, and those who have fifteen hundred do not see their way to devote a twentieth part of it to the poor, for they, too, have a position to keep up. By far the greater part of the money raised for charitable purposes is given by a very few. Most people give nothing, or next to nothing.”

“Must we despair, then?” asked Vera warmly. “Can nothing be done to relieve this terrible misery? The State should see to it; they should take charge of the poor.”

“Well, we have the poor-law, you know; and though there is much the State might do, I would rather trust to voluntary effort. No, my dear Miss Hardy; we must not despair; we must work. Reforms always take time, public opinion is slow to move, and progress is only achieved by prolonged effort. We are trying, a few of us, to help the poor on the one hand and enlighten public opinion on the other. And I do think that with time we shall succeed. I quite agree with you that there are food and wealth enough for all. But to take from the haves and give to have-nots, would be wrong. I believe in the Old Book and the Eighth Commandment. What we want is to bring about a sort of voluntary communism; to convince the well-to-do that they have a duty towards their less fortunate fellow-creatures—not merely in the way of money-giving—the easiest and least effective form of charity—but of personal sympathy and active help. We might then hope, if not to prevent poverty, at any rate to extinguish pauperism. It will take a long time to bring this to pass; yet I am full of hope. The number of workers increases. Only just lately a rich man—he was a brewer, but having scruples about continuing so questionable a business, gave it up—abandoned society to live altogether in the East End and devote nearly the whole of a large income and the whole of his time to the service of the poor. He collects subscriptions from others, too, and is organizing cheap lodging and eating-houses for the poor, and several other useful things. Next to relieving cases of pressing need, his main object is to teach the poor the great lesson that God helps those who help themselves.”

“What a noble fellow!” said Vera. “Is he a Socialist?”

“A Socialist!” answered Mrs. Maitland, whom the question seemed rather to surprise. “Well, since he gives nearly all his substance to the needy, I suppose he is one

practically. But if you were to ask him why he acts thus he would probably say that he is constrained thereto by the love of Christ."

"And his name——"

"Is Fletcher. But here we are at our destination. Let us get out and dismiss our cab."

It was clear, even to Vera's unpractised eye, that they were in a poor street and a low neighbourhood. The buildings were mean, the shops ill-furnished, their wares of the lowest quality, and in many of them second-hand garments were exposed for sale. Gin palaces were numerous, and in and out of them were going and coming hideous women, villainous-looking men, and ragged and barefooted children. The houses were gaunt and grim, the windows of many of them mended with paper and stuffed with straw, and in narrow by-streets and filthy back-yards tattered clothing was hanging out to dry.

Vera shuddered. Her artist's soul revolted at the sight of all this squalor, uncleanness, and gloom. The poverty of London was certainly not picturesque, and she wondered how human beings could submit to a fate which in her eyes seemed worse than slavery or death.

Mrs. Maitland led the way into a narrow and gloomy court, which, though Vera thought it unspeakably squalid, was by no means one of the worst in the neighbourhood. Then they mounted a dark and narrow staircase, between bare and damp walls from which bits of plaster hung in tatters. On the third flight Mrs. Maitland knocked at a door, and in answer to a hurried "come in," she entered, inviting her companions to follow. It was a small uncarpeted, unpapered room, furnished with a tiny table, four chairs, and a bed. The utensils about the fireless grate and on the mantelpiece showed that the room served every purpose, and the inmates had no other. At the table sat a pale, dark-eyed young woman, working with great energy at a sewing-machine. She was a trousers finisher, and time was so precious to her that she did not rise to receive her visitors. Without pausing to answer Mrs. Maitland's greeting, she asked them to sit down, and went on with her sewing.

"How is your sister?" asked Mrs. Maitland, glancing at the bed, on which lay another young woman, whose wan face, hectic cheek, and skeleton-like fingers left little doubt that she was in the last stage of consumption.

"About the same, I think. That doctor

you were good enough to send said that with nourishing food and good port wine her life might be prolonged. But how can the like of us get nourishing food and port wine? It is as much as we can do to live. I often wish I was like Mary there, and that we might die together. I should be at rest then."

"My poor girl, you are weary and do not know what you are saying," said Mrs. Maitland soothingly; "God will help you. 'He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,' you know."

"I wish He would temper it to me," exclaimed the seamstress almost fiercely. "Here have I been at work seven hours this morning, and when I have worked ten hours more I shall have earned a shilling, and my thread to pay for and my rent to meet, and to buy port wine and nourishing food for my sister—all out of a shilling a day! Yet you say God will help us. I wish He would, I wish He would!"

And the poor girl, after a burst of hysterical laughter, laid her head on the table and wept bitterly.

"Can these things be?" asked Vera in a broken voice, and putting her arm round the seamstress's neck she spoke to her words of comfort. "Do not despair," she said; "here is something for you" (laying a sovereign on the table), "take it, and when that is done you shall have more. I will see that you do not want, and that your sister has all she needs."

"This!" exclaimed the seamstress wildly, taking up the piece of gold. "Why this is twenty shillings! You do not mean to give me all this, dear lady? You cannot, it is too much."

"Yes, it is all yours," answered Vera gently; "your very own, and when you want more you must let me know, and I will come and see you again."

"Oh, how good you are! Mrs. Maitland spoke truly; God has helped us. But" (hesitating) "it is too much—take half of it for the shoemaker's family in the next flight; they want it more than we do."

"It is all for you," returned Vera; "and if you do not keep it entirely for yourselves I shall be vexed. We will see to the shoemaker's family."

"Who are they?" inquired Mrs. Maitland.

"Name of Striver," answered the seamstress, "second flight. Striver was run over ten days since, and lies in the hospital with a compound fracture of the thigh. I think he drank, and they were always pawning

their clothing to buy food ; but now I fear they have neither clothing nor bread."

"Let us go," said Vera.

And they went.

They found the shoemaker's wife and five little children all in a single room. For furniture they had a painted deal table, two or three dilapidated cane-bottomed chairs, and an old bed with a filthy coverlet.

The children were bare-footed and only half-clad. There was neither a shirt nor a shift amongst them. One little girl wore a boy's ragged overcoat and nothing in the world else.

"When had you anything to eat, Mrs. Striver?" asked Mrs. Maitland.

"Yesterday at this time. We've popped every rag and stick we could spare, and now we're fair clemming."

"You are from the country?"

"Ay, are we ; I wish we were i' t' country ageean. My maaster had a bit of a fortin left him, and we came to Lunnon to draw it, and then he thowt as he'd start for hissen i' t' shoemaaking line, that being t' trade as he wor browt up to. So he bowt a good-will and a stock, and shopped two jorneymen and set agaast. But he made nowt on't. T' fortin aw went in a twelvemonth ; then we wor sowed up, and we've gone fra bad to worse ever sin', and now we're fair at far end—clemming to deeach."

"You come from the North, I fancy?"

"Ay, out o' Yorkshire. We lived not so far fro a place called Bolland, as yo've happen yerd tell on. I wish we wor there now, I do that. What wi' my maaster mending shon and t' childer gooin to t' factory we could addle a middling good living."

Vera, who only half-understood the woman, took out her purse.

"Not yet," said Mrs. Maitland, with a significant look ; "let us first get them something to eat. Come with me."

They went out together.

"I rather fear from the look of that woman," continued Mrs. Maitland, "that she, like her husband, has a weakness for drink. If you gave her money it might not all be spent in food. Life in London has demoralised these poor Strivers, as it has done many of their betters. But the children must eat and be clothed, and then we will see what can be arranged for the family."

Then they went to a baker's shop and bought some bread, and to an eating-house and bought some meat. At a second-hand clothes shop garments were purchased, and

Vera found that at an outlay of a little over a pound she had fed and clothed an entire family. She thought that the pleasure of seeing the poor children eat was worth ten times the money. Before going away she paid the baker and eating-house keeper for a week's provisions in advance, and Mrs. Maitland said that she would arrange with a society, with which she was connected, to have the family sent back to Yorkshire, so soon as Striver was fit to travel.

"There are thousands more in the same plight," she said ; "they think London is an El Dorado, and they find it a hell."

They made several more visits, saw whole families making match-boxes at 2½d. a dozen, finding their own paste and string, and fire to dry the boxes. Some were making sacks for which they got a farthing apiece ; others shirts at twopence apiece ; and a crippled old tailor and his wife were hard at work with policemen's overcoats, which when quite finished, brought them in something less than three shillings each.

"I don't know what the contractor gives for his cloth," observed Mrs. Maitland, "but its cost, added to the three shillings, represents his entire outlay, and he doubtless makes a good profit. But if you were to speak to him he would tell you he cannot afford to pay more. The authorities accept the lowest tender, and the successful competitor is compelled to get his work done at the lowest possible price. It is the same with everything else. One tradesman undersells another, and the price of labour is forced down until the poor find it better to steal than to work. Some people say that competition is a fine thing, I say it is a curse."

Here Mrs. Maitland was accosted by a quiet, intelligent-looking man, wearing a decent black coat, rather a mark of distinction in that neighbourhood.

"Ah, is that you, Martin?" exclaimed Mrs. Maitland. "What news have you today?"

"There is a very bad case in Pitman's Rents, and something should be done ; but my funds are quite exhausted. Will you come and see ? It is not far off."

"But Pitman's Rents ! Isn't it a dreadful place ? Can we go ?"—glancing at her companions.

"Oh, yes ; all the worst characters are out by this time—begging, and worse."

"What do you say, young ladies, shall we go ?"

"By all means," replied Vera ; "if there is a lower depth I should like to see it."

"Come, then," said Mrs. Maitland; "lead on, Martin."

Martin led them to a wretched little court in a dark little street. The building to which the court gave access was large, but there did not appear to be a whole window in it, and its condition was so dilapidated that it seemed as if the first strong wind would blow it down like a house of cards. It was a place in which the sun never shone, where the fresh air never came—fetid, filthy, and horrible. They groped their way up a dark and rotten staircase, which threatened to give way at every step, and Martin, who went first, had several times to help them past treacherous places and gaping holes, and the air was so foul that Vera and Cora had much ado to keep themselves from fainting.

At the topmost story the City missionary—for that was Martin's quality—knocked at the door, which hung loose on its hinges, and, without waiting for an answer, entered the room into which it opened. Den, rather, for it was no more than eight feet square, and the walls and ceiling were black—as it seemed—with the accumulated dirt of ages. The table was an old box turned upside down, the seat a board resting on bricks, and in one corner stood the crazy remains of an old bedstead. A woman with touseled hair and hollow eyes, not more than thirty, but looking fifty, crouched before a grate in which burnt a hardly visible vestige of fire. She was nursing a month-old baby, swathed in a rag.

Mrs. Maitland's sharp eyes detected something moving in the bed.

"What have you there?" she said.

"Children," answered the woman abruptly; "all their things are at the pawnshop, and I have nowhere else to put them."

It was quite true. Four naked children were wriggling among the rags that covered the relics of the old bedstead.

"How is this?" inquired Mrs. Maitland. "Has she no husband?"

Martin explained that her husband, a bricklayers' labourer, had deserted her—at any rate he had disappeared—and owing to the birth of her baby she had been unable to follow her calling of shirt-finishing, by which, with hard work, it was possible to earn sixpence a day. Up to the present time she had existed (living it could hardly be called) on charity and by selling and pawning such poor things as she possessed. But now she had nothing more to pledge, and was too proud to beg. Too weak to go out herself, she could not send her children into the

street quite naked, and she still retained some feeling of pride and independence.

"It is a case for the workhouse," said Mrs. Maitland.

"So it is," answered Martin; "but to get a family into the workhouse requires time, and I do not think they have a bit of bread in the room."

"Not a crust," moaned the woman; "I have nothing for the baby, and the others haven't had a full meal for a month."

"Here, take this, Mr. Martin, and get them what they need," said Vera, moved to tears by the sight of so much misery. And as she spoke she gave the missionary the last sovereign she had in her pocket.

"God bless you, my dear young lady!" exclaimed the woman fervently, "and may neither you nor yours ever know what it is to want. For myself I could bear it, or lay me down and die; but when I hear the poor children cry for bread and I have none to give 'em, it drives me wild. I feel as if I could kill somebody."

"And no wonder," said Vera. "Poor children!"

After this they went away—for the air of the little room had become absolutely insupportable—the missionary with them, intent on procuring a supply of clothing and food for the wretched family.

"You will see about getting them into the workhouse, Martin," said Mrs. Maitland, when they had safely reached the bottom of the rickety staircase.

"This very day, ma'am."

"Whose property is this, Martin? These houses are really not fit for pigsties."

"They belong to a Mr. Pitman. He is very rich, they say, and a member of the Corporation, and this property brings him in fifty or sixty per cent."

"I would rather be a thief or the proprietor of a gambling hell than make money in such a way!" exclaimed Mrs. Maitland indignantly. "It is worse than murder."

It was now time for them to go, and after parting with Martin they made for the nearest cab-stand.

"What is your opinion now, Miss Hardy?" asked Cora. "Do you think you will be able to find a use for your income?"

"I do," answered Vera emphatically. "I have found my work, and for the first time I feel really glad that I am an heiress."

"But she must not be quite so lavish as she has been to-day," observed Mrs. Maitland with a smile. "As it is, I do not think any harm has been done. But to give sove-

reigns away at a time is too much, especially when there are more claims than the longest purses can satisfy, and profuse charity is as bad—in effect, if not in intention—as downright avarice.”

CHAPTER LIII.—VERA MAKES A SENSATION.

VERA was very silent on the homeward journey. The day's experience appalled her. She could think of nothing but what she had just seen. Much as she had heard and read of pauperism, and of the wretchedness of the London poor, she had not even faintly realised how wretched they were, how dire and sordid poverty could be. In Canton Vaud destitution began when a family was reduced to the possession of a single cow or half a dozen goats! Yet Vaud was not nearly so rich as London; there was more wealth in a single metropolitan parish than in the whole canton? Where lay the responsibility for this frightful misery, of which Mrs. Maitland assured her that she had seen only the merest glimpse; with personal selfishness or a vicious social organization? Which was right, M. Senarclens, who saw no hope of amendment save by a great upheaval of the masses and a revolutionary cataclysm; or Mrs. Maitland, who believed in the efficacy of voluntary effort, and that patience and perseverance would effect more in the long run than grand schemes and heroic measures? Despite her reverence for the historian she was rather disposed to take Mrs. Maitland's view of the matter; yet there could be no doubt that the fortunate failed shamefully in their duty to the disinherited, and it seemed to her that men like the owner of Pitman's Rents should be banned from society, and their nefarious trade stopped by the strong hand of the law.

It was late when Vera reached Grosvenor Square. A few minutes after she appeared in the drawing-room dinner was announced.

“I am sorry you did not come sooner,” said Sydney Leyton, whose arm she had taken, “you have missed making the acquaintance of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, and all the other swells.”

“A great loss, I am sure,” Vera replied smiling. “I must do my best to bear the disappointment with equanimity, and you can point these swells out to me, you know.”

“With pleasure; that is the Lord Mayor on my father's right hand.”

“The tall thin man with the long lean face?”

“Yes!”

“Well, I am disappointed. He is the very last man at the table I should have taken for the greatest man in London.”

“You are right, Mr. Boltwell is far from looking like an ideal Lord Mayor: yet he is said to be an excellent man of business, and he dispenses the hospitality of the Mansion House with profuse liberality. His right-hand neighbour, Alderman Chipping, will be the next Lord Mayor; does his appearance please you?”

“Very much. His physique is splendid; and with that white beard and ruddy countenance, and those dark eyes, he looks quite picturesque. I should like to paint his portrait.”

“Yes, Billy Chipping is a fine old fellow, and will well beseem his office. He is terribly bumptious though! I remember——”

At this point Mr. Sydney was interrupted by a question from a lady on his left, and Vera was left to her own thoughts—rather to her satisfaction, for she was not in a conversational mood. The sights she had witnessed in the East End were still in her mind, and she could not help contrasting them with the scene before her. The table was resplendent with silver and adorned with choice flowers; the viands were of the richest, the wines of the rarest, and some of the ladies wore as many gems as would have redeemed a dozen poor families from misery for the term of their natural lives, still leaving the owners enough to make a brave show. Yet, probably, no one there save herself was giving a thought to the disinherited, and had she not been so lately amongst them they might have been equally remote from her thoughts. Whence arose this callousness? and where could be found a remedy for these terrible inequalities of condition, whereby one class of the community was loaded with wealth and demoralised by luxury, while others have hardly the wherewithal to live, or were suffering the last extremities of want? A hard question, and, as Vera well knew, one that had bewildered wiser heads than hers. And then she bethought her of a graceful custom that prevails in Canton Lucerne. At every dinner of a formal or public character a collection is made for the Poor's Fund of the commune. All give something, for it is considered that when people are feasting, and presumably enjoying themselves, they should remember those who lack the common necessities of life and out of their abundance help them.

“How quiet and pensive you are, Vera!” observed Lady Leyton, who until that mo-

ment had not noticed her. "I fear your exertions have been too much for you."

"Not at all," replied Vera rallying. "I feel a little tired, naturally, but not very much."

"What do you think of the East End and the poor people you have seen there?"

"I wonder they do not come and cut all our throats," said Vera, half in jest, half in earnest.

But Lady Leyton took the saying very earnestly indeed, and quite *au pied de la lettre*.

"Heavens, Vera!" she exclaimed, turning pale, "what do you mean? what has happened? Were you—were you molested? There are frightful places at the East End full of thieves and murderers. I should not have let you go. Were you robbed? What was Mrs. Maitland thinking of to take you among such wretches?"

"I did not see any wretches except in the sense that all whom I met with are wretchedly poor. I was neither molested nor robbed; but I gave away all the money I had with me. When I spoke of cutting throats I merely meant that the poor I saw are so terribly poor, so utterly destitute, that it would not be very surprising if they were to do something desperate. But there is no fear of that. They are very patient, poor things; much more so, I fancy, than we should be if we were forced to exchange places with them."

"Heaven forbid! What a revolutionary sentiment! You quite make me shudder, child. But don't you think you exaggerate? You never saw any of the very poor before, and you may think them worse off than they really are."

On this Vera described some of the "interiors" she had seen, and as her imagination had been much impressed and she was full of her subject, she described them well and with considerable realistic force. All within earshot listened to her; several of the ladies were visibly affected and asked many questions. Vera was observing that the worst place she had visited was Pitman's Rents, when she was interrupted by a sharp-visaged man with thin lips and an unpleasant smirk, who did not seem to have quite caught what she said.

"I beg your pardon," he observed, "but I think I heard you mention my name."

"I think you are mistaken," she replied. "I have not the pleasure of knowing your name."

"Pitman is my name."

"What a singular coincidence! I certainly

did use your name, though I was not speaking of you. I was speaking of a dreadful place in Bermondsey called Pitman's Rents."

"That dreadful place is my property Miss Hardy, unfortunately."

"The people who live there are unfortunate," said Vera dryly. "Some of your tenants are dying of hunger, Mr. Pitman."

"It is possible; but you surely would not suggest that I am under any obligation to keep my tenants in food as well as to let them live rent free?"

"Do you let them live rent free, Mr. Pitman?"

"Why, not quite, but the rents they pay are very moderate, and my agent has instruction to deal with them as leniently as possible."

Vera could not contradict this statement, though she did not believe it, so she contented herself with suggesting that no conceivable rent for dwellings so dilapidated could be considered moderate.

"Excuse me, Miss Hardy," rejoined Mr. Pitman sharply, in his harsh, grinding voice, "that shows how little you know of the subject. I have very heavy rates and taxes to pay for that property, the condition of which, I admit, leaves something to be desired. But in two or three years the ground lease is out, and the land and all that is on it will go to the ground landlord, so that I literally cannot afford to put Pitman's Rents in good condition. It would be making you a present, Miss Hardy."

"Making me a present, Mr. Pitman!" exclaimed Vera in great surprise, trying at the same time to develop from her inner consciousness what a ground landlord might be.

"Yes, making you a present, for the ground on which Pitman's Rents is built belongs to the Hardy Trust. Your grandfather was very fond of putting his money into ground-rents, and he was right. There is no better investment, especially in London, where property increases so rapidly in value. He was too sharp for me and got the land before I knew it was in the market. The consequence is that in two or three years—by the time you are of age, I imagine—Pitman's Rents will become yours, and you will be at full liberty to let the tenants live rent free, or turn them out, just as you like." And Mr. Pitman smiled a triumphant smile, for he had been painfully conscious that the sympathies of his auditors were against him.

"Can this be?" said Vera, turning to Sydney Leyton. "Is it possible that this

horr— that Pitman's Rents will one day be mine ? ”

“ I am sure I cannot tell you, Miss Hardy. But I should think nothing is more likely, and you may be quite sure that Mr. Pitman is right. He knows if anybody does.”

“ So much the better,” said Vera recovering her confidence. “ I will try to see that my tenants have dwellings fit for human beings to live in, and that they do not die of hunger.”

Sydney, seeing that this retort was likely to draw an angry answer from Pitman, interposed with an irrelevant remark which, as he intended, had the effect of turning the talk into another channel. Later in the evening he and Vera met in the drawing-room and had a few words *en tête-à-tête*.

“ I quite agree with you, Miss Hardy, about those poor wretches at the East End, and Pitman's Rents, and that,” he said. “ Society does not do its duty by them. It is not right that these things should be, and Pitman is a rack-renting cad, everybody knows that, but he has a certain position, and being in the Corporation my father thinks he must recognise him in some way. He thought he had turned the tables on you when he said the ground of Pitman's Rents was yours. But you paid him back in his own coin, and with interest. I had no idea you were so clever at repartee, Miss Hardy. Pitman won't forget you in a hurry.”

“ Nor I him. It is not very satisfactory to think that a part of my income is paid by those poor starving creatures in Bermondsey.”

“ Nor is it. Pitman pays the ground, rent. You have nothing to do with his tenants.”

“ I am afraid it comes to pretty much the same thing; they pay him, and he pays the trustees.”

“ He would have to pay them in any case, and if the ground belonged to somebody else it would be exactly the same. And it is better that it should belong to you, because when you are of age and the property comes into your possession you will be able to do with the houses what you like, pull them down and replace them with model dwellings for working class tenants.”

“ That I shall certainly do, Mr. Sydney. I thank you for the hint, and I am greatly obliged to you for taking so kind an interest in my affairs.”

After this reply Vera was saved the trouble, and possibly the embarrassment, of saying any

more by a message from Lady Leyton, who wanted to present her to the Lady Mayoress.

CHAPTER LIV.—CORFE'S BROTHER.

ONE bright moonlight night, as Balmaine and Delane were walking across La Plaine to their lodgings they perceived a man lying on the grass, near the footpath. The weather being warm there was nothing in this incident very unusual, but as they neared the prostrate individual he rose slowly and with seeming difficulty to his feet, and they saw that he was in a rather damaged condition. His hat was crushed, his coat torn, his face streaked with blood, and he appeared unable to use his left hand.

“ What is the matter ? ” asked Balmaine, “ you seem to be hurt.”

“ Rather,” said the man in English, shaking himself and trying to straighten his hat.

“ You are English ? ” returned Balmaine.

“ Yes, and you are the editor of the *Helvetic News*.”

“ How do you happen to know that ? ”

“ You were pointed out to me the other day at the Café du Roi, and to tell the truth I was on my way to call upon you when that dastard struck me down.”

“ What dastard ? ”

“ My own brother, I am sorry to say. But I will tell you all about it to-morrow. I must go home and repair damages.”

“ Come to my lodgings and repair damages. They are hard by, and Delane and I will plaster up your wounds, and give you some supper.”

“ Thank you. I accept your invitation with pleasure, for I have something to communicate that may interest you.”

“ You were saying that you had been struck down by your own brother,” said Balmaine, leading the way towards the pension.

“ Yes; and you know him well, though he is no friend of yours. He would like to treat you as he has treated me—or worse, and he will if you don't take care.”

“ Indeed ! ” replied Alfred. “ I am grateful for the warning, but its value would be increased if I knew against whom I have to be on my guard.”

“ Against my brother, Vernon Corfe.”

“ I fancied as much, for so far as I know, Corfe is the only enemy I have; but from what you say, I am not the only one whose enemy he is.”

“ Not by any means,” answered the other, with a bitter laugh; “ Vernon is the enemy of every one who opposes him or whom he envies.”

"And he actually struck you down, and left you lying on the ground?"

"He did; but thereby hangs a tale, which I must tell you when you have half an hour to spare."

"No time like the present," answered Balmaine, whose curiosity was greatly excited; "here we are at the pension."

Alfred ordered a supply of hot water, took the young fellow to his bedroom, and examined his hurts. He had received two heavy blows on his head and another on his left hand, which he raised to parry the second blow, by which his fingers had been a good deal damaged and his signet-ring smashed. Sticking-plaster and a wash greatly improved his appearance, but as he was hardly in a fit state to sup at the table d'hôte, Balmaine ordered supper to be served in a room adjoining his bed-chamber, which, since his accession to the editorship, he had used as a study and sitting-room.

The meal over, cigars were lighted, and Hugh Corfe, who appeared to be a few years younger than his brother, proceeded to tell his story.

"It is not very much of a story," he said, "though there are parts of it that may surprise you a bit. My father, as I dare say you know, is an officer on half-pay. He lives mostly in Italy, with my mother and my sisters; and besides Vernon, who is the eldest, I have two other brothers, so altogether we are a pretty large family. My father is a strict disciplinarian, but not nearly so much so as he used to be; and I fancy Vernon was not brought up very judiciously. At the best he would probably have turned out badly; but severity makes some lads deceitful; what they dare not do openly they do secretly. It was so with Vernon, and my father now freely admits that he took a wrong course with him. But whatever may be the cause, he has been a trouble to the family nearly all his life; latterly he has been a disgrace. He was always prone to extravagance, and when my father tried to cure him by stopping his pocket-money, he pilfered. He even stole my sisters' jewellery and sold it. At the same time he was very clever, particularly at languages, and my father had no difficulty in getting him into the army. For a while he got on well, but one fine day he did something not quite square, and had the alternative offered him of standing a court-martial or leaving the service, and he left it. But for my father's influence he would probably have been prosecuted. Since that time Vernon has lived

practically by his wits. Friends of the family have got him several good appointments, but either by his unmanageable temper or downright swindling he invariably loses them. He cannot go to Italy, because he got a lot of money from a banker at Genoa against a cheque on a London bank where he had no account; and it is not very long since my mother, unknown to my father, raised money at a great sacrifice to get him out of a scrape which would have ruined him for life and disgraced us. But he did disgrace us after all, though the affair was kept pretty quiet; and we are now beginning to think that the best thing that could happen to him would be to get locked up. For my part I wish he had been locked up long since. Such a scoundrel has no right to be at large; and, unless I am greatly mistaken, he has committed a crime which, if it could be proved against him, might cost him his life. I am not sure that he did not mean to kill me just now. Did you know he was married?"

"Not until Mrs. Corfe appeared on the scene."

"Mrs. Corfe! Oh! you mean poor Esther Brandon. She was not his wife."

"No!" exclaimed Balmaine. "How was that?"

"By Jove! what a fellow!" said Delane. "Do you mean to say they were not married?"

"Not legally. It is a very sad story. My brother married an English girl of very good family with a little money. He spent the money, of course, and then took up with Esther Corfe, and married her—went through a form of marriage with her I should say."

"That was bigamy."

"Of course it was; and when the affair got wind, neither of the two women would have anything more to do with him, and his wife's relatives only refrained from prosecuting him on condition of his leaving England at once, which of course he did. Then, as far as I can make out, a false report of my sister-in-law's death got abroad, and Esther came here in the hope that Vernon would make her his legal wife, which of course he did not."

"And is your sister-in-law still living?"

"Yes; but she resumed her maiden name, and went as nurse into a London hospital, and that, I expect, gave rise to the rumour that she was dead."

"Why, he wanted to marry Miss Hardy!" said Balmaine, hotly indignant. "What a villain!"

"There is no mistake about that. I dare say, though, he really thought Maggie—his wife, you know—was dead. For a long time we had no idea he was at Geneva, but when my father heard—from Colonel Bevis, I think—he sent me here to see what Vernon was doing, and if possible get back some of the money he borrowed from my mother, and which he faithfully promised to repay. So I came," went on the young man, after a long pause. "I have not got any money out of him, of course. I did not think I should. But I have made a few discoveries which I think will rather astonish you."

"I doubt it," observed Delane. "I am about as much astonished as I can be already. But I can still wonder. What next?"

"Well, I am pretty sure that he murdered poor Esther Brandon."

"I have heard as much hinted before," said Balmaine thoughtfully, "but not in earnest, I think. What motive could he have for murdering her?"

"To get her out of the way, in order that he might marry that girl you were speaking of—Miss Hardy."

"But you say Esther Brandon was not his legal wife."

"Neither was she. But don't you see that she was in his way, and that he could not disclose the truth without causing a scandal and compromising his chances with Miss Hardy? Madame Marequart, with whom he lodged, is quite of my opinion."

"So am I," returned Balmaine, recalling his conversation with Corfe about secret poisonings and Alpine accidents, "but I fear he did it in such a way as to defy detection."

"Of course he did. My brother Vernon is an awfully clever fellow, I can tell you, and he is not the man to risk either his life or his liberty if he can get his ends without. He laid his plans very well; there are no proofs against him. And there's another thing I found out. He is no longer on your paper; he has lost all his pupils; he does nothing whatever, and yet he seems to be quite in easy circumstances. This was a riddle which I was determined to unravel; and with the help of a man I knew in Italy, and who knows Vernon well, though he does not like him, I have succeeded. He is a police spy, in the service of the French Government."

"Do you really think so?"

"I have not the least doubt of it. Vernon will do anything for money—anything but honest work. He is following no occupation, yet he keeps up a good appearance; and

when I inquired how he was living he asked what that was to me. And it is very likely. There are lots of refugees here about whom the Imperial police is glad to have information, and Vernon is much less likely to incur suspicion of being a *mouchard* than one of their own countrymen. He goes amongst them in the character of an English sympathiser with revolution, and that; and as he has a lively imagination and a ready pen, he is just the sort of man to concoct imaginary plots and conversations, and report them to Paris; and, you may depend upon it, he gets well paid."

"But isn't that rather a dangerous game?" said Balmaine. "If any of those refugees he is betraying find him out, he will stand a very good chance of getting a stab in the back some night, and being chucked into the river."

"Possibly; but Vernon is awfully clever, and, where his own safety is concerned, as wary as a fox. I dare say he will get off with a whole skin, as he has always done before. I would lock him up if I could; but as I cannot, I shall try to make his position in Geneva as uncomfortable as possible—too hot to hold him, in fact," said the young fellow vindictively.

"How?" asked Balmaine. "There are many suspicious circumstances against your brother; he is evidently a very bad fellow; but where are your proofs?"

"Well, I cannot prove that he murdered Esther Brandon, if that is what you mean, or that he is in the pay of the French police. But I can prove that he is a bigamist and that Esther was not his wife; and when these facts are made known it will be pretty warm for him with the English colony, I fancy. I shall tell, too, about the murderous assault he committed on me just now, as also a few other things not very much to his credit. I mean, also, to denounce him to the police here, and if they do not expel him from the place they will keep a very sharp eye on him."

"You are quite resolved on this?" said Balmaine significantly. Villain as Vernon Corfe was, he did not like to see this vindictiveness on the part of a brother.

"Quite. You are thinking, perhaps, of the proverb about washing one's dirty linen out of doors. I don't care for that. It is only right everybody should know what manner of man my brother is, so that they may be on their guard—and when he struck me down in such a cowardly fashion! But I did not tell you about that."

"No."

"Well, we had several talks, and I urged him strongly, as he seemed to be doing so well, to pay up some of the money he owes the family. And then we quarrelled. I spoke my mind pretty freely to him, and for several days we did not meet. But this evening he came into the Café du Roi where I was having a rubber with some English fellows, and made as if he had something to say. So I went out with him, and we walked in this direction. At first he spoke quite reasonably, said he was sorry for having caused the family so much trouble, and that he would try to give me some money. And then, when he had thrown me off my guard, and we were out on La Plaine there, he turned suddenly round exclaiming, 'I'll teach you to meddle in my affairs, you young imp,' hit me a crushing blow on the head with his stick, followed by another, which I partly parried with my hand. But it knocked me down and completely dazed me. I must have been on the ground several minutes when you came up. If he had not heard footsteps, or fancied somebody was coming, I do believe he would have finished me off. And now I mean to expose him. To-morrow I shall tell the chaplain and the consul what I have told you, and all the English fellows I know that frequent the Café du Roi. I shall see the police, too, and tell them of the assault. I regard Vernon Corfe as no longer my brother; if they hang him I don't care. And now if you will kindly allow me, I will take my leave. My head aches badly, and the sooner I am in bed the better."

"You have not told us your name," said Balmaine.

"No more I have. Hugh is my name. Here is my card."

Alfred and Delane offered to see Mr. Hugh Corfe safely to his lodgings. But he declined the offer, saying he would take a *fiacre* at the nearest stand.

"A queer business," observed Delane when their guest was gone.

"Very," said Balmaine. "This confirms the very worst suspicions we have had about Corfe."

"And a good deal more. Why, hanging would be too good for the fellow. But what do you think of the brother?"

"I would rather he had not shown quite so much vindictiveness, for bad fellow as Corfe is, they are both children of the same mother."

"I was after thinking the same thing

myself," returned the Irishman as he pensively lighted a cigar. "Vindictiveness seems to run in the family. If Mr. Hugh had got the money and had not got his head broken, I don't suppose we should have had the pleasure of making his acquaintance."

"At any rate, we should not have heard all these revelations."

"And they are revelations. By Jove, what a row there will be when the thing gets out! I should just like to see Mrs. Gibson's face when she hears those two were not properly married."

CHAP. LV.—HOW MAYO BOSSSED THE JOB.

DELANE'S prevision was fully verified by the event. Hugh Corfe's revelations caused a tremendous sensation. The indignation of the ladies who had received and visited poor Esther knew no bounds. Mrs. Gibson, who was staying in Geneva, while Gibson sought another situation in England, wrote her husband a letter in which her outraged virtue found vent in bitter upbraidings; she reproached him for introducing her to the Corfes, and more than hinted that he knew "that shameless woman" was no better than she should be, "all the time." She hardly seemed to blame Corfe at all, and expressed no pity whatever for his victim.

"Just like a woman," thought Gibson. "Poor Esther, she was not a bad sort, after all; I wish there were more like her." And then he congratulated himself on being a considerable distance from the wife of his bosom. It was so much easier to burn her letters than answer her taunts.

Mrs. Mayo, when she heard the news, almost went into hysterics to think how she had been imposed upon. Madame Caquetage was of course quite triumphant, and gave an afternoon tea party, at which the scandal formed the sole subject of conversation, and the tale was retold with marvellous embellishments.

As for Corfe, he neither went away nor seemed abashed. Except a few English and Americans, not much better than himself and his foreign associates, who did not think any the worse of a man for having two wives at the same time, everybody cut him. But the only difference he made was to swagger about more than ever. If he chanced to meet Mrs. Gibson or Mrs. Mayo, or any of the other women by whom he had been patronised when he was in the odour of respectability, he would take off his hat and make them a very polite bow, much to their annoyance. Mrs. Gibson expressed the in-

tention of hitting him with her parasol if he did it again; but when he did it again she somehow failed to carry her threat into execution. Another of Corfe's pleasant ways was to stand near the English Church and make loud and not very complimentary remarks about members of the congregation as they emerged from the sacred edifice.

"If they think their sneers and lies and cuttings-dead will force me out of the town," he was heard to say one evening in the Café du Roi, "they are mistaken. I shall not budge till I choose."

All this time Mayo was away in London and Leyland reigned in his stead. The ingenious proprietor had almost, as he informed his associate, "put the thing through," meaning thereby the sale of the paper to a company; and knowing that Mayo, though no more audacious, was more energetic than himself, he had sent him to London to give the finishing stroke to the transaction, promising him for his pains a handsome bonus in cash and a large interest in the new enterprise, and he was now in daily expectation of hearing that the business was completed. Leyland had good cause to put a high value on his manager's capacity and resource. During the former's absence in London Mayo had settled the claim of Harman and Brothers' liquidators for £500, borrowed from the *Helvetic's* new bankers, MM. Daxelhoff, Henriquez and Co. The liquidator was extremely loth to accept so small a composition, but when Mayo politely yet firmly intimated that in the event of the offer being refused he should be under the painful necessity of stopping the paper, in which case it was very unlikely that Harman's estate would get 500 francs, the poor man drew a long breath, made an expressive grimace, and wrote out a receipt in full of all demands.

"It was a grand *coup*," observed Leyland, when they were talking the matter over. "I am not surprised at that liquidator fellow taking £500. He would have been a fool if he had not. But I cannot for the life of me understand how you got the money out of those Daxelhoff people. That was really clever, now. Why, they are said to be the most close-fisted bankers in all Geneva."

Mayo did not complete the "putting of the thing through" with quite as much dispatch as he had anticipated, and Leyland was kept on the tenter-hooks of suspense a good deal longer than he liked. But one day, when he was beginning to fear that something had gone "decidedly wrong," and

feeling very low-spirited in consequence, he received a long telegram from the manager, for which that gentleman charged five pounds in his accounts (it had cost him nearly three), announcing the complete success of his mission. Everything was sealed, signed, and delivered, and Leyland might draw on a London banker (whom he named) for twenty-five thousand francs whenever he thought fit.

After relieving his feelings by a sort of view hallo, and exclaiming, "By Jingo, what a Godsend!" Leyland put on his hat and his grandest manner, went down to the bank, and immensely surprised Daxelhoff, Henriquez and Co. by handing in a draft on London for £1,000, and telling them that the paper had been turned into a company, with a capital of half a million francs. He then invited M. Henriquez and two other friends to second breakfast with him at the Hôtel de la Croix, and gave them the most sumptuous feed, which the *chef*, at so short a notice, could produce.

The breakfast, an affair of several hours, over, Leyland returned to the office and had a talk with Balmaine, which wrought an unexpected and momentous change in our hero's prospects.

It will be remembered that one of the consequences of Alfred's sojourn in Switzerland was a modification of his political faith. He became so far a Liberal that, without doing violence to his conscience, he could advocate the cause with which the *Helvetic News* had always identified itself—more probably from accident than design, for Leyland, like Duke Rollo, made no scruple in saying that he was for the side that paid the best. The ministry of the day was of the Liberal persuasion, and ever since Balmaine took the editorial reins he had given the government a hearty yet not an indiscriminating support. Despite the comparative insignificance of the *Helvetic News*, moreover, and Mayo's opinion that leading articles were mostly taken as read, he received many letters which showed that they attracted attention, and to one or two had fallen the honour of being quoted by a London paper of large circulation. But the days of the Government were numbered; the country was in the throes of a general election, the latest returns left no doubt that the Liberal party had been defeated "all along the line," and that either at or before the meeting of Parliament ministers would be compelled to resign.

When the news came to hand Alfred wrote a leader in his best style, deploring

this result, denouncing the blindness of British electors in preferring the vague promises of Lord Slapdash to the tried services of Mr. Whetstone, and exposing the intrigues and manœuvres which, in the opinion of the *Helvetic News*, had caused the fall "of one of the best and greatest ministries that ever swayed the destinies of the empire," and so forth. Balmaine was reading a proof of this article—not without a slight sense of satisfaction, for it seemed to him rather well done—when Leyland lounged into the room, his hat on one side, a cigar, about six inches long, in his mouth, and himself evidently in a state of serene complacency.

"How do, Balmaine?" he said, taking a chair. "Heard the news?"

"About the election, you mean? I am very sorry——"

"No, I don't," interposed the proprietor; "the elections be hanged! I mean about the paper."

"No; what about it? has something happened?"

"Rather. I sent Mayo to London, you know, to boss the job, and he has put it through slick. Everything is arranged, company formed, capital £20,000, nearly all subscribed. We shall never look behind us now, my boy."

"I am very glad to hear it," said Balmaine warmly, "and I congratulate you on your success."

"Thank you. Yes, it is a good thing; it will be a good thing for us all. I shall pay up all arrears this week end, and from the beginning of next month your salary will be increased to two hundred and fifty francs a week. I mean also to do something for Delane and Milnthorpe."

"Thank you very much, Mr. Leyland," returned Alfred, his face glowing with pleasure. "On my own behalf, and on behalf of my colleagues, I can assure you that your liberality will not be thrown away. We shall all work with redoubled zeal to promote the interests of the paper, which I hope may long flourish."

"I am sure you will, and you have only to go on doing well for the paper and it will do well for you. But there is one thing—we must change our politics."

"Change our politics!" exclaimed the editor, looking as glum as a moment before he had looked delighted.

"Yes. These people who are finding the tin are Tory and High Church. Several of 'em are parsons, and they look more to making the *Helvetic* an organ of the party

than for interest on their money, though I dare say they will take that too, if they can get it. Yes, we must turn our coats at once, old man. And what's the odds?"

Balmaine made no answer; he did not like the idea at all.

"And I want you to do a good rattling, out-and-out Conservative leader for to-morrow's paper. Anything you like, so long as you pitch it in strong. You have a capital opening on the elections. Couldn't you call it—yes, I once read something like it in a novel, or was it in a leading article?—'Old Queen and our New Premier;'—that would sound awfully well now, wouldn't it?"

"I am afraid it would hardly be complimentary to the Queen," said Balmaine, smiling in spite of himself.

"You are quite right: it hardly would; I did not think of that, and we must be loyal, whatever else we are. The throne and the altar, and all that sort of thing; you know what I mean."

"I think I do. But must this really be, Mr. Leyland?"

"Of course it must; it is in the contract, and as all the shares are not yet taken up—though we have got a nice lot of money in—it is of the utmost importance that we lay ourselves out to please these people. Why do you ask?"

"Because I do not see my way to complying with your request."

"You mean it is too late. I ought to have told you sooner, I know. But there is time yet. I'll make the fellows stay all night, if necessary, and pay them double and give them a good blow out at the Hôtel de Navigation on Saturday night into the bargain."

"I don't mean that. There is time enough and to spare. I mean, Mr. Leyland, that I cannot change my opinions to order—blow hot and cold with the same breath and unsay to-day what I said yesterday."

"Your opinions! You are not the paper, you are only the editor."

"That is a fact of which I am fully aware, Mr. Leyland; but even an editor may have a conscience, and I cannot do violence to mine by advocating views to which I object, and which in this very article (holding up the proof) I have condemned."

"Just as you like," answered Leyland angrily; "but I must tell you plainly that you will either have to do my bidding or lose your place."

"I quite understand that," said Balmaine, firmly, though a little sadly, for the sacrifice he felt it his duty to make was a heavy one,

"but what must be, must be. You think me foolish, I dare say, but I would rather lose my place than forfeit my self-respect."

"I know a fellow in London in every way suitable, who will be glad to come for two hundred francs a week, and write whatever he is told. I shall engage him at once. But about this article for to-morrow's paper, couldn't you do it for this once?"

"If I could do that I could do everything."

"Well then, I'll do a leader myself, or get one done. But look here, leave me that proof, so that in case I don't succeed I shall have something to fall back upon."

"Certainly," said Balmaine, wondering greatly what sort of a leader the proprietor, who had never written a five-line paragraph in his life, would turn out, or how, at such short notice, he could get one written. "It is quite understood, then, that you undertake to supply the leader, that I have no further responsibility in the matter."

"Quite."

"In that case I may as well go. I am under engagement to dine with the Rosslyn's, and it is about time I went."

"But you will look in to-morrow?"

"Of course; and if you do not object, I shall be glad to come to the office as usual, until the arrival of my successor."

"By all means do so. We shall only want about two political articles a week, and I dare say we can knock them together somehow without asking you to do violence to your conscience."

CHAPTER LVI.—MILNTHORPE'S MISFORTUNE.

WHEN Balmaine went down to breakfast next morning he opened his copy of the paper with some eagerness, being curious to see what sort of a leader Leyland had succeeded in "knocking together." He could hardly believe his eyes when he saw that it was his own, after all. But with what a difference! "The Liberal defeat" was turned into "The Conservative victory;" for "deplore" had been substituted "rejoice;" and by a few similar alterations, most ingeniously done, the whole tone and intent of the leader were reversed, and his jeremiad over the fall of Mr. Whetstone had become an *Io pæan* over the rise of Lord Slapdash.

"Well!" he ejaculated, "if that is not about the biggest piece of impudence I ever knew!"

"What is the biggest piece of impudence you ever knew?" asked Delane, who had just taken a place opposite to him.

"Converting my Liberal leader into a

Tory one. It is uncommonly well done, too. I did not give Leyland credit for so much literary skill."

"Are you sure he did it?" asked the sub-editor with a significant smile.

"You don't mean! Ah, I see who is the plagiarist."

"Don't be waxy, old man. It's a delicate thing to meddle with a man's copy, I know. But in the circumstances I really don't see how I could have done otherwise. Leyland wanted me to do it, and it would have been as much as my place is worth to refuse. And I am no politician, you know. Whigs and Tories are all the same to me. I hope you don't blame me, Balmaine."

"Not a bit, my dear fellow. You did quite right; and I cannot too much admire the way in which you carried out your instructions. Leyland ought to be well pleased."

"So he is; and he has promised to raise my screw twenty francs a week. But I am awfully sorry you are leaving us, Balmaine. I would rather lose my rise, and something more, than lose you. We have always got on so well."

"I am sorry, too," said Balmaine gravely; "very sorry. It is no light thing to give up the editorship and £500 a year, to say nothing of parting with such tried friends as you and Milnthorpe. But I could not act differently and retain my self-respect. I dare say you think I have acted very foolishly."

"No; I don't. As I said, I have no decided political opinion, but I understand your position and respect your motives. I don't say, though, that I should have done likewise; very few fellows would. I suppose you will go to London?"

"Yes; that is my intention. As I don't seem to have struck oil here, there is nothing for it but to seek my fortune there. But I shall not go immediately. I have promised Leyland to stay on until my successor arrives."

"I wonder what sort of a chap he will be," said Delane thoughtfully.

"Very easy in his principles, from what Leyland says; he will write whatever he is told."

"I hope he will be as easy in his temper, that is all," returned the Irishman. "I say, won't they make a nice trio? for two easier-principled ruffians than Leyland and Mayo I defy you to find in all Europe. Do you know, I feel rather sorry for these poor shareholders?"

"You think it won't last after all."

"Not it. Leyland is one of those fellows who go up like a rocket and come down like the stick. It is in him; he cannot help it. But he is going up now, luckily, and we shall get paid up on Saturday."

Which they did, and Balmaine found that, with his back pay and the sum Leyland proposed to give him in lieu of notice, he should have nearly a hundred pounds wherewith to start life in London. Delane, in his joy at getting so big a draw and a rise in his "screw" at the same time, gave a supper at the Café du Roi, and treated Madame von Schmidt and her daughter, with Balmaine and Milnthorpe, to a carriage trip over the Col de la Faucille, and an *al fresco* banquet on the top. Milnthorpe got leave of absence and went up the Valais, intending, as he said, to tramp through the Rhine valley and pass by the Gemmi into the Bernese Oberland. He meant to be away a fortnight, but four days after his friend's departure Balmaine received a letter from him that almost took his breath away. It was dated Saxon-les-Bains, and stated, with great point and brevity, that the writer had been making an utter fool of himself—lost every centime of his money at *trente-et-quarante* and *rouge-et-noir*—and begged Alfred to remit him a hundred francs by wire, that he might pay his hotel bill and "get away from this cursed place."

The money was sent, and on the following day Milnthorpe turned up at the office, looking terribly crestfallen.

"I suppose you were very much surprised," he said to Balmaine.

"I don't think I was ever so much surprised in my life. You are the very last man I should have suspected of being——"

"A gambler. Out with it; don't mince matters."

"Oh, no," said Alfred eagerly. "I did not mean that at all. I was going to say so foolish. You cannot possibly be a gambler."

"But I am a gambler," returned Milnthorpe almost savagely, as he stood up, wildly gesticulating; "a confirmed gambler of the worst sort. When I came here penniless, a year or more since, I had just been cleaned out at the very place where I have again lost every centime I possessed—painfully saved all this time for that very purpose. I inherited a fortune; I have made money in business—all went in the same way. Don't reason with me; don't tell me what a fool I am. No reasoning can be so severe as my own conscience. I am worse than a fool; I am a villain. I have been a curse to

others as well as to myself. My poor old mother, a dear girl whom I should have married—but no, I was not villain enough for that. . . . I cannot help it, Balmaine. God knows how I try. But I have long lucid intervals, when, as you have seen, I can be as sensible as anybody. Then the madness breaks out again. And so it will be to the end of the chapter. I am a ruined man—not merely moneyless, that is nothing—but ruined morally."

"Don't say that, old man," said Alfred, now more surprised even than before. "I refuse to believe that you are incurable. You have plenty of character; and if you really resolve to conquer this propensity, I am sure you will succeed. If I can help you in any way——"

"Help me! How can you help me? I am a hopeless man," exclaimed Milnthorpe excitedly. "But stay, there is one thing. I am not an extravagant chap; I can save money, and as fast as I lay it by I will send it to you in London; and you must make me this promise—not to let me have it on any consideration whatever, unless I come for it myself."

"Rather a strange trust," returned Balmaine; "but to help you, I will accept it."

"It will help me, by keeping temptation afar off. Saxon is so near, that if I have a few hundred francs by me I am sure to go there, sooner or later. But if I can only have money by fetching it from London—that might make a difference."

"Give time for reflection?"

"Say rather, for the mad fit to wear itself out. I am always reflecting. I am thankful for your sympathy—from most people I should have had only blame. Yes, I will try again. And perhaps I can do something for you. I have long been estranged from most of my friends, as you may easily believe; but there is a man in London now in a position of considerable influence, whom I once laid under a great obligation. I will give you a letter of introduction to him; he may be of use to you."

"Is he a journalist?"

"No; he is in business in the city. But see him; it will be worth your while. He owes me a good turn, and I shall tell him that what he does for you I shall consider done for myself. But say as little about me as you can—merely that I am living a quiet life here in Switzerland."

The letter was written, and Alfred, without looking at the address, put it into his pocket.

THE HEART'S IMMORTALITY.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR OCTOBER.

By THE REV. T. VINCENT TYMMS.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Psalm xxii., and 1 Peter i. 13—25.

A FLATTERING WISH.

THE psalmist's words remind us of an ancient salutation employed by the courtiers of Chaldean kings. On the night of Belshazzar's feast the queen used it with a strange though unintentional irony to the trembling monarch, saying, "O king, live for ever!" In his royal pride he had been drinking wine out of the sacred vessels brought from the temple at Jerusalem, and had "praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone," while vaunting their victory over the God of Israel. But while he drank a hand was seen writing on the wall. It was not the hand of Bel or Nebo, or of any local deity, and the dismayed man read his doom in that foreign scroll before Daniel came in to translate its words. The fears of guilty and presumptuous minds never fail to read judgment in mysterious appearances, and thus the king's countenance was changed, the flush of wine and arrogance died away and left his cheeks livid, his knees smote one against another as he shook with awful apprehension, and behind this pitiable show of panic "his thoughts troubled him." Before this abject creature the aged woman, who had seen the judgment of his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, stood to offer comfort, and even in that hour she must needs indulge him with the fulsome forms of oriental flattery. "O king, live for ever; let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed." But "in that night Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain."

It is somewhat singular that the words which reminded us of Belshazzar's banquet were also written in connection with a feast, and with one in which some of those same golden vessels, which were desecrated in Babylon, may possibly have been employed. In the psalm a long-afflicted, but now delivered prince, declares his intention to make a great feast of thank-offerings, and to summon, as Moses directed, the poor and godly among the people to come and partake of his consecrated viands. No princes and lords or troops of concubines were to be called, as by Belshazzar, no boastful libations of wine were to be poured out; but, de-

clares the giver of this feast, "The meek shall eat and be satisfied." They that seek the Lord shall be inspired with new gratitude and praise. Then speaking by anticipation to this humble and devout company, he exclaims, "Let your heart live for ever."

We might contrast at length the spirit of this utterance with that of the pagan phrase, but it must suffice to indicate one important difference between the two. The one is evidently no more than an empty compliment, the other is a sincere and fervent wish. Nitocris, the Babylonian queen, had no notion that her words would be fulfilled, or that they would be seriously construed, nor were any of the listening courtiers deceived. "All men deem all men mortal but themselves," and so the king might under other circumstances have been lulled into an illusory sense of security by such language. There was, however, no false peace in his soul that night. The spell of a dreadful omen lay upon his spirit, and he knew himself to be as he appeared, a cowering creature, shivering under the shadow of a coming fate. But the psalmist not only meant what he said, he deemed his desire possible, and was full of faith and hope when he exclaimed, "Let your heart live for ever." The heathen flattery we pass over with a mournful pity for the long line of kings who listened to it eagerly and are dead. The Hebrew greeting we may venture, without vanity, to accept for ourselves, and without a tinge of insincerity may say to every mortal friend, "Let your heart live for ever."

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read 1 Sam. xxv. 23—38, and Romans viii. 1—17.

HEART AND FLESH.

How vast a distinction is made by the introduction of the one word "heart." The wish for a fleshly immortality carries mockery upon its front. Death comes to kings and peasants with impartial certainty. As the fool dies so dies the wise man, and in this respect "man hath no pre-eminence above the beasts: for all is vanity. All go to one place: all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." Those lowly feasters who ate and drank in Jerusalem, and praised the living God, were soon laid in their graves, and when Belshazzar spread his banquet their

bodies had for centuries been mingled with the earth. The royal singer himself also died and saw corruption, and his sepulchre perhaps lay under the ruins of the holy city. We may go also beyond this and say, not merely that fleshly immortality is impossible, but that it is not a boon to be desired. Men do indeed cling to life. The wish for an immediate decease rarely comes except to the miserable and broken-hearted, and to those who suffer from incurable and agonising disease. Yet hateful as dying is to human nature, Job uttered the common thought of humanity when he said, "I would not live always." Among the most pathetic of all legends is that which tells of one who has wandered up and down the world for ages, praying for death, and seeking it wherever battle rages or pestilence prevails, yet is cursed with a life which cannot be laid down and neither love nor enmity can take away. Very mournful too were the myths which grew up in the ancient Church concerning the Apostle John, as still alive and waiting wearily for Christ's return. Even the five-score years which he is believed to have actually attained must have been labour and sorrow, and he may often have been tempted to envy Peter the lot that disciple thought so hard, when Christ foretold it by the Sea of Galilee. The swifter anguish of that cross which dismissed Peter to the presence of his Lord, and the sharp stroke of the axe which released Paul from all indcision about remaining or departing, would have been hailed as a merciful relief before John's century was closed. Truly life is brief, and, as we often think, too brief for those we love. We spend our years as a tale that is told, yet as the tale wears on men become less willing for the chapters to be long, and slowly learn to lift that prayer which youth accounts absurd,

"Teach me that harder lesson—how to live."

If the tree of life which bloomed in Eden were within our sight, and its fruit hanging low upon its branches, few who have passed out of earliest youth would put forth their hands to pluck and eat, if by so doing they doomed themselves to remain in these bodies of humiliation for ever.

But when the sentence runs, "Let your heart live for ever," our thoughts are instantly changed. There is no mockery of fixed mortality in such an aspiration, and it answers to the noblest and intensest of desires. The heart, in Scriptural language, is the seat of human consciousness and personal

identity; it is the central home of affection and thought. The heart is therefore said to fail and pine or die when existence ceases to be gladsome, when thought becomes a burden, when love decays, when courage sinks to fear and fear faints down to apathy, and the warm pulsating soul turns into a stone, as it did in Nabal's breast. In this sense the heart may die while the flesh flourishes. It may be palsied, as Belshazzar's was, by the vision of a handwriting on the wall; it may wither under the blighting influence of hopeless sadness until, as Paul declares, "the sorrow of the world worketh death;" it may be so rotted by sin, so hardened by resistance to what is good, so buried under the refuse of sensuality, as to lose all power of understanding spiritual truth, all appreciation of moral worth, and all faculty for fellowship in love. Yet while the heart may die in the midst of vigorous fleshly life, bodily decay may not impair its health. We often see hearts springing into newness of life as the body droops and perishes; when the outward man pines into feebleness and physical desires fail, thought frequently clarifies, and holiest aspirations become strong. Loving insight, devotion, self-sacrifice, often gain their fullest power in dying hours. Courage has been displayed by death-stricken men and women in its sublimest forms, and spiritual heroism shines most gloriously in that triumphant fidelity to principle which induces the martyr to refuse deliverance and leads him through the gates of dissolution as one who anticipates a conqueror's crown. The pure heart knows, what the intellect may doubt, that it will not die, but live. Death is horrible to the upright, chiefly because it seems to contradict the soul's intimations of her own immortality. There is no mockery therefore in the words, "Let your heart live for ever." A grey-haired sire may sit with smiling childhood on his knee, and without forgetting his old age may listen to these words in peace; and when his spirit passes, you may take the sentence as it stands in an older version and whisper to the departing traveller, "Your heart shall live for ever," and you shall yet praise the Lord and drink the new wine of His kingdom out of the golden vessels of His heavenly house.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Psalm xxxiv., and Luke xiv. 7-24.

THE CHOICE OF LIFE.

As the psalm now reads in the revised version, an element of human choice is recog-

nised, "Let your heart live for ever." What have we to say to this? Can we give to ourselves Eternal Life? Can we keep alive our own souls? If not, how shall we attach any useful meaning to such words? The fleshly parallel may assist our thought. No man can keep alive his own body for a single moment by any expedient, or by any exercise of will in independence of God. Yet we are responsible for letting our bodies live. We may let them die, and have power to commit suicide. You may poison your body. Like the demoniac youth, you may cast it into fire or water. Like Saul at Gilboa you may drive sharp steel into it, and it will surely die. Refraining from all these violent acts, you may simply refuse food and the end is not far off. More easily still, you may do as thousands are doing every day before our eyes and court disease and premature decay by unduly pampering the flesh, by fulfilling all its passions uncurbed by self-denial, so that while loving life and desiring many days you may hasten the day of death by self-indulgence. Is it not thus also with the heart? The highest evidence of life in a human heart is love. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love," writes the Apostle John. Our hearts can only live by keeping the great commandment on which all precepts hang. Every passion which that everlasting law condemns is an instrument of death to what is holiest, best, and happiest within. The indulgence of envy, wrath, jealousy, lasciviousness, pride, or hatred destroys the power of pure affection, divides the soul from its fellows, so causing it to shrivel into darkness and isolation and gradually working spiritual decay.

By the same law of death to unused or misused faculties, the heart may perish through an exclusive culture of the intellect. A man of science may live in a world into which no defiling passion enters, where the truth of things is prized supremely, and for its own sake, and where the common enticements of evil have no allurements, yet he may become as cold as a frosty day in winter, and as indifferent to the sufferings of his fellows as the east wind which breathes its withering blast on fur-clad wealth and naked poverty, and on the sickly and the strong alike. It is possible even to engage in studies which have some benevolent intent, to ponder social problems, to explore the past, to criticise the theories of high thinkers and the methods of great workers who have sought to amend the condition of mankind, yet to so divorce

these blameless, these honourable labours from all actual participation in the struggles of life as to become an unsocial socialist, a humanitarian sorely lacking in humanity, a philanthropist loving all men while musing in a library or writing books, yet rendering to no living man or woman the veritable deeds of love, and possibly casting scorn upon the love of Him who gave His life for the world, and revealed the only possible redemption for mankind.

These sentences may be condemned by some as the utterance of a preacher too narrow-minded to appreciate purely scientific thought, but they involve no disparagement of any intellectual work, and the same doctrine may be applied to Biblical and theological pursuits.

It is possible to be a diligent student of the Christian scriptures, an eloquent exponent of the Great Teacher's words, and a sincere admirer of the beauty which shines in Him as the chiefest among the sons of men, and yet to become petrified by familiarity with all that is holiest in spirit and mightiest in moral motive, while disobedient to the maxims and ungoverned by the principles of the gospel. A life of thought unaccompanied by healthy, social action, must bring death to the heart, and the more directly the thinking is concerned about religion, the speedier will be the process. There may be a name to live while dissolution works within. Others may suspect no decline, and the man may deem himself well and in need of nothing, but a time must come when he will have to say with a nameless confessor—

"First went my hopes of perfecting mankind,
And faith in them, then freedom in itself,
And virtue in itself, and then my motives, ends
And powers and loves, and human love went last."

He may also plead that the change went on unconsciously—

"I felt this no decay, because new powers
Rose as old feelings left."

But these new powers, these intellectual forces, these heightened gifts of wit and song, of keen analysis and lucid statement, of stirring appeal and poetic presentation, are in his case but the hiding of spiritual famine and of waning faculty for fellowship with Christ in the divine service of man. For all who think and say, but do not, there must be an awakening to exclaim, as did this same confessor—

"My powers were greater: as some temple seemed
My soul, where nought is changed, and incense rolls
Around the altar, only God is gone,
And some dark spirit sitteth in His seat."

On the other hand every exercise of kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, long-suffering and self-discipline strengthens the heart, increases the force of virtuous resolve, and links the spirit more vitally with others. The omission of any social duties, and the entertainment of any anti-social feelings and ideas, is not only a robbery of one's neighbour but involves the spoliation of self. Selfishness means affectional paralysis, and the heart can only thrive and throb with joy when, ceasing to nurture its own dainty pangs and ruminate upon its own delights, it minds the things of others and renders love to God and man with uncalculating kindness; as the sun shines because it is a sun and pours its radiance into space, although the worlds which float in its brightness have no light to flame back in return.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Isaiah lv., and 1 John iii.

THE BREAD BY WHICH HEARTS LIVE.

But whence comes such life as this to man? Being what we are, and touched, as we all know too well, with every feeling we denounce, how can we pour out such love? We are not ignorant of the fact that to be such lamps of light and warmth would insure unflinching happiness and raise our natures to partake the peace and glory of the Blessed God. But, alas! we cannot create such clean hearts within, nor renew such rightness of spirit. There is no original spring of life or love in man, and to become great in the faculty of love there must be some filling up of our selfish, because hungry and unsatisfied souls, from a higher source. John answers our inquiry for this spring of spiritual life by saying: "We love Him because He first loved us." The heart can only live by bread, and its true bread must come down from heaven. Not without deep meaning, therefore, did the psalmist write: "Let your heart live for ever," in relation to a religious feast, a temple banquet, a festival of holy meditation for humble seekers of God.

"Of Thee cometh my praise in the great congregation:
I will pay my vows before them that fear Him.
The meek shall eat and be satisfied;
They shall praise the Lord that seek after Him:
Let your heart live for ever."

The poor were to taste the king's consecrated sheep and oxen. The common hunger of their mouths was to be richly satisfied, but they were also invited to partake of the king's gratitude. He would stand up and

declare the name of his saving Lord in the midst of the congregation gathered round his tables, bearing witness to His goodness and mercy.

"Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him:
All ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him;
And stand in awe of Him, all the seed of Israel.
For He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;
Neither hath he hid his face from him;
But when he cried unto him he heard."

These cheering memories of divine goodness were to be the true wine of the festival, making glad the hearts of his guests. These thoughts of mercy and truth were the royal bread of God; and nourished by such food of faith and gratitude the meek would rejoice and revive. "Let your heart live for ever" becomes no vain or flattering salutation when coupled with such great provisions. It is but a varied form of the invitation, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. . . . Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live." "Let your heart live for ever." Take away all that was local and temporal in the setting of these marvellous words, bring them down from their writer's age to our own, and from the Hebrew temple to the Christian family, and there need be no vagueness or mystery in their meaning. The heart can only live by love. Uncared for, deceived, betrayed, forsaken, or cut off from the real love of others by unbelieving suspicion or by the blindness of selfish passions, it pines and shrivels as a plant without sunshine, or as a traveller in dry and thirsty lands where no water is. Let it live then. There is love around and above, take it in; rejoice, and be strong! But what love shall we take? Shall it be the love of father or mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, friend? Yes, take it all and prize it, wisdom answers; it is priceless. Better such affection in its purity than all wealth and fame, or station and power. A rich voluptuary, who had also won distinction in literature and politics, once sat at the window of his palatial house, and watched an old blind mendicant tottering along the road as he sang a plaintive song with quivering voice. By his side was a fair young child, whose tender care for the old man shone out in many touching ways. Seeing this, the sated nobleman exclaimed, "I would wander blind and bareheaded over Europe to be loved like

that!" Better such love than all else this world can furnish. Take it all then freely, and return it richly. You cannot love too well. Pour out your own heart in unstinted streams of kindness on the good and evil, on the kind and the unkind alike, for love is the one thing which gathers by scattering, increases by sacrifice, and grows by giving out its vital force. Whoever tells us that we may love a fellow-creature too well is ignorant of what love means.

The cross of Christ is the measure of the love He bids His disciples give to one another, and none need fear to overpass the bounds of the command to love each other as our Lord has first loved us. But while the sun of earth is beaming comforts and rejoicings in your soul, let it ever be remembered that human love is not the bread of life eternal. Affection between mortal men unlinked with faith in God may cheer some fleeting days, and sustain the soul through many tribulations, but it is like the manna gathered in the wilderness, of which the Israelites partook for a few fleeting seasons and then died, or like the water in the well at Sychar, of which men drank to thirst again and perish. We will not here speak of faithlessness, of love lip-deep, which makes its promise to the ear and breaks it to the heart. We will not dwell upon the possibility of ill-requited service, of sacrifices consumed by ungracious greed, of confidence betrayed, and mercy mocked, or long devotion coldly disesteemed. All these sorrows are common in the world, and are causing heart-break oftener than evening shadows fall. But taking human affections in their purest and most prosperous forms, it is certain that their very intensity is the measure of some future loss and pain to those who have no hope of any blessed sequel to this earthly tale.

"The soul from loss to loss, from shore to shore,
Rolls to eternity.

* * * *

"Thou makest a perpetual solitude
Wrap all man's steps around.
Thou hast not seen it fit that certitude
Or joy should here be found.

"Whatever good he has time takes away:
Nought can he call his own in life's quick flight,
So that he here can make a home, or say,
Here is my house, my field, or my delight.

"All sights he may but for a moment see,
Must age, unhelped, alone."

If the heart is to live for ever it must eat of some meat that endureth unto everlasting life, and drink of some water which shall become a spring welling up within for evermore.

FIFTH SUNDAY.

Read Ezekiel xxxvii. 1-14, and John vi. 41-59.

CAN DEAD HEARTS LIVE?

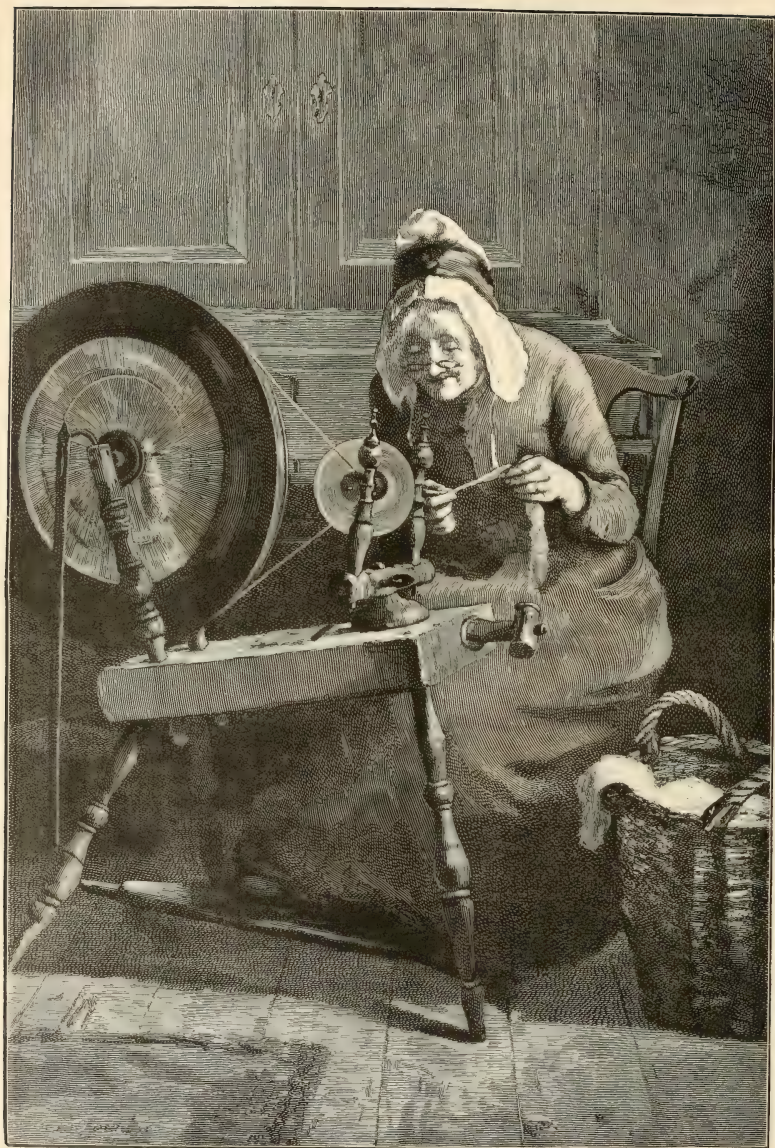
In the Royal Academy last year there was a picture which excited much attention, and will still be fresh in the recollection of many who read these lines. The subject was rather depressing, but its artistic treatment was very fine, and it may help to present one aspect of our theme. The picture represents a man whose heart is dead, having died of starvation in the midst of luxury combined with the poisonous fruit of sin. There is but one figure in the composition—a man, prematurely old, but anxiously arrayed in all that may preserve a guise of youth. His general bearing, costly attire, and the massive furniture of the room tell of ample wealth, and suggest high station. A table laden with rich plate, and flowers, and fruits, and wines, assure us that he fares sumptuously every day. But the epicure sits alone before the hearth, his eyelids reddened by wine and tears; his head sinking forward with an air of broken pride and hopeless disappointment; his hands drooping with the listless feebleness of an aimless mind. The man has had everything on earth but love. In a previous picture a beautiful counterfeit sat at the table with him, while the mask of simulated love fell from lips that no longer strove to smile. Now the pretence has gone. There was never any hallowing or endearing affection upon either side, and both becoming weary of the sham, the woman carries her enchantments to another scene, and the man remains to endure the humiliation as he may. The dream is done, and he sits alone with a heart out of which the last vestiges of love, hope, joy, and courage have departed. He bears within his breast a heart of stone, a dead heart, a heart that expects no resurrection, a heart that can never live again unless, deep down in the grave it inhabits, it should one day hear the voice of the Son of God, and feel the breath of His quickening Spirit, like the dry bones in the Valley of Vision.

In that same exhibition there was a picture by another artist which will set before us a contrasted thought. By a coincidence which few may have noticed, it was placed upon an opposite wall in the same room. The scene, still speaking of it as present, is laid in a village churchyard. The graves are not those of the great. The monuments are for the most part rudely fashioned, and many

nameless hillocks cover the obscure departed. On a weather-crumbled tombstone an old farm labourer is seated with a young girl in mourning by his side ; she is gazing intently at a plain mound of turf on which a few costless flowers plucked from a village garden have been laid. This man has had none of those good things we saw in the other picture, and he is almost alone, yet on his face there is a look of calm content. He contemplates a spot where again and again he has laid his dearest treasures, but he is not sad. A light of tender love and patient hope shines upon his wrinkled face, lending softness and beauty to its otherwise hard lines. The old man's heart is not dead. It is not withered. It is still uncrinkled. On what then does it live ? By what strange elixir is it sustained ? Does that grave nourish it ? Does that lowly and ill-kept churchyard revive, and people it with happy guests ? Can the memories of vanished joys and death-closed stories of affection afford contentment now that those hands are still and those dear faces are changed ? No ; but the old heart lives and is young, because he believes that the hearts of his dead are alive for evermore, and that in the house eternal he and they will presently be gathered face to face with Him who is our eternal life, because He is the revelation and the formation of eternal love.

"Let your heart live for ever." Oh ! miserable mockery, if there were no love divine on which our affections may be nourished. The heart cannot possibly survive the loss of that on which it feeds. It cannot outlive its chosen springs and objects of affection. To live for ever it must eat imperishable meat, and fasten its affections on eternal things. But for the presentation of these unfailing things in Christ one might as well go into some hospital and bid the sick be well and strong, or into yonder garden of sepulchres and bid the dead arise and walk, as speak to bereaved and mortal men of rest and joy, and never-failing hope. There is a handwriting on the walls of all our happiest, healthiest homes as plain as that which troubled the Chaldean king. Distressful thoughts of joys, departing never to return, flit ghostlike through our minds amidst scenes of mirth. As we walk together from the starting places of youth we see fair faces slowly changing towards a day when they will disappear from us or our eyes close on them. There is a law of death working all

around and in each person, so that every pulse is a movement towards decay. As we think of what it all means our hearts grow sick and faint, and we instinctively turn our mental gaze to less distressful sights. But forgetfulness is the multiplier and aggravator of grief. Wiser are we to flee from the land of illusions, and to seek among the verities of God for a faith which shall flinch from no realities, and ask for no escape from the inevitable portion of mankind. Standing amidst the ravages of death, Christ said, "I am the resurrection and the life." He wept indeed that day, and we may weep, but His were not despairing or foreboding tears. He wept, moreover, not over the corpse of Lazarus but over the unbelieving, the dying and dead hearts crowding round the grave. Far from weeping over Lazarus as departed, He would be more inclined to weep over the work of bringing him back again to this inferior life, and to the endurance of a second death. In restoring him to mortality he was conferring a lesser benefit than other men obtain in that "better resurrection" which ushers into everlasting life. Lazarus was brought back as a sign of power to do far greater works than the quickening of bodies. By means of the poor miracle which Christ reluctantly performed, He became the resurrection and the life to those broken-hearted sisters. Their hearts revived at His mercy, and to-day, having passed with their brother through the once dreaded portals, they still live in Him. In formless power, Christ evermore is coming unto us. He comes to us by the resting places of our dead and whispers of the glory of God. He comes where our purposes have failed, where our courage has faltered, where affection has brought pain, and fondest fellowships have left the dreariest desolation. He comes where sin has wrought decay and remorse produced despair. He comes where other helpers fail, and comforters grow speechless and ashamed ; and ever as he comes life awakens, hope stirs, like springtide in the leafless woods, love kindled by His love revives to feel affinity with God, and at His visitation hearts grow strong again, and faith in the eternal Father is the power of an endless life. This is the true temple feast whereof the meek may eat and be satisfied, the feast of which the simple supper of our Lord is at once an emblem and a pledge. For this goodness "they shall praise the Lord that seek after Him," wherefore "Let your heart live for ever."



"Left alone, in a wearisome world,
But to work for her daily bread."

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XL.—GILBERT IS QUITE SUCCESSFUL.

TO have bestowed the warmest affections of one's heart upon an unworthy object is, beyond doubt, a great calamity. It is true that, after a certain time of life, we are not inclined to view such mishaps in a very serious light; we are apt to smile indulgently, but a trifle ironically, at those who bewail themselves over a blighted love affair, because we know that so many worse things than that may befall the pilgrim through this vale of tears. He may, for example, be cursed with a disorganized liver, which is a thing far less amenable to treatment than a broken heart; or he may, through some taint of hereditary sin, be an Irish landlord; or he may, for the matter of that, have been successful in his wooing and married the woman of his choice, with consequences altogether unforeseen by him when he gaily bade farewell to celibacy. In fact, there is no end to the incurable ills which flesh is heir to, whereas it has been admitted on all hands since the world began that love-troubles, though sharp for a time, are by no means incurable. But wisdom of this kind comes only by experience; and until the age of thirty or thereabouts (which is as much as to say during the better, and by far the longer half of life), few men or women attain to it. And since an affliction is heavy or light simply and solely in proportion as it is felt to be the one or the other by the person afflicted, it must be allowed that Brian Seagrave, after hearing Beatrice's confession, had every right to consider himself a most unhappy mortal.

That right would, at any rate, have been conceded to him by Kitty Greenwood, who at the same time was thinking the same thing of herself for very much the same reason. Yet she was not, in truth, quite as unhappy as he, because the discovery that she had been deceived in the object of her adoration had a very different effect upon her from that which a similar discovery had produced upon him. She might have forgiven Gilbert for deserting her; she might have loved him still, or fancied that she loved him still, after his heart had been given to another woman; but when she saw plainly that he was not only ready to sacrifice her

for the sake of material advantages but determined to cover his retreat by forcing her to accept the responsibility of breaking off their engagement, her love for him died at once and for ever. The man's whole character was revealed to her by that final touch of baseness, and her first feeling was rather one of thankfulness for her deliverance than of anger against him. She was, however, very angry with Beatrice; and that she did not at once give him the dismissal which he almost asked for at Halcombe was due partly to a not unnatural reluctance to make her rival's path smooth, and partly to a reason which many people might think far-fetched, but which had a certain weight with one whose conscience was sensitive and schooled to the examination of nice points. If—as was evidently the case—Gilbert had been led astray by an unscrupulous flirt, might it not be her duty to withhold his release until he positively demanded it? If she possessed any influence for good upon him, ought she not to exercise it and rescue him, perhaps, from a temptation which had not yet quite got the victory over him? He had certainly been fascinated once before by Beatrice and had shaken off the fascination.

Mrs. Greenwood would have been justifiably incensed against the sacerdotalism which she had often decried, had she known what was passing through Kitty's mind, and that it was not to her but to Mr. Monckton that her daughter looked for a solution of this somewhat fantastic problem. But she heard nothing about it, and Kitty's application to her spiritual director was made without any previous sanction from the home authorities. In fact the girl knew very well that her parents, kind and good as they were, could not possibly make up her mind for her, whereas she thought that Mr. Monckton could. She was a little surprised when, after listening patiently to all that she had to tell him, he answered without a moment's hesitation—

"It is as simple a case as I ever heard in my life. Send him about his business; you are well rid of a worthless fellow."

Nor did he give her all the credit that she had expected for her willingness to snatch a brand from the burning. "It can't be anybody's duty to marry a man against his will and her own," he said, with a slight smile.

"All you have to ask yourself is whether you can love and respect him ; and if you can't, of course you must tell him that your engagement is at an end."

"Yes," agreed Kitty dubiously, while the tears forced their way into her eyes ; "but—but then I shall have to bear the whole blame, and mamma is sure to be very much displeased with me, and—and——"

"Yes ?" said Monckton.

"And oh, Mr. Monckton, it is rather hard that Beatrice Huntley should get all she wants and not even be made to feel ashamed of herself !"

"I think I may undertake to make your peace with Mrs. Greenwood ; she isn't a very implacable person, is she ? And as for Miss Huntley—well, I don't know exactly what Miss Huntley's aims and objects may be ; she has avoided me for a long time past."

"Because she hasn't dared to speak to you."

"Well, if so, I suppose she is a little ashamed of herself already ; and though her punishment is no business of yours, it is pretty sure to overtake her, I think. If she marries Gilbert Segrave that will be punishment enough in all conscience ; and if she doesn't—why, then the Manor House won't be a very pleasant place of residence for her."

"What difference will that make to her ? She has plenty of money ; she will only go off somewhere else, after doing all this mischief here."

"It has been a beneficent kind of mischief, so far as you are concerned. Indeed, I can't pity you, for you have nothing to accuse yourself of, and most certainly nothing to regret. Besides, I doubt whether you would thank me for pitying you."

This timely appeal to Kitty's pride was not without effect. It was quite true that she did not want to be pitied ; nor, as she walked home, did she feel that her plight was a very pitiable one after all. She could not all at once recover her spirits, but every morning when she awoke she was conscious of a sense of relief, as though some great weight had been removed from her mind, and so by degrees she began to understand that her love for Gilbert had not for some time past been as real as she had imagined it.

One afternoon she desisted him riding up to the house and went to the door to meet him, as she had been wont. Her pulse was a trifle unsteady, but she felt neither angry nor miserable, only anxious to get the coming ordeal over as quickly as might be. As

he drew nearer the sight of his trim figure and well-cut features gave her a strange sensation of repulsion ; there was no doubt about it, he had become hateful to her. He raised his hat on recognising her, cantered past to the stable-yard, and presently returned on foot. Their meetings hitherto had been such as are customary between lovers, although their conversations had not always been lover-like ; but now, when he approached her, she drew back, saying—

"Will you come into the library, please ? I have something to tell you."

This was very much what he had been prepared for. He followed her, assuming a seriousness of demeanour suitable to the occasion, and the moment that he had closed the door she began—

"I have been thinking about what you said to me before you went to London, and I see that you were right. It would be impossible for us to live together happily."

"If you think so," answered Gilbert, in grave, subdued accents, "no doubt it is so. I can only bow to your decision."

Nothing in his face or his voice betrayed any inward satisfaction that he may have felt. He looked like one who has had hard measure dealt out to him, but who respects himself too much to complain of it. Kitty had made up her mind to let him march off with the honours of war, since he coveted them ; but she was a little bit provoked all the same.

"I suppose," she remarked, "that you think so too."

"I am afraid that, if I am to be truthful, I must answer yes. It seems to me that in many ways—especially with regard to religious questions—our notions of life and duty are diametrically opposed ; and I ought not, perhaps, to expect that you should yield to me in such matters. I shall neither have time nor, frankly speaking, inclination, to go to church on week-days ; nor, if we were married, would you be able to take your place in society and go on devoting yourself to ecclesiastical exercises. I can't help admitting that these are sufficient reasons to justify you in putting an end to our engagement."

"I dare say they might be ; but they are not the real reasons, and I think you should be told what my real reason is. It is simply what you said the other day—that I find you are not what I took you for, and that—I don't love you."

Probably it was not altogether disagreeable to Kitty to make this unequivocal statement ; certainly it was not altogether

agreeable to Gilbert to hear it. He had an abundance of phrases ready, designed to prove to her in the kindest and most delicate way that, although she might still love him, it was expedient that she should renounce him; but he was not prepared, upon the spur of the moment, to show cause why she should still love him, although she renounced him; and doubtless that accounted for his blurring out the clumsy rejoinder of—

"It has taken you some time to make this discovery."

"No," she answered simply; "it did not take me long—scarcely a minute, I think. I knew it really before you had finished speaking to me that day at Halcombe."

"Indeed! Then I am surprised that you did not say so at once."

"I thought it better to do as you advised, and take a few days to think it over in. It seemed to me that there was no immediate hurry."

"None whatever. When one has a cruel thing to say, one can always make it doubly effective by saying it deliberately."

"Yes; that is just what I felt about the words that you used to me at Halcombe. They were not hasty words, and I could not go on deceiving myself after them."

Gilbert winced. For weeks he had been doing all that in him lay to bring about this result; yet, now that he had arrived at it, he did not half like it. So painful was it to him to be despised, and so far was he from sharing Kitty's conviction that their old love was dead and gone, that she might, if she had wished it, have won him back to his allegiance even at this eleventh hour. Happily, she had no such desire; for it is certain that he would have repented of his weakness immediately after giving way to it.

"You have not one spark of love left for me, then!" he exclaimed.

She shook her head.

"As little as you have for me," she replied. "I think we understand each other," she added presently in a low voice, "and there is no occasion to say anything more."

Well, really this was very amazing. Gilbert had always been accustomed to regard Kitty as a dear, good little soul, with no brains to speak of and a nature so guileless that any child might get the better of her. Yet here she was making a man of the world look utterly mean and foolish, showing him plainly that she could read to the bottom of his heart and refraining from entering into particulars with a disdainful magnanimity which made his position quite untenable. There was

nothing left for him to do but to evacuate it without loss of time. To do so gracefully was impossible; but notwithstanding his humiliation and embarrassment, he remembered how important it was that there should be no public misapprehension of the causes which had led to this rupture; so he said hesitatingly—

"I think, for both our sakes, it will be better to make your parents and—and everybody understand that we part because—because—in short, because you have changed your mind about me."

"You will not be blamed," she answered briefly; "I shall tell them nothing more nor less than the truth—that I am convinced that I do not care enough about you to marry you."

Then he mumbled a few words of farewell and got out of the room somehow.

A man who proposes to act disgracefully should make sure beforehand that he is of sufficiently tough fibre to endure contempt. Gilbert, unluckily for himself, was not so constituted, and he rode away from Morden Court in anything but a jubilant mood. He had been very successful, for he had not only regained his liberty but had had it thrust upon him, and had been assured that nothing of a nature to cast discredit upon him would be revealed to the neighbourhood; yet he was made miserable by the consciousness that there was one person in the world who knew him for what he was. He almost doubted whether the game was worth the candle. So morbid was his sensitiveness that to incur the disdain of a single insignificant young woman seemed to him, for the moment, too heavy a price to pay for wealth, fame, and gratified ambition. Moreover, he could not feel quite sure of her. Women are proverbially bad hands at keeping a secret; she might let out the truth any day to Monckton, for instance; it dawned upon him that for a long time, perhaps for years to come, his reputation would be in a measure at her mercy. If, at least, she would hold her peace until after the election! But even that did not seem certain.

About the last man in the world whom he would have wished to meet, while under the influence of these despondent forebodings, was Admiral Greenwood; but it was the Admiral's thickest figure which loomed suddenly up in the twilight as he was unfastening the park-gate, and it was the Admiral's jovial voice which called out—

"Hullo, Gilbert! Back from London, eh?"

Well, what news of Brian's opera? I suppose you have been giving Kitty a full, true, and particular account of the whole thing. Why she didn't go up with you I can't make out; but women are full of fads and caprices—even the best of 'em—though I don't say so to Mrs. Greenwood. *Varium et mutabile*, you know."

Gilbert perceived at once that the Admiral must be enlightened. The necessity was a painful one; but it would be very unwise to shirk it; so he said in a grave, sad voice—

"I have only too good reason to know it. I am sorry to tell you that all is over between your daughter and me."

"What!" roared the Admiral. And then—for, albeit a pious man, he had spent the greater part of his life in the Royal Navy—he proceeded to relieve his feelings after the fashion customary among sailors, while Gilbert sat silent on his horse, the picture of dignified resignation.

"God forgive me for swearing!" ejaculated the Admiral, after pausing a moment to take breath; "but this is really preposterous. Come, come; we mustn't make mountains out of molehills. Lovers' quarrels—kiss and make it up again, eh? Now, Gilbert, you just come straight back to the house with me, and we'll set this all right in a jiffy."

But Gilbert made a melancholy gesture of dissent.

"You don't understand," said he mildly. "There has been no quarrel; but Miss Greenwood has told me in so many words that she does not care enough for me to become my wife."

"I don't believe it," exclaimed the Admiral.

Gilbert gathered up his reins. "Of course," he remarked, "I can't compel you to accept my word."

The Admiral did not appear to be much impressed by this lofty rebuke. "Stop a bit, my young friend," returned he; "you're asking me, let me remind you, to believe that my girl is a jilt, and I shall want better security than your word before I'll sit down under an accusation of that kind. I may be wrong—and if I am I'll beg your pardon—but it strikes me very forcibly that I haven't heard the rights of this affair yet. One thing I can tell you: no man shall play fast and loose with my daughter; and if I find that is what you've been doing, so sure as I stand here, I'll thrash you first and make the place too hot to hold you afterwards."

The truth was that the Admiral had never

been able to conquer his distrust of his prospective son-in-law, and although none of the rumours which had been flying about Kingscliff had reached his ears, he had an intuitive conviction that this catastrophe was none of Kitty's creating.

"I am sorry," said Gilbert, "that you should think fit to express yourself so intemperately. I can only refer you to Miss Greenwood, and hope that, when you have seen her, you will feel that you owe me an apology. Good-night."

Thereupon he turned and went his way, with an outward composure which concealed much inward perturbation. The Admiral's threat of thrashing him was, of course, all nonsense; the difference in their ages rendered anything in the shape of a personal encounter between them impossible. But that the place might easily be made too hot to hold him he did not doubt. "What a thundering idiot I was to speak to the man at all!" he muttered. "It would have been so simple to be overcome by my emotions and to ride on, without answering, when he hailed me."

All his previous misgivings were swept away by the thought of this new danger. Everything now depended upon whether Kitty chose to stand to her guns or not, and really there was no reason why she should brave the wrath of a choleric father in order to shield a false lover. Nevertheless, Gilbert saw that, if the worst came to the worst, he could make out a tolerably plausible case for himself. She might bring charges against him, but she could hardly prove them; and the fact remained that he had given the Admiral a strictly truthful version of their rupture. It was Kitty and not he who had put an end to the engagement, and she had done so on the specific ground that she no longer loved him. The most determined suitor in the world could only retire after such a declaration as that.

As he rode through Kingscliff it occurred to him that it might be prudent to forestall rumour and provide the gossips with an authorised account of what must in any event become the subject of eager discussion before the next twenty-four hours were over. There was a small club in the place, which at that season of the year was always thronged with loungers between five and seven o'clock. Thither he betook himself, and leaving his horse in charge of a boy at the door, went up-stairs to the billiard-room, where, as he had expected, he found half-a-dozen men playing pool and another half-dozen or so looking on.

One of them, Johnson by name, immediately accosted him with, "Well, Segrave, you look very down in the mouth. Radical prospects not quite so bright as they were, are they?"

This Johnson, a major on half-pay, a frequenter of tea-parties, a steward of local balls, and an inveterate retailer of local scandals, was just the man for Gilbert's purpose. He was of course a Conservative (for who ever heard of a Radical half-pay major?), but he liked to be upon good terms with the landed proprietors of the neighbourhood, and affected a certain intimacy with the owner of Beckton while deploring his political apostasy.

"I know nothing about our prospects," Gilbert answered, "nor, so far as I can see, does anybody else. If I look down in the mouth, I suppose it is because I have private worries of my own."

"Ah!" said Johnson inquisitively. "Well, we all have worries enough, goodness knows—health, or money, or women; the three roots of all evil, as I say. Hope your trouble isn't connected with any of them. Excuse me, my dear fellow, I really didn't mean to question you. Sounded as if I did, I'm afraid."

"Oh," answered Gilbert, with a sigh. "I don't mind being questioned. Indeed, I may as well tell you at once what everybody will know before long. My engagement is off, that's all."

"You don't say so! Really and finally off, is it? Dear, dear, dear! Well, Segrave, I'm sincerely sorry for this."

Gilbert gravely thanked his sympathising friend. "I hope you understand," he added, "that I make no complaint against Miss Greenwood. You, who know women so much better than I do, must be aware that they often change their minds."

"Yes, yes; very true," agreed Major Johnson, with a sapient air. "And so she has actually thrown you over. Did she—if I may ask—give any reasons?"

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders. "In such cases it is hardly generous to press for reasons," he remarked. "I have always been a Broad Churchman; perhaps that may have had something to do with it."

He moved away, as if he did not care to pursue the subject further; and after gloomily watching the players for another ten minutes and exchanging a few words with some of them, left the room.

His tactics would have been admirable but for the fact (of which he was as ignorant as Admiral Greenwood) that his attentions to

Miss Huntley had been the common talk of Kingscliff during the preceding three weeks. Thus it was that everybody in the club was speedily informed of how "that fellow Segrave" had given poor little Miss Greenwood the slip.

"Had it from his own lips," Major Johnson declared, swelling with satisfaction. "He tried to make out that she had thrown him over; because he isn't a Ritualist, too; as if I should believe such a cock-and-bull story as that! I told you how it would be. Now, didn't I tell you fellows from the first how it would be? I should have warned poor old Greenwood, only I hate to interfere with other people's business. And a most infernal shame it is, upon my word! That young Segrave," continued the Major, wagging his head solemnly—"well, his father was a friend of mine, and he is pleased to consult me pretty frequently, and perhaps I ought not to speak against him. But if I am asked my opinion of him, why, I must give it candidly."

"I'm sure you're always ready to give a candid opinion of any of your friends, Johnny," remarked a younger member of the club.

"Yes, sir," replied the Major, drawing himself up. "I am not given to disguising my opinions, and what I say behind a man's back I say to his face. Well, well, I suppose the next thing we shall hear will be that he has landed the heiress."

CHAPTER XL.—GILBERT'S TRUMP CARD.

ON the ensuing morning Gilbert received an apology from the Admiral which was more apologetic in matter than in manner.

"I cannot see my way," the old gentleman wrote, with touching simplicity, "to avoid asking your pardon; for I find that your account of what still seems to me an unaccountable business was substantially correct. I beg, therefore, to withdraw any offensive expressions which I may have used to you. As it has been suggested to me that you may be under some apprehension of losing my vote at the coming election, I take this opportunity of stating that I shall vote, as heretofore, with the party to which I have belonged all my life, little as I admire some of its measures and a good many of its members."

This was not precisely a message of peace; but it came as an immense relief to Gilbert, who had been in trembling expectation of a declaration of war. The Admiral might, and probably did, smell a rat; but pride

would keep his lips closed, while the authorised and authoritative Johnson might be trusted to put the gossips to silence. Gilbert avoided the town during the next few days; otherwise he might possibly have detected signs of a rising wave of hostile public opinion. As it was, the first intimation of its existence was conveyed to him through the medium of the local newspaper, which reported at full length a speech delivered by the Conservative candidate to a crowded meeting of the electors.

Mr. Giles, as usual, was very funny. The patient cow trotted forth at his bidding and disported herself in many a humorous metaphor; the assumed determination of the new voters to possess themselves of three acres of land apiece was declared to be not inconsistent with the insatiability of a political body which could not be contented with less than three leaders.

"We, gentlemen, as you know, have been politely called the stupid party; and perhaps it is owing to our stupidity that we can understand a man agreeing with Mr. Gladstone, or Mr. Chamberlain, or Lord Hartington, but have a difficulty in realising the mental process by which he can bring himself to agree with them all at once. We cannot help thinking that before long he will have to choose one or other of these statesmen, and fearing that that one will refuse to hand him over even a single poor acre of his neighbour's property."

But it was when Mr. Giles withdrew from the general struggle to fight his own little battle that, according to the newspaper, he carried his audience triumphantly along with him; and the newspaper added that in that audience there was a considerable contingent of Radicals. "My friend and adversary Mr. Segrave," the orator was reported to have observed, "has become curiously cautious of late. I search through his eloquent speeches in vain for cows and acres; I find no more allusions to free education; he seems to have clean forgotten that a month or two ago the Church Establishment was doomed. Now, I will not accuse my friend of hedging; but I will venture to hazard the conjecture that he has selected his leader, and that the leader in question does not hail from Birmingham. No; I think the leader in question would be found a little north of Birmingham and not quite so far north as Midlothian. I haven't a word to say against that selection, which may or may not be a prudent one; but I can't help wondering in my stupid Conservative way, how we are to

reconcile it with Mr. Segrave's earlier and more distinct utterances. We know, because he has told us so, that he is in favour of very sweeping measures indeed—and Brutus is an honourable man (laughter). We know—for is it not recorded in the pages of that admirably edited journal, the *Kingscliff Chronicle*?—that no longer ago than the month of August last he was firmly convinced that every civilised state is as much bound to provide its humblest citizens with instruction as with food—and Brutus is an honourable man (laughter). We know—we cannot doubt it, since we have his own authority to rely upon—that a bill for the payment of members of Parliament would have his hearty support—and Brutus is an honourable man" (great laughter).

The speaker appeared to have continued in this strain for something like a quarter of an hour. There is no more tedious reading in the world than the facetious attacks of an opponent. It is impossible to see anything amusing in them, it is extremely hard to comprehend why any one should find them so, and often—as in the present instance—they appear to be absolutely pointless. What point was there in repeating "Brutus is an honourable man" at the end of every sentence? And what was there in that inane reiteration to excite "great laughter?" Gilbert found out when he turned over the page and read Mr. Giles's summing up of that branch of his subject.

"Well, gentlemen, these things are mysterious to us; for we are only stupid Conservatives, and, like the stupid man in the fable, we find it strange that the same mouth should be able to blow hot and cold. But we may rest assured that a satisfactory explanation will be forthcoming in due time. It cannot be otherwise; because nothing is more clear than that Mr. Segrave is pledged to the extreme Radical programme, and although I cannot pretend to an intimate personal acquaintance with my distinguished rival, yet, from all that I hear of him, I feel convinced that he would be the last man in the world—quite the last man in the world—to break an engagement of any kind" (roars of laughter).

This was very disagreeable, and most gentlemanlike conduct it was on the part of Giles to give a private and personal character to a political controversy. Such allusions are just what tend more than anything else to degrade public life and to deter respectable persons from entering upon it. However, Gilbert could have pardoned him his

allusion if only it had not been received with roars of laughter. The echo of that significant hilarity resounded in the culprit's ears and made him feel that his position was a ticklish one. He had been assured—and he believed it—that he could not afford to lose a hundred or even fifty votes; he knew that the laughter of mobs is often and easily converted into hooting, and he very much feared that his chances might be placed in serious jeopardy by innuendoes to which he dared not make any reply. His conclusion was that the sooner he could produce his trump card the better it would be for him.

Now, this playing of the trump card would not, of course, be in all respects pleasant. His friends and the Greenwoods' friends would be a little shocked and a little disgusted to hear that so very soon after receiving his *congé* from Kitty he had engaged himself to another woman. Yet he would not be quite the first man who has astonished his neighbours in that way; they might, if they were disposed to be charitable, attribute his apparent heartlessness to a fit of pique or despair; their bitterest sarcasms would doubtless be reserved, as they always are in such cases, for the lady. And, at any rate, their disapprobation must be risked. The main thing was to be able to tell Buswell that the Manor House would soon be in his hands, and to make the electors understand that by rejecting him they would reject a man of great wealth; which wealth would assuredly be lavished upon another constituency if they allowed it to slip through their fingers. He was strongly of opinion that these practical considerations would prove more persuasive than the satire of Mr. Giles or the outraged propriety of a few old frumps and fogeys. That he held the trump card in his hand he would not allow himself to doubt. Beatrice Huntley, if he knew anything of her character, was not the woman to encourage any one as she had encouraged him without being prepared to go all lengths; nor was she the woman to be diverted from her purpose by fear of censorious tongues. Indeed, he had often envied her superb indifference to what might be said or thought about her. Still he was nervous and desperately eager to be put out of suspense. Beatrice had told him that she would stay a week and no longer at her brother's house; but it was quite possible that she might change her mind, and time was of the greatest importance. What if, after all, she were to delay her return until it should be too late?

He would not have felt much fear on that score if he had known how very unpleasant Miss Huntley's visit was being made for her by her sister-in-law. It was with feelings of the most unfeigned joy that Beatrice, having stood firm against all Lady Clementina's supplications, threats, and denunciations, and having refused Stapleford for the second time, seated herself in the train which was to convey her back to Kingscliff. She had been victorious, but her victory had not been easily won; and Gilbert, who called upon her on the following afternoon, was startled by her worn and jaded appearance.

"You don't look at all well," he could not help saying.

"I don't feel well," she replied shortly; "I have been worried to death. Deservedly worried too, which makes it all the worse."

"I don't know why or by whom you have been worried; but I am quite sure that you have not deserved it," Gilbert declared.

"Are you? I can't think why you should be; but it doesn't much matter. Now that I look at you, you also show traces of care. Has the world been treating you ill since we parted?"

"I suppose most people would think so," answered Gilbert; "but, somehow or other, I hardly imagine that you will. You never considered my engagement a wise one, did you?"

"Never. And latterly I have observed symptoms of your having come round to my view. Have you broken it off, then?"

"It has been broken off. Not by me, though, I am glad to say. Even after I knew that I had made a great mistake I felt that it would be quite impossible for me to release myself; but to you I won't pretend that I am not heartily rejoiced at my release. Indeed it is a happy release for her too."

"I should rather think it was! Excuse me if I am unflattering; but really I can't help agreeing with you."

"I don't think that is unflattering," said Gilbert; "it is the truth. It was neither her fault nor mine that we could not be happy together. Only I am very sorry that we did not recognise facts a little sooner. When I look back upon it all I am amazed at my—my—"

"Yes? What is it that you are amazed at? Your patience, perhaps?"

"Oh, no; I was bound to be patient, under the circumstances. I was going to say at my madness. Surely a man must be crazy if he imagines himself in love with one woman while all the time he is really in love with another."

"Quite fit for a padded cell, I should say. And can it be that that is actually your lamentable case?"

"Don't laugh at me," pleaded Gilbert reproachfully; "this is no laughing matter for me, whatever it may be for you. And I am sure you know, and have known for a long time, that that is my case. Sometimes I think that I may have feared my fate too much. When I first met you—well, it wasn't very strange that I should regard you as being far above my reach, was it? Now that I am better acquainted with you, I see that you don't value yourself, as most women in your place would, for your money or even for your beauty. I now know that you would never think of saying to yourself, 'I am entitled to marry a man of the highest position, and therefore I shall be satisfied with nothing short of that.' But I could not very well know it then, could I?"

"I forgive you for having taken my measure by too low a standard," said Beatrice gravely; "it was only natural."

"It was natural, at all events, that I should be extremely reluctant to admit to myself that I had done so foolish a thing as to fall in love with you. I persuaded myself that all I felt for you was admiration, and afterwards friendship—when you seemed willing to allow me that privilege. So things went on until last summer, in London, when I left you so suddenly—do you remember?—and in a sort of panic proposed to Miss Greenwood and was accepted. It was a conclusive way of proving to myself that I did not love you."

Beatrice was bending over the fire, resting one elbow on her knee and shielding her face from the blaze with a large feather hand-screen. "Oh," she said, without changing her attitude or looking at Gilbert; "that was why you proposed to Kitty Greenwood, was it?"

"Yes," he answered unblushingly; "that was why. It was wrong, perhaps, and certainly it was foolish; but I have repented of it and I am ashamed of it."

He rose and drew nearer to her. "Do you forgive me, Beatrice?" he asked; and as he spoke he took her left hand, which was lying on the arm of her chair.

She drew it away; but without apparent displeasure. Indeed she was not under the influence of any emotion at all that he could detect; and it was in a perfectly cool, matter-of-fact voice that she asked: "What is it that you are ashamed of?"

"Why, I have told you," he answered;

"I am ashamed of having all but married a girl whom I did not love."

"Oh, I think not. I don't see how you can be ashamed of that; because, you see, that is an offence of which you haven't been guilty. If you feel ashamed—but are you sure that you do?—surely it must be of having forsaken a girl whom you really did love when you asked her to marry you, and whom I suppose that you really love still—in your peculiar fashion."

For a moment Gilbert was horribly frightened; but, remembering that it would be quite characteristic of Beatrice to torment him a little before owning herself vanquished, he took heart of grace.

"You don't mean what you say," was his rejoinder.

"I assure you I do; and between ourselves, isn't it the truth? Come, Mr. Segrave, we are alone, and there is no reason in the world why we should not be quite open with each other. I intend, at least, to be quite open with you, and, to set you more at your ease, I may as well tell you at once that you are in no way a mystery to me. You were, and, as I said just now, I believe you still are, as much in love with Kitty Greenwood as you are capable of being in love with any one; you hesitated a long time about proposing to her, because you are gifted with immense prudence, and your hesitation naturally increased when it dawned upon you that you might secure a far more valuable prize. You are so kind as to say that I don't value myself by the amount of my fortune; still I am aware that that is just what constitutes my value in the eyes of prudent persons, and of course my value was greatly enhanced in the eyes of one prudent person when I came into possession of this property, which Mr. Buswell wants so badly for building purposes. In July last you had fully made up your mind to marry me and the Manor House; but at a critical moment your prudence deserted you; your head followed your heart, and lo and behold! you found yourself an engaged man. Now, after a more or less painful struggle, you are once more free. I congratulate you upon your freedom, and I should imagine that you are likely to retain it."

Gilbert had turned white to the lips. He saw that there was but one chance for him, and he took it. "What you say sounds very like the truth," he answered boldly. "It would be easy to put it differently; but I have already told you that I did think myself in love with Kitty, and I confess that I

am not altogether indifferent to money. I don't know who is. What then? Neither you nor I are sentimental; we know that friendship and sympathy wear better than love, and I think I may venture to say that we are suited to one another. You know the worst of me now. If you will marry me, Beatrice, you shall know the best of me. Believe me, you will not find me unworthy of you."

She turned her face slowly towards him. "Mr. Segrave," she said, in deliberate accents, "I would as soon marry a convict."

So for a few seconds they faced one another without speaking. It was Gilbert who first broke the silence. "You have deceived me intentionally from first to last, then?" he exclaimed.

She inclined her head slightly in token of assent.

"But why?—why?" he burst out excitedly. "What have I ever done to you that you should treat me with such cold-blooded cruelty? You have made me act like a scoundrel—for I have acted like a scoundrel; there is no use in denying it now—you have probably lost me my election; I don't see how I can even go on living in my own house after this. And all for what? To gratify your miserable vanity?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Segrave; not for that reason. I beg you to believe that I am not proud of my conquest. Quite the contrary; for if you have acted like a scoundrel, as you certainly have, my conduct has not been above reproach; and if you lose your election, I have lost more. I have lost friends who will never come back to me, while you, I dare say, will find your way into the House of Commons one of these days. As for cruelty, you are hardly the right person to complain of that. I say nothing about Kitty Greenwood, who will live to thank you for deserting her, though probably she will never thank me for having saddled myself with a rather repulsive task in order to bring about her desertion; but you must have taken me for a curiously dense observer if you thought I did not understand what your treatment of your brother has been. You cheated him out of his estate; you allowed him to go off and work for his living, knowing perfectly well that he was no more capable of taking care of himself than an infant; you did not care what became of him; you would have let him die of hunger—I believe he actually would have died of hunger if I had not bought this property from him in the nick of time! And then you have the

face to accuse me of cruelty because I have managed to give you a taste—a very little taste—of the punishment that you deserve! After all, you are indebted to me; for you would have led a wretched life if you had been allowed to carry out your engagement; though I acknowledge that it was not for your sake that I put an end to it."

"Do you really mean that you wove this intricate and not very creditable plot out of sheer good-will to Miss Greenwood?"

She inclined her head again. "Why not?"

"The motive doesn't appear to me to be quite sufficiently powerful, that is all. I think there must have been another motive; I think I might even go so far as to form a guess at it."

She rose and stood looking at him scornfully. "I had no other motive," she said. "I do not in the least know what you are alluding to."

"No? And yet I thought that you revealed it pretty distinctly just now. I did not answer your accusations about Brian, it was hardly worth while. When a lady takes such an interest in any man as to put herself in very equivocal positions for the sake of avenging his supposed wrongs, it seldom is worth while to point out to her that she is talking nonsense about him. Well, Miss Huntley, I hope Brian will be grateful to you, but somehow or other, I scarcely think that he will, or that he will particularly enjoy the spectacle of my disgrace. He has such old-fashioned notions of morality, you know."

It almost gave him back his self-complacency to see her colour and flinch. "Good-bye, Miss Huntley," he said; "you have contrived to do a great deal of mischief and no earthly good, that I can discover, either to yourself or to anybody else. One piece of advice I will make so bold as to offer to you, and that is, that you should refrain from giving to any one else the explanation which you have just vouchsafed to me. Because I really do not think that in all England you will find a human being quite credulous enough to believe in it."

She made no answer, and he left her without another word.

CHAPTER XLII.—HOME-SICKNESS.

IF Phipps had not been a very good-natured little man in the main, he might have been vexed to find how universally the success of *The King's Veto* was attributed to his partner. A large proportion of his large acquaintance begged to be intro-

duced to Brian; undiscriminating persons congratulated him, not upon being the author of a piece which promised to be the greatest hit of recent years, but upon his insight in having associated himself with a hitherto unknown genius; the newspapers, after awarding him a line or two of approbation, went on to devote quite a generous share of their valuable space to pointing out that in Mr. Segrave had arisen a musical star which might very probably prove to be of the first magnitude.

"You're new, my dear fellow," the experienced Phipps remarked, "and the London public of the nineteenth century resembles the Athenian public of the first in some respects. They can't find words to express their admiration of you, you see, while they think they have done enough for your humble servant by saying that 'Mr. Phipps is as amusing as usual,' or something of that sort. As if it was easy to be as amusing as usual! Never mind, I'm not jealous, and I'll go shares with you in another opera as soon as you like."

This offer was made to Brian only a few days after the memorable evening which has been described; yet it was not the first offer of the kind which had reached him. From all quarters he received intimations that he might, if he pleased, render his career a lucrative one. His old friend, Mr. Berners, the musical publisher, called upon him to say that a brisk demand had already sprung up for those despised compositions which had so long lain unheeded on the shelves, and that if Mr. Segrave had any unconsidered trifle by him in the way of a ballad, suitable for voices of ordinary compass, he could engage to dispose of it upon profitable terms. "The ballad, sir, is not the highest expression of musical art; but some of the greatest composers, as you are aware, have not disdained it. And it pays. To many composers money is an object. I don't of course mean to say that it is so in your case, sir."

Brian, after a moment's hesitation, replied that money was more or less of an object in his case, and that he would willingly occupy some of his leisure hours in the manner suggested. The truth was that he did not just then feel as if he cared very much about making money, but he was anxious for work, and hardly equal to work of an ambitious description. Work, so far as he could see, would have to be the one object and pleasure of his life. There was nothing else to look forward to, and nothing else that he could bear to think about. Of Beatrice he was

determined to think no more; she was dead to him, and even worse than dead, since the very memory of past days must always be bitter to him now, instead of sweet. But it is scarcely necessary to add that he was quite powerless to carry out his determination and that he thought of her every day, not to say every hour.

One morning he received a letter from Monckton, which he read with interest, but which contained no reference to Miss Huntley. In an hastily added postscript, however, he found some not unexpected news. "I have just heard," Monckton wrote, "that the engagement between your brother and Miss Greenwood has been broken off by her wish. I hardly know whether this will be as little of a surprise to you as it is to me; I can't say that, all things considered, it seems to me to be a matter for regret."

"He takes it pretty coolly," muttered Brian; "but I suppose he wouldn't say what he thinks about it to me anyhow."

For his own part, he did not find himself able to take this fulfilment of his forebodings as coolly as he could have wished. All through that day and the next he was restless and excited, eager to know the worst, wondering whether Beatrice would take formal possession of her captive at once or not, and possessed by a feverish and impotent longing to save her from her fate. "Was there nothing to be done?" he asked himself again and again, and could only answer that certainly there was nothing to be done by him. He might think as badly of her as he pleased, but he knew well enough that she could not have played the part that she had played without deep humiliation, and it was not to be supposed that she would go through such humiliation for nothing. No; she would take her own way; she would marry Gilbert, for better or for worse; the circumstances under which she had done so would soon be forgotten; the ancient glories of Beckett would be revived; its owner would become an important personage in the county; the poor old Manor House would probably be sold and razed to the ground after all.

This last thought was singularly distasteful to Brian. He regretted with all his heart now that he had ever parted with the place. If only he could have waited a few months longer, there would have been no need for him to do so, nor would he have had to acknowledge that he, as well as Gilbert, had rendered all the sacrifices of his father's life vain. Turning these things over in his mind, he remembered all of a sudden

that the step which he had taken was perhaps not irrevocable. He was in a fair way towards earning an income quite large enough for a bachelor's modest wants; the purchase-money which he had received from Beatrice was still intact; it would not make much difference either to her or to Gilbert whether he or Mr. Buswell became the owner of a property which they no longer required. Nay, they would surely prefer having a non-resident neighbour at their gates to being brought within hail of half-a-dozen denizens of brand-new villas. At all events it could do no harm if he were to go down to Kingscliff and sound them upon the subject.

Now, it is superfluous to assert—because everybody must be aware of it—that it is within the capacity of the most single-minded of men to take himself in, upon occasion, with the most transparent of self-deceptions; and when Brian began to make preparations for a flying visit to his native place he was fully persuaded that he had a simple and definite purpose in so doing. It did not strike him that it was somewhat premature to propose a transaction contingent in its nature upon circumstances which had not yet arisen; nor did he reflect that, in any case, the proposal in question could be made with more propriety and less awkwardness by his lawyers than by himself. He was quite sure that he did not want to see his brother, and equally sure that it would be most painful to him to meet Beatrice, should he be called upon to face that ordeal. However, he thought it would be pleasant to have a chat with Monckton; added to which, he fancied that it might relieve his weary heart and brain to escape for a day or two from the bricks and mortar of London, which he had always hated, and to look once more upon the quiet woods of Beckton, upon the old grey house and the red cliffs, and the open, rolling sea. In truth, he was suffering from a sharp access of home-sickness, which, like many other maladies, is apt to attack a man when he is down. If any incentives beyond these impelled him westward he was unconscious of them and to be sure they were vague enough to be ignored.

It was early on a cold and cheerless November morning that he started from Paddington, and as the train whirled him out from the smoke-clouds which hung over the city he was fain to admit that the country at that season of the year is not much better adapted to raise the spirits of a dejected mortal than St. James's Street. The trees were bare, or nearly so; there was a motion-

less leaden sky overhead; it had been raining for some days, and round about Slough and Windsor the meadows were under water. Nor was any improvement perceptible lower down the line. Swindon, Bath, and Bristol had the forlorn, dirty, dripping appearance which only English towns can assume. English landscapes can stand grey weather better than most—there is nothing even in Lincolnshire to compare for utter, hopeless melancholy to certain parts of France—but the stunted houses, the slate roofs, and the dull red bricks of our cities have, under some atmospheric conditions, a lugubriousness which causes the heart of the beholder to sink within him.

But towards mid-day, by which time the express had rushed past Taunton, signs of a change became perceptible. The level canopy of cloud seemed to have risen a little higher; here and there it had streaks of a pearly tint, and these, gradually spreading, opened out into rifts through which rays of pale sunlight found their way, and even a suggestion of blue sky could be detected. It seemed that the west country was about to show evidence in support of the claim often put forward on its behalf, but not very often substantiated, that it possesses a separate weather system. After Exeter there was no more question of rain or gloom. The sun was shining brightly upon the low hills; the broad estuary was covered with dancing, glittering wavelets; it was pleasant to let down the window and inhale the fresh breeze which swept in from the sea.

“‘Twas autumn, and sunshine arose on the way To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back,” muttered Brian to himself. Well, the home of his fathers was not likely to give him much of a welcome, but he was glad to see the dear old country again, and glad that it should chance to smile upon him. He could not help being influenced in some degree by the weather; he could not help feeling as if he had awoke from some brooding nightmare, and as if, in spite of all, the world was not really the deplorable place that he had imagined it. He had a vision of Beatrice meeting him on the heights near the Manor House, looking at him with those clear eyes which surely could never belong to a traitress, and telling him that it was all a mistake—that she had only been putting his faith to the test, that she had never played Kitty Greenwood false, and that she had no more intention of marrying Gilbert than she had of marrying Stapleford.

But this, of course, was only a day-dream,

and a sufficiently absurd one. He returned to actualities when he stepped out to join the short branch line to Kingscliff which Sir Brian had been wont to abuse in old days, and now he began to dread a possible encounter with some acquaintance and to wish that he had taken the afternoon express, so as to arrive under cover of darkness. It was a relief to him to find the familiar little platform tenanted only by porters and newsboys. He gave his portmanteau to one of the former, hurried out of the station to avoid meeting the station-master, and jumping into a closed fly told the man to drive to the Royal Hotel. He reached his destination without having been recognised by any of the passers-by; but there was no escaping the cordiality of the landlord and landlady, who were loud in their manifestations of joy, and did not fail to add thereto some expression of surprise that Mr. Brian, after his long absence, was not bound for Beckton.

"I shall only be here for a couple of nights," Brian explained, "and I have one or two things to do. It will be more convenient for me to be in the town for this short time."

To which they both replied, "To be sure it will, sir—yes, to be sure;" and looked as if they didn't believe a word of it.

However, they added that, since they were to have the honour of sheltering him under their poor roof, they would do their best to content him, and the large first-floor sitting-room was vacant—"same as Sir John Pollington and her ladyship had when they was here in the summer, sir, and was pleased to say as everything was most comfortable."

Brian had not the heart to grieve them by replying that he had no need for a sitting-room. He knew that to them it would seem a truly lamentable thing that a Segrave of Beckton should eat his meals in the coffee-room like a commercial traveller, and he did not wish them to pity him more than they could help. So he submitted to be installed in the state apartment, with its mahogany sideboards, its horsehair sofas, and its prints representing the Queen's coronation, the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, and other national events; and while he was eating his luncheon Mr. Petherick, the landlord, came in, ostensibly to ask whether he required anything, but in reality, of course, to find out what had brought him to Kingscliff.

Mr. Petherick walked to the window, drew up the blind, and observed that it was wonderful weather for the time of year. Also that a gentleman as had come down with his

famly for the winter, had passed the remark to him that a many people lost their lives every year by running off to Italy and such-like places, where they didn't get no 'ome comforts, when they might have just as fine a climate within five hours of London. "They tell me, sir," he added, "that we're to have the fullest season this winter as has ever been known. That is, as soon as we get done with these blessed elections, which don't do no good to nobody."

"But I suppose elections are good for trade," Brian remarked.

"Why, no, sir; not nowadays. The law is that stringent a man don't hardly dare to stand any one a glass of ale; and both sides is keeping a precious sharp look-out, as I under stand. It'll be a close thing, a *very* close thing; and there's been a deal of feelin' got up of late, as I dare say you've heard, sir."

"I haven't heard much about it," answered Brian.

"Well, sir," resumed Mr. Petherick, advancing to the table and speaking in a more confidential tone, "I believe Admiral Greenwood he don't mean that it should influence him; and quite right, I say, though a Tory myself and making no secret of it, whether it costs me custom or whether it don't. When Mr. Giles come here, I says to him right out, 'My vote 'll be for the Tory candidate, sir,' I says; 'but I wish you was the Radical and the Squire on our side, like his father before him.' Ah, well, Mr. Brian, times is changed."

"They have changed for the better in some respects, I should think," said Brian.

"There's a many as think so, sir, and there's more money in the place than what there was, that's certain; but I don't know but what folks are gettin' a bit above themselves with it all. There's Brooks the linen draper can't be content to live above his shop no longer, but buys himself one of them new houses of Mr. Buswell's, and calls it Balmoral, if you please! 'Well, Mr. Brooks,' I says to him on Sunday last, 'I suppose we shall have to address your daughters as their Royal 'Ighnesses now.' I'm gettin' to be an old man, Mr. Brian, and I like the old times and the old ways best. I'd rather have seen you at the Manor House than that there young lady, though I don't deny as she's liberal to the poor. Maybe she won't be there long, though. They do say as the Squire—but I didn't ought to repeat all this foolish talk. Should you be wanting a carriage to drive you up to Beckton this afternoon, sir?"

"No, thank you, I would rather walk," answered Brian. "And indeed it is time for me to start," he added, glancing at his watch and getting up.

The landlord had not got much out of him, but, on the other hand, he had got rather more than he wanted out of the landlord. It appeared, then, that Gilbert had not even thought it worth while to disguise his intentions, and that the probability of his shortly becoming affianced to the beautiful heiress was already discussed at the bars of public-houses! In small places like Kings-cliff such things are always known and discussed; yet Brian hated to think that it was so—hated also the thought of meeting his brother. He began to see how much better it would have been to make his proposition by letter than by word of mouth; but it was too late to think of that now.

He walked briskly through the town, looking neither to right nor left, and reached the open country without having been accosted by anybody. When he had mounted some distance up the hillside, and felt tolerably safe from intrusion, he paused and looked back at the town, in the aspect of which one short year had indeed, as Mr. Petherick had declared, worked many changes. The works of Buswell were conspicuous everywhere, save in the fishermen's quarter, which presumably he had not yet dared to invade. From the point where Brian stood he could see stonemasons and bricklayers busy on the land to which his father had clung with such obstinate tenacity; the whole of it was marked out into lots; in one place a huge wooden notice-board had been set up, bearing the inscription of "Site for New Assembly Rooms." Brian turned his back upon all this with a sigh, and climbed higher.

Presently he took an abrupt turn inland, because he did not wish to pass too close to Beatrice's door, but after he had reached a certain pine-wood that he knew of he went his true course again until, on arriving at the outskirts of it, he could gaze down at the old red house which had been his for a short time, and which he hoped would be his again. It too was changed, and, for the matter of that, improved. The grounds round about it looked very trim and well cared for; new gates and fences had been erected; smoke was curling up from the chimneys, and every now and then the sound of stamping hoofs arose from the stable-yard, where some invisible grooms were whistling and laughing over their work.

"I wonder whether I shall ever be rich enough to live in such a place?" thought Brian. "I wonder whether I should like to live there if I were rich enough? Not now, nor for a long time to come at all events. Perhaps some day, when all this has become an old story, and I have grown accustomed to thinking of her as my sister-in-law, I shan't mind."

He walked on with his head bent, and his hands behind his back, mentally rehearsing what he should say to his brother. He was not going to say much, and there should be no quarrelling, he was determined of that. He had come to Beckton to obtain, if possible, the refusal of a property which might shortly be for sale; he had not come to offer useless comments upon anybody's conduct. "Gilbert will know what my opinion of him must be," he thought. "I don't suppose he cares, and I'm not going to try and make him care. What would be the good?"

CHAPTER XLIII.—MITCHELL PUTS HIS OAR IN.

GILBERT, as he walked away from the Manor House after saying his last word to Beatrice, was by no means a happy man. It was true that a sudden inspiration had enabled him by that last word to discomfit his assailant, and quit the field without too much appearance of having been routed; but he had been routed, all the same, and that by means of a stratagem which any one with his wits about him would have detected from the outset. For Miss Huntley had not played her part particularly well. She had betrayed her true feelings again and again by sarcasms which ought to have put him upon his guard; she had never conveyed to him the impression that she was in love with him, and he might have known that she would be most unlikely to marry him for any other reason. It would have enraged him to think what a fool he had been, if at the moment he had felt capable of rage; but he was too thoroughly beaten for that. He had staked everything upon this event, and the event had not come off. It was probable that he would lose the election now; it was almost certain that he would lose the few friends whom his questionable conduct towards his brother and his political apostacy had left him in the neighbourhood; in short, his scheme of life had failed, and he said to himself with the calmness of despair that there was nothing for it but to form a fresh one. This, however, was more easily said

than done; and for the present he neither knew what was to become of him nor greatly cared. A sound drubbing, whether physical or moral, has just this advantage, that a man who has received it is seldom conscious of anything but a wish to retire into some quiet corner and rest. It is not until the next day that his bones begin to ache, and his spirit, if he has any, reasserts itself.

Gilbert plodded homewards, with the sea breaking far beneath him on his right hand, and the wind making a pleasant murmuring through the pine plantations on his left, and before him the expanse of rocky, heathery park-land of which not even the most ruthless modern reformer could wish to deprive Beckton, seeing that it could never be made to do more than graze a scanty flock of sheep. On this sunny autumn afternoon it was serving the not altogether useless purpose of presenting charming outlines and stretches of varied colours to eyes appreciative of such things; but Gilbert's eyes, it must be owned, were not quick to discover the beauties of nature. What they did discover presently, with anything but gratification, was the figure of a tall, broad-shouldered man advancing from the direction of the house, and twirling his stick as he walked. "Bother the fellow!" muttered Gilbert to himself; "I thought we had seen the last of him. I suppose I can't give him the slip."

He certainly could not do that, for it was manifest that he had been already seen; so he summoned up an amiable smile, and as soon as the intruder was within hail, called out: "Hullo, Mitchell! Glad to see you back in these parts. What has brought you from the other end of the kingdom?"

Mitchell's response was a very discourteous one. He strode up to Gilbert until he almost touched him and then ejaculated, "You infernal scoundrel!"

Gilbert fell back a step, looking notes of interrogation.

"You want to know what I am here for, do you?" Mitchell went on grimly. "Well, I have much pleasure in telling you that I am here to settle accounts with you, my fine fellow. I suppose you thought it was a very safe thing to insult and desert a girl who had nobody at hand to protect her except an old man; but you see, you made a little mistake, for once in your life. I carried this ash-plant—and a good stout one it is too—up to your house this afternoon with the intention of laying it over your shoulders, and that's what I am going to do this moment, with your permission."

Now this is not at all the right way to set about assaulting a man who retains the use of his limbs: and Mitchell, if determined to inflict condign punishment upon one who well deserved it, should have gone to work forthwith, instead of opening the attack by a volley of injurious epithets, like a hero of epic poetry. Gilbert, though not endowed with much bone or muscle, was as active as a cat, and had no notion of allowing himself to be thrashed if he could help it. He sprang upon Mitchell before the latter had finished speaking, gripped him by the wrist, wrenched his stick out of his hand, and sent it flying a dozen yards away. Then, without waiting to be shaken off, he relaxed his hold and leaped back.

"What a fool you are, Mitchell!" he exclaimed. "You don't know what you are talking about. I'll tell you the rights of the matter, if you like, though I really don't know why I should; for it is no business of yours."

"Pray don't trouble," returned Mitchell. "I know quite as much as I want to know, and you needn't think that I shall let you off. Now then, look out for yourself!"

The advice was hardly given quite soon enough to be acted upon; for simultaneously with its utterance Mitchell's left arm shot out straight from the shoulder, and down went Gilbert upon the flat of his back, with the soles of his boots turned up to the sky.

It takes a few moments for a man who has been knocked down to regain possession of his senses and resume an upright attitude, in order to be knocked down a second time or to return the compliment; and during those few moments some one who, from the edge of the wood above, had been an amazed spectator of what had taken place, and who happened to be a swift runner, was able to reach the spot and confront the aggressor.

"Mitchell, you great idiot!" he panted, "what are you about? What's all this?"

"Tell you presently," answered Mitchell. "Get out of the way. I haven't half done yet."

Meanwhile Gilbert, who had ceased to see stars and had got upon his feet once more, had recognised his brother without any feelings of pleasure or gratitude. To do him justice he was not a physical coward, and indeed there can be few human beings who would tamely accept such an affront as he had just sustained.

"Stand aside and mind your own business, Brian," he said curtly; "I don't want your help."

"You'll have it, though, whether you want it or not," returned Brian tranquilly. "This isn't a fair fight, and I shan't let it go on."

"Who said it was a fight?" called out Mitchell. "I'm giving a licking to a black-guard who would have every bone in his skin broken if he got his deserts, and I'm not going to let him escape because he's your brother. That's your misfortune, and I can't help it."

"All right, old chap," said Brian; "you'll have to lick the pair of us then, that's all. Come on!"

But it was obviously out of the question to accept this invitation. Gilbert would doubtless decline to take part in a joint attack, and with Brian Mitchell had no quarrel. Moreover, though this was a minor matter, it was probable that the licking of Brian might prove a task of some difficulty. The instrument of Nemesis had to descend to entreaty.

"Go get out of the light," he whispered. "Just for three minutes; only for three little minutes! I'll promise to drop my hands the moment time's up."

Brian, by way of reply, linked his arm firmly within Mitchell's and drew him away. There were loud expostulations both from Mitchell and from Gilbert; but affrays which have been interrupted by a parley are very seldom resumed, and the upshot of it was that Brian led Mitchell off towards Kings-cliff, while Gilbert remained standing where he was. "Blessed are the peacemakers," but it is scarcely by thwarted belligerents that they can expect benedictions to be invoked upon their heads.

"Hang it all, Brian! I don't see what you wanted to put your oar in for," grumbled Mitchell, while he was being removed in safe custody. "Of course he's your brother; but after all I shouldn't have killed him, and I think you'll allow that if ever a man has earned a hiding he has."

"I don't know about that; but everybody has a right to fair play, and it stands to reason that Gilbert couldn't have a chance against you," returned Brian. "You should hit a man of your own size. If I had been in his shoes it would have been another matter."

"I wish with all my heart that you had been—or, rather, I wish he were as big as you. But really it isn't my fault that rascals are sometimes lightly built. I should have gone for him just the same if he had been Goliath of Gath, and if he is no match for me I'm not to blame for that. I'm thankful to say that I didn't make him."

Brian made no rejoinder; he was not concerned to defend the rights of rascality in the abstract, or to set a premium upon low stature. But after he had conducted his companion to what seemed to be a safe distance from the scene of hostilities he remarked, "I think, as soon as you are a little bit cooler, Mitchell, you will be glad that I interrupted you when I did. You may even be rather sorry that I didn't come up a minute earlier."

"That I most certainly shall not," Mitchell declared. "I did give him one for himself, thank goodness! I don't think he'll care about showing his face to the electors for the next week."

"My dear Mitchell, it's all very fine to talk like that, but, as you said to me just now, I don't see what you wanted to put your oar in for. I suppose I can guess what your quarrel with Gilbert was, and now that we are alone, I don't mind admitting to you that I think he has behaved badly——"

"Badly! He has behaved like the consummate villain that he is! To throw over a girl who believed in him implicitly, and who has no natural protector to stand up for her, because the Admiral's fighting days are over, and——"

"Yes, I know; but the question is whether you are the proper person to put yourself forward as her champion. You know, Mitchell, ladies sometimes think that kind of thing a little bit officious. I hope Miss Greenwood will never hear of this, but if she ever does, you may depend upon it that she won't thank you. You forget, or perhaps you haven't heard, that, as a matter of fact, it was she who threw Gilbert over."

"Oh, I know that well enough," answered Mitchell; "that's just the most disgraceful part of the whole business. Of course she gave him his liberty when he let her see that he wanted to get rid of her; and the first thing that he did was to go down to the club with a long face and announce that she had broken off the engagement. I heard all about it from old Johnson. When I went away he promised to drop me a line from time to time and let me know how things were going on here; and the other day I had a letter from him telling me this pretty story. Well, Brian, you know how it used to be with me in the old days; everybody knew; I dare say most people know that I proposed to her in the summer and that she refused me. That was all right; I didn't expect anything else; and she was as kind as she could be about it. I stayed on here until I

couldn't stand it any longer, because I thought I might have a chance of being of use to her in some way or other. I give you my word, sir, that for her sake I would have served that brother of yours to the best of my power, and I really did work pretty hard at electioneering for him. Well, do you know, Miss Huntley once prophesied to me that he would break her heart some day, and I said that if ever he did I would break his head. Now just put yourself in my place for a moment, if you can. Wasn't it natural that, when I got Johnson's letter, I should take the first train south and try to keep my word?"

"I dare say it was natural," said Brian; "but what good could it do?"

"Somebody must do these things," answered Mitchell decisively; "a fellow like that isn't to be allowed to have everything his own way. As it is, he has got off, thanks to you, with a little bit of a bump between his eyes, which I hope will turn yellow and black but which won't trouble him long. Barring that slight inconvenience, he has triumphed all along the line. They tell me that he has been as good as accepted by Miss Huntley—a woman whom I must say that I don't understand—and I suppose he will live happily to the end of his days."

"Is it a fact that Miss Huntley has accepted him?" asked Brian carelessly.

"I believe so. I see now why she was always so anxious to encourage me, and kept on hinting mysteriously that your brother would not marry Miss Greenwood. Women haven't much sense of honour, it seems to me."

"Except one, I suppose."

"There are exceptions to every rule," replied Mitchell gravely. "Well, I wish Miss Huntley joy of him, I'm sure. No accounting for tastes, is there?"

"Do you mean to call upon the Greenwoods, now that you are here?" asked Brian, to change the subject.

Mitchell tilted his hat over his eyes and rubbed the back of his head doubtfully. "I hardly know," he answered. "I should like

—but perhaps it would be better not, eh? What do you think?"

"If you ask me," said Brian, "I should advise you not to go near them. You would have to give some explanation of your being in Kingscliff, and you aren't quite as clever at deceiving your neighbours as—as Miss Huntley seems to be. In my opinion the best thing you can do is to go back to Berwick-on-Tweed without any loss of time."

"Oh, but that's impossible, you know. One can't hit a man in the face and then run away."

"Gilbert will know where to find you, if he wants you; but the thing mustn't go any farther. You ought really to make him an apology; for everybody would tell you that you were entirely in the wrong. You may think this or that about him, but all you know for certain is that he is not going to marry Miss Greenwood because she won't marry him. You would have no right to knock a man down for that even if you had the right—which you have not—to make yourself Miss Greenwood's champion."

"If ever I apologise to him, I'll eat my hat!" Mitchell declared with much emphasis.

Brian did not insist upon the point, perceiving that it would be a pure waste of breath to do so; but, after some further discussion, he prevailed upon his pugnacious friend to go away by the night mail. Mitchell could not but admit that a public scandal, though it might be unpleasant for Gilbert, would be scarcely less so for Kitty; moreover, he was secretly alarmed lest—as he was assured would be the case—she should resent his intermeddling with what did not concern him.

"But mind," was his last injunction to Brian, who accompanied him to the station to make sure of his departure, "if your brother would like to meet me quietly anywhere but here, he has only to say so and I shall be very much at his service with any weapon he chooses to name, from rifles down to walking-sticks."

LEFT ALONE.

THIS just like a belt of the moorland
That borders the side of the sea,
With patches of corn and potatoes,
With stretches of rye-grass and lea,
With patches of broom and of bramble,
Of hawthorn and hazel-tree.

The quaintest and queerest old houses
All lie within sound of the shore,
Their bracken-thatched roofs in the sunlight
With wild-flowers and grasses grown o'er,
With ivy and lichen-grown gables,
And crooked each window and door.

The quaintest and queerest old houses,
 Rough-raftered, and mystic within,
 Where the fire glimmers low on the hearth
 And light through the smoke struggles in,
 One sits, with her life-laden visage,
 Alone, but to dream and to spin.

Alone, in that mystical region,
 Once cheery with prattle and song,
 Once bright, with the sweetness of faces,
 Once rich with the healthy and strong,
 Alone at her wheel in that dreamland
 She spinneth the weary day long.

Whirr! goes the wheel in its motion,
 And restless the past in her brain—
 The joys and the loves and the sadness,
 And the shafts of grief and of pain—
 That is spun with the thread, a spinning
 Life's journeyings over again.

The sun flickers in at the window
 And dances bright over the floor,
 The bee with the breath of the moorland
 Comes in at the open door;
 She sings to the dance of her children,
 Till the bobbin with thread runs o'er.

Round her house by the ivy gable
 She can see the boats in the bay—
 Fishermen's boats, with their bark'd brown sails
 Wind-full, sail gaily away.
 Then a blinding mist comes o'er her eyes,
 With sad thoughts of another day.

Whirr! goes the wheel in its motion,
 And on with the thread as it runs,
 A bark, wind-tossed on an angry sea,
 With a father and three brave sons,
 On, till the flight of her vision dies
 And her soul in a frenzy burns.

These quaintest and queerest old houses,
 With wild-flowers and grasses grown o'er,
 Are havens of hardy fishermen
 Who live on the western shore,
 Fishermen's crofts, with their quaint old homes,
 That were built in the days of yore.

And she who sits wearily spinning
 Her thoughts of the past with the thread,
 Suffers the lot that fishermen's wives
 And that fishermen's mothers dread,
 Left alone, in a wearisome world,
 But to work for her daily bread.

TOM McEWAN.

THE STARS: ARE THEY SUNS?

By PROFESSOR R. GRANT, LL.D., F.R.S.

II.

IT is known to students of celestial phenomena that astronomers have classed the stars which may be perceived with the naked eye into six orders of magnitude, the stars of the first magnitude being the brightest, and the stars of the sixth magnitude the faintest, or those which are barely visible without the aid of a telescope. When the heavens are observed with a telescope the number of new stars disclosed to view will depend upon the optical capacity of the instrument we employ, or, in other words, on the quantity of light which the instrument is capable of concentrating, whether it be a refracting or a reflecting telescope. As we employ in our observations telescopes of increasing optical power, stars which were previously invisible in consequence of their faintness come successively into view; and if we assume that the stars are equal in magnitude and intrinsic splendour, and that their different degrees of brightness are attributable solely to their different degrees of distance, the telescope, as compared with the unaided

eye, becomes a powerful means of enabling us to measure the relative distances of the stars, and in this manner to penetrate, so to speak, into the depths of space.

Adopting this principle of measurement, Sir William Herschel explored the depths of the starry regions with telescopes of gradually increasing optical power, and arrived at some remarkable conclusions. The instrument which the illustrious astronomer chiefly used in his stellar observations was a reflecting telescope of 20 feet of focal length and 18 inches aperture. He found this telescope to have a space-penetrating power of 75; in other words, he found that if a star which could be barely perceived with the naked eye were transported into space so as to be 75 times more remote than it actually is, it would still be visible in the 20-foot reflector. Let us consider a little further the significance of this result. It has been found by photometric experiments on the light emitted by the stars of different orders of magnitude that the light of a star of the sixth magnitude amounts to only one-hundredth part of

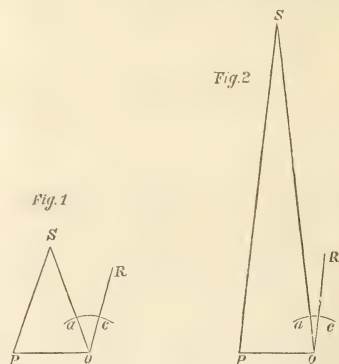
the light of a star of the first magnitude. Hence we conclude (always supposing the stars to be of equal magnitude and splendour) that a star of the sixth magnitude is ten times more remote than a star of the first magnitude. Now the bright star Alpha Centauri may be considered as typical of a star of the first magnitude. Combining our knowledge of the relative distances of Alpha Centauri and the stars of the sixth magnitude with the conclusions above arrived at, it follows that if Alpha Centauri were transported to 750 times its actual distance it would still be visible in Herschel's 20-foot reflector, and consequently there might be perceptible in such an instrument a star the distance of which is 750 times greater than the actual distance of Alpha Centauri. Now the absolute distance of Alpha Centauri from the earth, as ascertained by the researches of various astronomers, may be stated in round numbers to be 20 billions of miles. Hence we arrive at the astonishing conclusion, that the distance of the stars which are faintly visible in a 20-foot reflecting telescope, such as Herschel employed in his observations, is not less than 15,000 billions of miles. Light which traverses space with a velocity equal to 186,000 miles in a second, would therefore occupy *more than two thousand years* in passing from such a star to the earth. Well might Herschel remark that the visibility of a star in the present day is proof—not of its actual existence, but rather of its having existed hundreds, it may be thousands, of years ago.

It has been already remarked that Herschel assumed in these speculations that the stars are all equal in magnitude and splendour. The researches of subsequent astronomers have led to the belief that the stars, like all other natural bodies, while bearing towards each other a typical resemblance, are not absolutely equal, either in magnitude or in intrinsic splendour. Still, it may be confidently supposed that many of the stars which are faintly visible in a powerful telescope, such as Herschel's, may be bodies comparable with Alpha Centauri, in which case it is impossible to avoid the conclusion above arrived at.

In the foregoing remarks we have alluded to the absolute distance of Alpha Centauri as one of the established facts of science. The determination of the absolute distance of one of the fixed stars has been a desideratum in astronomy since the days of Copernicus. It was felt that while it would fur-

nish an incontrovertible argument in support of the true system of the universe, it would also throw a flood of light upon the grand doctrine that the innumerable luminaries of the stellar vault are vast bodies shining like the sun by an intrinsic light, and comparable to the sun in magnitude and splendour. Many attempts have been made during the last two centuries to determine the parallax of a star, or, which amounts to the same thing, to ascertain its absolute distance from the earth, but down to within the last thirty or forty years all such efforts were fruitless.

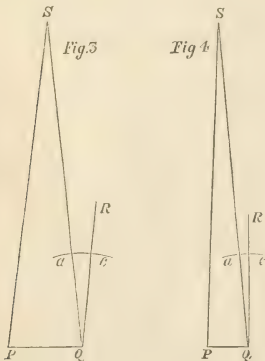
Many persons have a difficulty in understanding how it is possible to ascertain the distance of an inaccessible object, seeing that a process of actual measurement is impossible. The principle employed in measuring the distance of a celestial body is essentially the same as that which underlies all surveying operations on the earth's surface. It is remarkable for its simplicity, as will be apparent by the use of one or two obvious illustrations.



Let *s*, Fig. 1, represent an inaccessible object observed from two stations, *P* and *Q*, and let it be required to ascertain the distance of *s* from each of these stations. The first step is to measure the linear distance between *P* and *Q*, or the length, whether expressed in feet or miles, of *PQ*, the line connecting the two stations. This accomplished, the observer, provided with an instrument for measuring angles, determines the magnitude of the angle contained between *PS* and *PQ*, or the angle *s P Q*, and then proceeding to *Q* he ascertainment in like manner the magnitude of the angle *s Q P*. Now, these two angles being thus ascertained by measurement, the angle *s* at the apex of the triangle *s P Q* becomes

known also. In the triangle SPQ we have then the base PQ known, and also the angles of the triangle; hence, by a very simple computation we arrive at a knowledge of the lengths of the sides, SP , SQ , which represent the respective distances of the object from P and Q . In triangulations of this kind the line PQ connecting the two stations is termed the base line. It is manifest that the inclination of SP to SQ measures the change of direction which the object S undergoes as the observer transfers his position from P to Q , or *vice versa*. Now, if we draw QR parallel to the original direction PS , it is manifest that the change of direction will be represented by the angle SRQ , which again is equal to the angle S at the apex of the triangle. Now the angle SRQ is measured by the little arc ac . It follows, therefore, that the arc ac measures the change of direction which the object S undergoes as the observer transports his position from P to Q . This angle has a technical appellation. It is termed the parallax of the object, and a knowledge of its value is essential to the determination of the distance of the object.

In Fig. 2 the base line PQ is of the same length as in Fig. 1, but the object S is more remote. The result, therefore, is that the parallax, as measured by the arc ac , is smaller in Fig. 2 than it is in Fig. 1. This important fact will be evident by an inspection of the two figures. If we imagine the object S to be a thousand times more remote than it is represented in Fig. 2, the arc ac , representing the parallax, would be smaller in a corresponding degree, and thus we arrive at the conclusion that, *for a base line of a constant length, the more remote the object is the smaller is the parallax.*



In Figs. 3 and 4 the object S is at the same distance, but the base line is diminishing from 3 to 4. What is the result in this case? Clearly that the arc ac , representing the parallax, is less also. If the base line be imagined to be still further diminished, the parallax will in like manner be diminished, and thus we arrive at this second conclusion. *For objects equally remote the shorter the base line the smaller will be the parallax.*

We have seen that the determination of the parallax of an object depends upon the measurement of two angles at the opposite extremities of a base line. A comparison of these angles indicates the change of direction which the object undergoes, as viewed from the one station and from the other, in other words it gives the value of the parallax. If the object be very remote, the change of direction, and consequently the value of the parallax, will be correspondingly small, and it then becomes a question whether the value thus found represents a real parallax, or whether the difference between the two angles at the extremity of the base line is attributable *mainly* to the small outstanding errors which more or less affect all astronomical observations, even the most accurate. Here we have presented to us the fundamental difficulty experienced in all the efforts made to ascertain the absolute distances of the celestial bodies. This difficulty consists in the remoteness of the object and the smallness of the base line from which our observations are necessarily made. As will be readily seen by reference to Figs. 1 and 2, and to Figs. 2 and 3, these circumstances are both conducive to a small parallax, and the value actually found may be so very small, that no confidence can be placed in it as the representative of a real parallax. The moon being comparatively near to the earth has a large parallax, consequently no difficulty has been experienced in determining its value.

It is quite a different matter when the question refers to the distance of the sun or any of the planets. In any of such cases the object is so remote, and the parallax consequently is so small, that it requires all the resources of science to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problem. In the planetary system as established by Copernicus, the sun is supposed to be placed in the centre of the system, and the planets revolve in orbits of different magnitudes around it. Now it is important to bear in mind that long before the absolute distances of the planets from the sun were known with any degree of accuracy, the *proportion* of their

distances had been ascertained with sufficient precision. Thus it was known that if the mean distance of the earth from the sun be represented by 100, the mean distance of Mars from the Sun would be 152, the mean distance of Jupiter would be 520, and so on. Consequently, if we knew the distance in miles between the sun and the earth, a simple application of the rule of three would give us the distances in miles of the other planets from the sun. It is clear then that a knowledge of the earth's distance from the sun, or which amounts to the same thing, a knowledge of the value of the solar parallax, would lead by a simple arithmetical process to a knowledge of the absolute distances of all the planets from the sun.

But the solar parallax has not been ascertained by direct observations of the sun for two reasons. First, in consequence of the great distance of the sun, its parallax is small, and therefore liable to considerable uncertainty. Again, by reason of the high temperature of the sun, and the heating effects of its rays upon the regions of the atmosphere through which they pass, it is not possible to determine its place in the heavens with all the precision required in so delicate a problem. In view of these difficulties the practice of astronomers has been to attack the problem indirectly, in other words by observations made upon one of the planets rather than upon the sun. If we could ascertain the parallax of a planet when it is in any determinate position of its orbit, we should then be enabled, by means of the known proportions of the planetary distances from the sun, to pass to a knowledge of the solar parallax, and in this way we should arrive at a knowledge of the absolute distances of all the planets from the sun. Now there are two planets which occasionally approach comparatively near the earth in the course of their revolution round the sun. These are the planets Venus and Mars, the one revolving *immediately within* and the other revolving *immediately without* the earth's orbit. Both of these planets have accordingly been used for determining the value of the solar parallax. Take the case of the planet Mars. Observations of its apparent place in the heavens have been made at two distant stations on the earth's surface, say Greenwich and the Cape of Good Hope, and these results, combined with the ascertained length of the base line connecting the two stations, constitute the data for arriving ultimately at the value of the solar parallax.

In the case of Venus the mode of procedure

is altogether different, the result being obtained by means of observations of the transit of the planet across the sun's disk made at suitably chosen stations on the earth's surface. On rare occasions the planet is seen as a round black spot passing over the luminous surface of the sun. Halley, the celebrated English astronomer, first pointed out the importance of these phenomena for affording the means of determining the solar parallax. The transits occur generally in pairs, the individual transits of each pair being separated by an interval of eight years. Transits of the planet occurred in the years 1761 and 1769, and the principal nations of Europe fitted out expeditions and despatched them to various suitably chosen stations on the earth's surface for the purpose of observing the phenomenon. The next pair of transits occurred in our own time, namely in 1874 and 1882, and in these cases also the principal nations of the civilised world co-operated in observing the phenomena with all the accuracy demanded by the present advanced state of science. The results of the two last transits have not yet been fully worked out, but it may be pretty confidently asserted that the distance of the sun from the earth as deducible from the phenomena cannot differ much from ninety-two million seven hundred thousand miles. This is a step of vast importance gained in astronomical science. Once in possession of the value of the solar parallax we are able to compute not only the distances of the planets from the sun but also their magnitudes, and the distances of the satellites from their respective primaries. Furthermore we can calculate the perihelion-distances of comets and the distances to which they recede at the aphelia of their orbits. In short, we are in a position to express in numerical terms the scale upon which the solar system is constructed.

We have now to consider the question more nearly related to our present subject—the parallax of the stars. If we attempted to ascertain the parallax of a star by means of observations made at two distant stations on the earth's surface, as has been practised so successfully in the case of the planet Mars, we should utterly fail in our object. This arises from the necessarily excessive smallness of our base line relatively to the amazing distance of the star. The diameter of the earth amounts, in round numbers, to eight thousand miles. Consequently we are unable to select any two observing stations on the earth's surface which are at a distance of

more than a few thousand miles apart. In an investigation of parallax the disadvantage of a distance so great as the distance of a fixed star, combined with a base line so small as any base line which can be measured upon the earth, must be obvious by referring to Figs. 1 and 2. In fact, the direction of the star as observed at one of the extremities of the base line is found in all such cases to be identical with its direction as observed at the other extremity, and consequently, under such circumstances, no appreciable parallax is ascertainable.

But when we have determined the value of the solar parallax we are in a position to attack the problem of the distance of a fixed star under vastly more favourable circumstances, for we are now enabled to operate upon a base line, the length of which is no longer measured by thousands, but by millions of miles. In reality we have now got for our base line a diameter of the earth's orbit, which may be stated in round numbers to amount to 186 millions of miles. The advantages of a base line of such enormous dimensions may be seen at once by referring to Figs. 2 and 3, which show that a greater base line leads to a greater parallax.

During the last two centuries repeated attempts were made by astronomers of the highest eminence to ascertain the distance of a star by means of observations made at the opposite extremities of a diameter of the earth's orbit—in other words, by means of the annual parallax of the star; and although results were obtained in this way which seemed in many instances to indicate the existence of a parallax of sensible magnitude, still a careful scrutiny, subsequently made, showed them to be fallacious. This was attributable to the excessive smallness of the parallax and the presence of many disturbing influences which mask its value and defeat the efforts of the astronomer to eliminate it from the observations. The problem, however, has finally yielded to the persevering researches of astronomers in recent years, and we now know the distances of several of the fixed stars from the earth with a considerable degree of precision. Let us take as the basis of illustration the bright star in the southern hemisphere called Alpha Centauri, which has been found to be the nearest to the earth of all the fixed stars. The distance of this star may be stated in round numbers to be 20 billions of miles. Now a billion means a million of millions, so that the distance of Alpha Centauri may be stated to be 20 millions of millions of miles.

Let us now try to form some conception, however imperfect, of this amazing distance.

Let us suppose a railway train to leave the earth, travelling day and night at the rate of fifty miles an hour *without stoppages*. In six months it would reach the moon, in two hundred years it would reach the sun, and in six thousand years it would reach the planet Neptune, the orbit of which forms the extreme known limit of the planetary system. The same train, however, would not reach the star Alpha Centauri in less than *forty-two millions of years*. One more illustration may be useful. Comets, in general, revolve in very eccentric orbits. When a comet is in the perihelion of its orbit it is comparatively near to the earth; on the other hand, when it is at the aphelion it is remote—in many instances very remote from the earth. For instance, the celebrated comet of 1858, known as Donati's comet, one of the greatest comets of modern times, at the time of its passage of the perihelion was distant from the sun fifty millions of miles, but when it has attained the aphelion of its orbit (which will occur in about a thousand years hereafter) its distance from the earth will not be less than 30 thousand millions of miles. Now our typical railway train, starting from the earth, would not reach the aphelion of the orbit of Donati's comet in less than sixty thousand years, and yet the aphelion distance of Donati's comet is *only 1-700th part of the distance from the earth to Alpha Centauri, the nearest of the fixed stars*.

The star Alpha Centauri is a double star, and is remarkable for its large proper motion. It was this latter circumstance which led Henderson, the discoverer of its parallax, to suspect that it was comparatively near to the earth, and the results of actual investigation demonstrated the correctness of this surmise. Similar considerations conducted Bessel, about the same time, to the discovery of the parallax of 61 Cygni, another interesting double star. Quite recently, Professor Pritchard has ascertained the parallax of this star by an investigation based upon a continued series of photographs of the apparent position of the star, taken at many different times in the course of twelve months. This remarkable step opens up a new vista of astronomical research, the importance of which it would be difficult to over-estimate.

When we know the absolute distance of a celestial body and its apparent diameter, we can hence easily calculate its absolute magnitude. It is manifest, therefore, that in order

to ascertain the absolute magnitude of a star whose distance is known, we must endeavour to obtain a measure of its apparent diameter. To effect this object, however, has been attended with insuperable difficulties, in consequence of the excessively small apparent diameters of the stars. A striking illustration of this was obtained soon after the invention of the telescope. It consists in the phenomenon presented by the occultation of a star by the moon. As is known to our readers, the moon revolves in a monthly orbit round the earth, and being the nearest to us of all the celestial bodies, is continually passing between us and some of the stars which lie in her apparent path. Hence originates the interesting phenomenon of an occultation of a star by the moon. Now it was found that when a star was covered in this way by the moon, the occultation happened not *gradually*, as in the case of a planet with an appreciable disk, but *instantaneously*, whence it was justly inferred that the apparent diameter of the star must be excessively small. This very interesting and suggestive phenomenon was first remarked by the English astronomer Horrocks, and it was held by him to indicate not the absolute smallness of the star but its immense distance. We shall see presently that this surmise was just.

The apparent diameter of a star being thus inappreciable, the question arises, How can we otherwise arrive at a knowledge of its absolute magnitude? Light here comes to our rescue, and if it does not enable us to obtain an absolute solution of the problem, it lends us helpful co-operation towards that end. Let us suppose that the distance of a star is known, and also that the light emitted by it in comparison with the light of the sun is known. We may then imagine the sun to be placed at the distance of the star, and as we know the law according to which light diminishes as the distance from the luminous object increases, we can calculate what would be the intensity of the light emitted by the sun if it were placed at the same distance from the earth as the star. The difficulty of the problem as here proposed consists in determining in the first instance what are the relative intensities of the light emitted by the sun and the star, the light of the sun being overwhelmingly greater than that of the star. The problem has been solved by using the moon as a medium of comparison. The light of the star has been compared with the light of the full moon, and the light of the full moon has been compared with the light of the sun. In this way the compara-

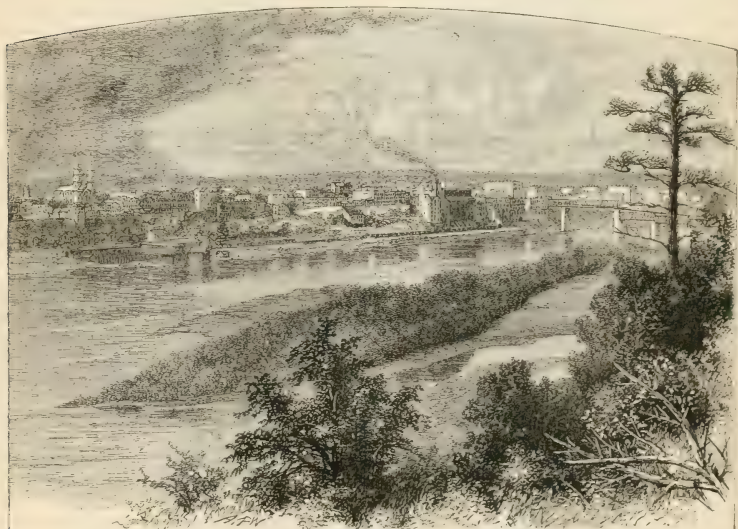
tive intensities of the light of the sun and the star have been ascertained. Various other methods, to which we need not further refer here, have been employed by astronomers and physicists, and the comparative intensities of the light of the sun and the light of a star have in several instances thus become known. Sir John Herschel found, by photometric experiments which he executed during his residence at the Cape of Good Hope, that the light emitted by Alpha Centauri is to the light emitted by the sun, assuming both bodies to be placed at the same distance, as 2.3 to 1. Several other comparisons of this kind have been made between the sun and the stars, and the results all concur in supporting the belief that the stars are distant suns.

Although generally speaking the stars are all comparable with each other and with the sun, it does not follow that sun and stars should all have the same intrinsic splendour. This is by no means probable. In obtaining a measure of the light emitted by a star, we are unable to pronounce how much of the result is attributable to the intrinsic splendour of the star and how much to its absolute magnitude. Furthermore, any comparison instituted between the light of the sun and the light of the stars at the same distance is largely dependent upon the parallax of the stars, an element of which we have at present a very imperfect knowledge. Still, the photometric researches to which reference has just been made are capable of leading to general conclusions of a highly instructive nature respecting the vastness of the material universe as it exists beyond the limits of the solar system. In this connection I may quote the words of one of the most eminent natural philosophers of the seventeenth century, who was led in the course of his researches to consider this interesting question. "In such noble and sublime studies as these," says the illustrious Huyghens, "it is a glory to arrive at probability, and the enquiry itself rewards our labours. But there are many degrees of probability, some nearer the truth than others, and in the determining of the most trustworthy approximation to the true result lies the chief exercise of our judgment."

It has been remarked that the stars, notwithstanding their probable immense magnitude, have no appreciable apparent diameter. This may be readily understood by means of a simple illustration. When the moon passes centrally over the sun (in which case the result is a solar eclipse, either total or annular), the

interval which elapses between the time when the moon enters upon the sun and the time when it finally leaves the solar disk, may be stated to be in round numbers one hour. If we now suppose the sun to be placed at the distance of the planet Jupiter, the apparent diameter would be so much diminished that the moon would pass over it in twelve minutes; and again, if the sun were transported to the distance of Neptune, the most remote of all the planets, it would be eclipsed by the moon in the short interval of two minutes. If the sun were placed at the aphelion distance of Donati's comet the moon

would pass over it in twelve seconds of time; and if it were transported to the distance of Alpha Centauri it would be covered by the moon in the *sixtieth part of a second*. Now the stars in general are vastly more distant than Alpha Centauri. We see, then, how impossible it is, in the present state of science at all events, to ascertain by measurement the apparent diameter of a star, and how the instantaneous disappearance of a star at the time of its occultation by the moon may be accounted for by its enormous distance from the earth, apart from all considerations of its absolute magnitude.



Saint Paul.

MINNEHAHA AND THE LAND OF THE DAKOTAS.

MINNEHAHA—Laughing Water! Such is the fanciful and poetic name of the unpretentious yet lovely little waterfall, the remembrance of which has been perpetuated for all time to come through the mention made of it by the poet Longfellow in his imperishable and strangely fantastic "Song of Hiawatha." It is of this little waterfall, hidden away in a valley on the wide prairies near the exact centre of the great continent

of North America, that we propose now to write a few lines.

In the course of last year, just when the summer days were longest and hottest, and the hardworking farmers on the fertile wheat-plains of the far-western State of Minnesota were rejoicing in the prospect of an unusually plentiful and not far-distant harvest, the writer found himself, with a few spare hours upon his hands—

"In the land of the Dakotas,
Where the falls of Minnehaha
Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,
Laugh and leap into the valley."

The mushroom city of Saint Paul, in which for the time we were "located," is the capital of the before-mentioned State of Minnesota. Enterprise itself has scarcely been able to keep pace with the progress of this flourishing portion of the ever-advancing Western Republic. Within the lifetimes of men scarcely yet of middle age, Minnesota was little more than a valueless, uncultivated wilderness, inhabited only by the beasts of the forest and the plain, by a number of almost equally wild Red Skins, belonging to the warlike Sioux or Dakota nation, and by a very limited number of adventurous trappers and fur traders, attracted thither by the prospects of gain in the trade with the Indians. Even so lately as the year 1861, the boundaries of the State—then only some four years old—did not contain a single inch of railway and only one hundred and seventy-three thousand inhabitants; now the State has some four thousand miles of railway and close upon eight hundred thousand inhabitants. Saint Paul, its capital, which in 1860 was a mere village with less than ten thousand inhabitants, now contains about one hundred and fifty-five thousand souls; while Minneapolis, only eight miles farther up the Mississippi River, has grown still more rapidly, and is now nearly equal to Saint Paul in point of population. Both are bustling centres of enterprise and industry, with enormous hotels and warehouses, fine well-paved streets, and all the luxuries of modern civilisation. So rapid, indeed, has been their growth that to the majority of stay-at-home Englishmen their names are still but vaguely known. They have scarcely as yet found their way into the school geography books of the day, although they will shortly take their place among the largest of American cities.

Rather more than two centuries ago—that is, in the year 1680—Louis Hennepin, a Franciscan priest, and the first white man to explore the upper reaches of the Mississippi, arrived in his canoe at the foot of some extensive falls, which he named the Falls of St. Anthony, after his patron saint. To-day these falls are the mainstay of the city of Minneapolis; they afford the power which drives the huge flour-mills which have made the city so celebrated all the world over for its flour that it might, without impropriety, be called "Millapolis." Beside the largest "elevator" for the storage of grain in the

world, and several large saw or "lumber" mills, the place has no less than twenty-eight of these flour-mills. Twenty million bushels of wheat are required annually to keep all the mills in full work. Taking the average yield of wheat in America, about a million and a quarter acres of land would be required every year to produce this enormous quantity. The "Pillsbury A. Mill," which is the largest in the world, has a "daily capacity," as it is called, of twenty-four thousand bushels. The whole of these gigantic flour factories are put in motion by the power supplied by the Mississippi, which, even here at the head of navigation, is over one thousand feet in width. The bed of the river descends seventy-five feet in the course of a mile, thus supplying what the Minneapolitans claim as one of the finest "water privileges" in the universe. In addition to its world-famed flour-mills, Minneapolis can boast of fifty-two churches, three daily newspapers, and fifteen weekly ones; while Saint Paul, which has been already referred to, has thirty-eight churches (its inhabitants being, apparently, somewhat less religious), five daily papers, and six weekly ones. The chief difference between Minneapolis and Saint Paul lies in the fact that the former is a manufacturing city, while the latter is a great railway centre, and consequently a great distributing point. Over one hundred trains per day either arrive at or depart from it, over eleven distinct lines of railroad. Which of these two twin cities of the West will ultimately become of the greatest importance it is as yet impossible to say; at present the rivalry between them is extremely keen. In whichever of the two the visitor happens to find himself, he is certain to be told that the other is the smaller in point of population and does the less trade. These few facts will suffice to give the reader some idea of the extraordinary amount of commercial vitality which these young Western cities possess.

But it is not only on account of its amazingly rapid commercial progress that the State can lay claim to exceptional interest; Minnesota is also remarkable as being the State which gives birth to the great "Father of Waters," as the Indians call the Mississippi. This, the largest river of the New World, has its source in a sparkling little lakelet lying some few miles beyond Lake Itasca, which until recently was supposed to be the true source of the great river. It lies hidden away in the heart of the desolate forest of pines which everywhere covers the

wild, rocky region forming the north-eastern portion of the State—a country widely different from the fertile and treeless prairies to the west of it. The lake in question is situated upon a ridge which forms one of the principal water-sheds—or “divides,” as an American would say—of the continent. While the Mississippi flows away due south,

the Red River of the North, which rises in Lac Rouge, only a few miles distant, runs in an exactly opposite direction, and after draining the boundless wheat-plains of Manitoba, eventually finds its way into Hudson's Bay. Beside this, many small streams, having their origin in the same district, drain into Lake Superior, and thence find



The Falls of Minnehaha.

their way into the Atlantic down the broad St. Lawrence.

Minnesota, too, derives additional interest from the fact that it is, in the truest sense, “the land of the Dakotas.” Although the wild red man is now rapidly disappearing from the hunting-grounds of his fathers, the remembrance of him is likely long to linger there. The Dakota or Sioux nation formerly

occupied the whole of the country between the upper Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains, extending north to the British boundary, and south for a considerable distance; but the tribe to which the name Sioux is at present most commonly applied inhabited the district which now forms the State of Minnesota. The early French explorers and traders knew this tribe by the name which its

enemies the Chippeways gave to it, namely, "Nadouessieux," from which comes the present name of Sioux. The Sioux formed, unquestionably, one of the very finest of all the aboriginal tribes of North America. In physique, in courage, in intellect, in war-skill, and in the romance which was mixed up with their legends and beliefs, they had few or no equals. Their bold independence led them from the first to resent the growing supremacy of the white man; and led ultimately to that bloody conflict between the two races, which roused to the utmost the worst passions of both, and is not likely soon to be forgotten in America. One of the most notable events of the contest was the celebrated Sioux massacre of 1862. Exasperated beyond measure by the total disregard on the part of the whites of the stipulations of their treaties and by the deceptions perpetually practised upon them, the red men, without one single word of warning, suddenly and unanimously rose in revolt throughout the greater part of the State. The results were tragic. The white population of the district was too scattered and too much taken by surprise to organize any effectual resistance. Within a few hours several hundred persons, mostly women and children, were cruelly massacred by the Indians, who then combined their bands in an attack upon the forts in which the more fortunate settlers had taken refuge. This state of things, however, did not last many days. In the adjacent towns vigorous measures were at once taken to put down the revolt. In spite of the feeble resources of the infant State, a force was speedily got together, which, after a sharp fight, succeeded in subduing the Indians, upon whom condign punishment was summarily inflicted. Eighteen of the ringleaders were hung together near the town of Mankato, on a site which the writer has visited; while most of the others were removed to Dakota and there placed on reserves. The bands farther to the west, however, were constantly at war with the whites up to the year 1877, and large bodies of troops were required to protect the frontier settlements. In 1875 and 1876 occurred the difficulties with the celebrated Sioux chief, Sitting Bull, who for long resisted all the efforts of the United States troops, and at last escaped into British territory. The words in which Longfellow has described the enmity between the Dakotas and the Ojibways describe equally well their relationship to our own race. He says:—

"Very fierce are the Dakotas,
Often is there war between us,
There are feuds yet unforgotten,
Wounds that ache and still may open!"

To-day the Indian population of Minnesota falls short of two thousand five hundred.

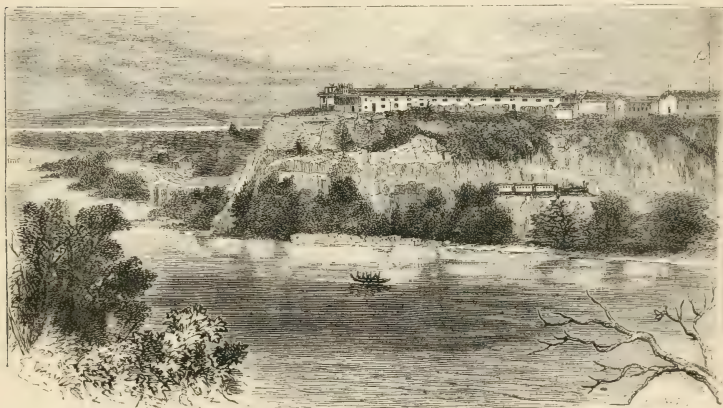
The State of Minnesota takes its name from the largest tributary of the Mississippi lying within its borders. This stream was formerly known as the St. Peter's River, but custom has of late restored to it its much more euphonious Indian name of the Minnesota, which, it seems, may be best rendered into English by the words "sky-tinted water." The word *minne*, which signifies water in the Dakota language, occurs innumerable times in the names of towns and villages scattered throughout the region of the Upper Mississippi. This is but natural, seeing that over the whole of that district countless rushing streams and placid lakelets lend to the landscape its most striking natural feature. Thus we have it in the name Minneapolis—one of the most absurd hybrid names that the ingenuity of man could easily have devised. Surely the pure Dakota tongue was never before nor since wedded to a classical Greek word, as in Minneapolis, the water city! Then we have Minneiska, Minnetonka, Minneopa, Minnewaukan, Minnedosa and many others, including Minnehaha, the Laughing Water, of which we write. In the Dakota tongue the word *iha* or *haha* signifies both a waterfall and a laugh. The Dakotas—ever, like most Indians, intensely fanciful and poetic in their ideas of natural things—regard the water as laughing playfully as it shoots over the precipice, hence their use of the same word in both cases. The addition of the word *minne* to the word *haha*, in this particular instance, is merely a freak of the poet's fancy.

About midway between the two cities of which we have spoken, the Minnesota River joins the great "Father of Waters." On the high, angular point of land which is formed by and overlooks the junction of the two streams stands Fort Snelling, one of those frontier posts where for many years past United States troops have been stationed to keep in check the unruly Sioux. It was built in the year 1820 by Colonel Snelling, and was at first called Fort Saint Anthony, but several years later was rechristened Fort Snelling, after its founder. In all respects the situation of the fort is an excellent one. It crowns the summit of an eminence nearly one hundred feet in height, the sides of which fall almost perpendicularly to the water's edge, while the view up the two broad rivers, with their

steep and thickly-wooded banks, is very fine. At present the fort is tenanted by a regiment of black soldiers, who do not seem to have any very onerous duties to perform, the Indians being now no longer sufficiently powerful to prove in the least degree troublesome. The Mississippi, as it flows beneath the walls of the fort, is always seamed with quantities of sawdust from the water-driven saw-mills of Minneapolis, and either the troops in the fort, or some careful settlers of the district, have constructed a long floating boom of timber, which projects far out into the river and collects the numerous pieces of wood that are constantly floating down. These, when dried, are used as firewood.

The railroad from St. Paul runs under the

walls of the fort and on to Minneapolis, past the Falls of Minnehaha, where there is a station. The writer, however, preferred to take the train no farther than the fort and to walk thence to the falls, across the undulating, flower-strewn prairie which commences at the top of the steep slope or "bluff" forming the right bank of the Mississippi, and stretches far away towards the region of the setting sun. The day was hot and sultry; of shade there was none; and before the three miles intervening between the fort and the falls were covered we had almost repented of our decision to walk the distance. Long before the narrow fringe of trees which shade the Minnehaha Creek was reached, they were to be seen through the trembling air, lifted



Fort Snelling.

up and strangely distorted by the deceptive mirage, so common on the prairies of the west. The creek in question carries off the surplus waters of two small lakelets, known as Lakes Harriet and Calhoun, which are characteristic of many others in the neighbourhood. It is very far from being a large or imposing stream. At most it is but a few yards wide, and seldom more than an inch or two deep. The smooth rocky bed over which it peacefully ripples is quite unobstructed, and, were it not for the sound of falling waters close at hand, no one previously unaware of the fact would for one moment suppose that the peaceful little stream which, only a few yards away, disappears quietly into a thick grove of trees,

was on the very point of plunging over the far-famed Falls of Minnehaha. Yet such is the case; and after descending the steep slope which commences directly the grove is entered, the visitor at once arrives at "the little waterfall, which [as one writer says] is for ever singing a love-song to the mighty Father of Waters."

Travellers visiting the Falls of Minnehaha will do well not to expect to see too much. The waterfall is in no respect gigantic or imposing. There are in many parts of the world others which fully equal it in their attractions. As a matter of fact, it is certain that the Minnehaha would never have attained to anything like its present fame had not Longfellow brought it so prominently

into notice by naming after it the bride of his hero in the "Song of Hiawatha," wherein he speaks of the "dark-eyed daughter of the ancient arrow-maker," who was—

"Wayward as the Minnehaha,
With her mood of shade and sunshine,
Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate,
Feet as rapid as the river,
Tresses flowing like the water,
And as musical as laughter."

Nevertheless we do not for a moment wish to deny that Minnehaha is an exceedingly beautiful and picturesque waterfall. On the contrary, we assert that it is so. The stream, on arriving at the edge of the overhanging precipice, throws itself over it in a broad unbroken sheet, which, after falling some sixty feet or more in a graceful curve, reaches a circular pool below, the sides of which are kept perpetually wet by the steamy spray that is for ever rising from beneath the falling water. After dashing itself into this pool, the water glides rapidly away along a narrow channel, occupying the bottom of the valley and closely hidden by a dense growth of bushes and small trees, laughing and chuckling to itself, as though pleased with the graceful feat it has just performed. A secluded pathway runs for a mile or so along the bank of the little stream, through the thick brushwood, until it suddenly reaches the bank of the broad, saw-dusty river, hastening rapidly onward towards its far-distant ocean home, over two thousand two hundred miles away in the Gulf of Mexico. From this spot the visitor must return to the falls, as no path can be made along the foot of the nearly perpendicular bank, formed of a fine white sand, which rises almost straight from the water's edge. But the Minnehaha well deserves another visit. Its different aspects are too many to be all taken in at one glance. One of its most notable peculiarities lies in the fact that visitors may walk right round beneath it, from one side to the other, by a passage which is, we believe, partly natural and partly artificial. It gives a strange sensation to walk the length of this passage, with a solid wall of limestone rock on the one hand and a torrent of falling water within

arm's distance on the other, pouring down with thunderous noise into a pool some thirty feet below. Certainly the waterfall has about it much that is calculated to fascinate and charm the beholder. It is impossible to entertain any but pleasant thoughts

"As one sees the Minnehaha,
Gleaming, glancing, through the branches,
As one hears the laughing water
From behind its screen of branches."

But Minnehaha is not always thus. At times when the ice-king has laid his grasp with unusual severity upon the fair face of nature, he builds the Maiden-Spirit of the Falls a splendid palace of ice, of which the noble hall is floored, curtained, columned, arched, and walled with ice. Chaste stalactites of ice are hung within, and without the massive walls and roofs are added to and thickened till the whole forms a huge dome of ice, which has been fancifully called "the ice-wigwam of Minnehaha." In this, so says the legend of the red man, Minnehaha sings the long cold winter through. At the time of our visit, however, it is almost needless to say that the maiden wore her summer garb.

Minnehaha is a favourite spot with the inhabitants both of St. Paul and Minneapolis when they are inclined to while away a few spare hours of a hot summer's day. Already the falls are beginning to pay the penalty of fame. Several hotels have sprung up on the verge of the grove of trees which surrounds the spot; ice-cream vendors ply their trade within a few yards of the falling water; while an enterprising photographer is ready to take your portrait, comfortably seated in an arm-chair, with the cascade in the background. But the beauty of the spot, though marred, is far from being spoiled as yet. We ourselves spent the greater part of a very pleasant day there, seeing the waterfall and its surroundings under their varied aspects, and we can with confidence recommend a brief visit to the Falls of Minnehaha to any English or other tourists who happen hereafter to find themselves in "the Land of the Dakotas."

MILLER CHRISTY.

A GOOD WORK AMONG THIEVES.

ONE of the happiest things which has attracted our notice in this year of Jubilee, has been the diminution of crime during the fifty years of the Queen's reign; and

one of its most interesting features is the work that is done for the transformation of the criminals themselves into honest citizens.

Mr. George Hatton, the founder of the

St. Giles's Christian Mission, has devoted attention to this service for at least ten years; and there is no exaggeration in saying, that he has done more than any other individual to bring about this lessening of our criminal population. As Mr. Hatton is still comparatively only a young man, he might naturally hope to continue in his chosen philanthropic work for many long years; but unhappily, delicate health has of late compelled him to curtail his efforts. The work itself, however, has not been allowed either to flag or to suffer in any way, for his lieutenant, Mr. W. Wheatley, is constantly engaged, and the extreme value of his services is recognised by the judges, by the police-court magistrates, and by all the authorities at Scotland Yard.

Mr. Hatton himself is a native of London, and as a youth was drawn to Bloomsbury Chapel when the late Dr. Brock was at the height of his fame and influence. At that time the notorious region of St. Giles's retained many of its original characteristics. Its low lodging-houses still presented a phase of London life which such keen observers as Dickens and Cruikshank loved to study, but which had a tendency to inspire social economists with despair. In the cellars and attics of its murky streets there herded a large population, which though unnoticed or unpitied by the main portion of the great world outside, constituted a source of moral and physical contagion. In many rooms were those who having once occupied good social positions, had thrown away their last chance in life—the victims of idleness, self-indulgence, or crime. Some of these, while associating with cadgers and thieves, were scholars able to quote the Greek and Roman classics, or to give various readings of passages in the Bible. On Saturday nights the busiest houses of business were the gin-palaces; and on Sunday mornings the open shops, the costers' stalls and barrows, and the chaffering throng of the streets, altogether presented the appearance of a noisy fair, of which the respectable world, less than a mile away, for whom the churches and chapels were open, knew little or nothing. To crown all, this strange little world, picturesque at times even amid its squalor, and presenting many features of interest despite its abounding sin, possessed printing-works of its own—the famous Catnach Press, whence has issued millions of songs, broadsides, and "last dying speeches," which patterers and pedlars have circulated in all parts of England.

Such was the neighbourhood which Mr. Hatton found lying within a stone's throw of Bloomsbury chapel a quarter of a century ago, when it was resolved to do what was possible for its reclamation. The attempt was made in faith; and as is inevitably the case under such conditions, the Mission was successful. Those who had been supposed to be too sin-hardened and degraded to be longer in anywise hopeful characters were attracted to the services, and many striking cases of reformation took place. While the Gospel won its conquests, schools were established, habits of thrift and temperance were inculcated, while something was done in the way of recreation to lighten and brighten the dull monotony of the life of the very poor. Words would not be sufficiently expressive to tell how thankful some were to be visited in their own rooms, while others who were at first indifferent or querulous, found in the Gospel an unexpected messenger that could raise and comfort them. In exceptionally hard or trying times temporal assistance has been dispensed, and, so far from losing self-respect through such help, many despairing men and women have been enabled to tide over difficulties until better days dawned upon them. In course of time the rude and inadequate building which had served our St. Giles's Reformers as their head-quarters, was supplemented by the chapel in Little Wild Street, a sanctuary of striking interior, and which can claim a distinguished history, reaching back as far as the heroic days of William III. It was thither that the late Mr. Justice Lush was attracted when he came to seek his fortune in London; and in due course the rising young lawyer became son-in-law of Mr. Woollacot, the pastor.

The idea of helping discharged prisoners and of organizing what may be called a mission to thieves, came afterwards; and in a singular or providential manner it was first of all suggested by individual thieves themselves, who, after being discharged from prison, came and asked for assistance. The timely, and not altogether unreasonable request of these unhappy men thus became a means of inaugurating that department of the St. Giles's Christian Mission which has since that day done more than any other similar agency to bring about a diminution of crime among men and boys. It will readily be supposed that when once begun, earnest philanthropic minds found plenty of incentives to perseverance in their chosen work. It was discovered, for example, that large numbers of

youths, who in no proper sense could be said to belong to the criminal class, were enticed into vicious courses almost before they themselves suspected that they had forsaken the paths of honesty. Passers of spurious coin are ever on the look out for whom they may ensnare, and no victims so readily answer their purpose as innocent-looking youths from the country who have come to push their way in London. Such are readily detected by the professional "smasher," who happening to come up at an unexpected moment, well understands how to simulate the air of a friend-in-need—one who can introduce the novice into other ways than hard labour of working his way upward. If the youth from the country listens to the deceiver he passes the Rubicon which divides the honest from the criminal class, and urged on by threats of exposure when he would fain recede from his dangerous course, his fate would be sealed if our kind-hearted judges and magistrates did not perfectly well understand the situation. In large numbers of cases youngsters who are detected in the act of attempting to pass bad money are known to be the dupes of others. In former days they would have been summarily hanged; but now, instead of suffering punishment proportionate to the crime actually committed, they are in London generally handed over to the representatives of the St. Giles's Mission. If such means were not available to save them, the law would necessarily have to take its course. Prison discipline would hardly prove a successful corrective in their case—it would, on the contrary, be scarcely other than a confirmation of that criminal life from which it would be well-nigh impossible for such subjects to escape.

We cannot conceive of a better beginning than this determined and successful endeavour to save the victims of coiners; but a good deal of much harder work remained to be undertaken in connection with the attempt to reclaim the ordinary run of criminals on their discharge from the gaols. The present Lord Chief Justice once declared his belief that it was possible to awaken even in the most hardened criminals some sense of the value of religion, while the example of our Lord in dying for sinners could touch their hearts and rouse their consciences. It is quite true that the power of heaven is never straitened, but human agents have to make nice calculations, and in this instance no plan seemed to afford greater promise than that of meeting the men and boys at the time of their discharge from prison and of

inviting them to a comfortable breakfast in a place of assembly specially hired for the purpose hard by. This mode was accordingly adopted, and thus, for several years past, on every week-day morning, these breakfasts have been prepared near the gates of all the great London prisons.

The outer gates of our great modern prisons are, as a rule, quite as imposing as they are forbidding; and as in company with a little expectant crowd we wait for the egress of the first comers, the grim portals look as though they were hiding from the world many a story of wrecked lives and wasted opportunities. Though not actually needed, there are policemen present to represent the majesty of the law; but with the exception of Mr. Hatton's agents, the main body of the spectators are so far interested in the proceedings that they are looking out for the reappearance in the world of freedom of friends or family connections. Some of those who thus wait are roguish adventurers, who have no desire to live by honest labour so long as they can steal; and if on being discharged, a prisoner renews his acquaintance with confirmed criminals, who probably were the original cause of his leaving the path of rectitude, there can be no hope of his permanent amendment. On drawing the very first breath in the atmosphere of freedom, therefore, he has at least an opportunity of choosing between the good that is offered by Christian friends and the evil that is proffered by designing knaves, who use him for their own selfish purposes. Happily there are thousands who in the course of the year accept the invitation to breakfast and the assistance which is never withheld from those who really desire to turn into better ways. On the other hand, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the other side offers some almost irresistible inducements to certain natures to continue in the track of crime. Money for present needs, something stimulating by way of refreshment at the gin-palace—which is sure not to be far distant—words of false cheer, and promises of "work," are all forthcoming. Knowing what human nature is, can one wonder that a proportion turns aside from the breakfast which Christian charity has prepared, to accept what is for the moment the more tempting fare of the devil's banquet? When you see a youth come forth from the black, heavy gaol entrance, to be led forth in a sort of triumphant jocular way by a bull-necked, bullet-headed man on one side and a shameless woman on

the other, be sure that the watchers have snared their prey, and that the ruin of the simple one is being accomplished.

The breakfast itself is a fine opportunity for studying human nature in what is supposed to be one of its most repellent phases. Many yield to the persuasive words which are addressed to them; some even accept the Gospel as unreservedly as it was accepted by the thief on the cross, and become very genuine cases of reformation.

It is not at these repasts, however, that the main work which is being carried on day by day, and from the opening to the end of the year, can be witnessed. To see that, we have to attend at the station in Brooke Street, Holborn, on any day at noon. There, in the very thoroughfare in which the despairing Chatterton cut short his young life nearly a century and a quarter ago, a house of industry is provided for quondam thieves who desire to work; and such have their passage paid to the colonies, have assistance rendered by grants of money or tools, or they are sent into situations at home as fast as openings can be found for them. To remain for an hour in the office or audience-chamber, is to come into close contact with a strange succession of unhappy persons, who are living illustrations of the truth of Solomon's dictum, "The way of transgressors is hard." Those who chiefly awaken sympathy are the suppliant weeping women, who come on behalf of fallen husbands. Some belong to the common street waif-and-stray class, who having stolen to satisfy hunger, found in the gaol a far more luxurious lodging than any to which they had been accustomed in their wanderings, and who frequently turn out well when a helping hand is held out to them. Those who are the most difficult to deal with are the clerks and warehousemen, who for the sake of petty pilfering or of securing a dishonest haul, have forfeited good situations, and who now, in a broken-hearted condition, apply for the assistance which will enable them to make a fresh start in life.

The magnitude of the work thus carried on at the Brooke Street station of the Mission may be inferred from the following figures. During the year ending November 30th, 1886, the number discharged from the prisons of Pentonville, Holloway, Wandsworth, and Millbank, was 20,524. As many as 14,261 of these accepted the invitation to breakfast given at the gates; 4,671 signed

the temperance pledge; and 5,751 were assisted in various ways to regain a creditable position in the world. Thus, 4,828 received money, clothes, tools, stock, &c.; 208 were sent home to their friends; 91 went to the colonies; 61 took to a seafaring life; and 489 had employment found for them at home. In addition to this, 713 convicts had their gratuities, amounting to more than £3,000, paid to them through the Mission, and a large number of these cases received additional grants from the Mission funds.

If it be asked, "What comes of all these efforts put forth daily on behalf of thieves year after year?" the answer is, "A general diminution of crime, so far as Great Britain is concerned, which is without parallel in our own annals or in the history of the world, and which renders our situation unique among the nations." The experience of the United States, for example, is quite the reverse of our own; for in the *Princeton Review* for January of the present year, Mr. C. D. Warner, in speaking on behalf of the Republic, shows "that crimes rather increase than diminish, that the number of criminals in penitentiaries more than keeps pace with the growth of population and of wealth, so that enlarged accommodation for both old and juvenile offenders are continually demanded, and that what is known as the criminal class is larger year by year."

In England and Wales, during 1885, the number of penal servitude sentences was 1,027, being 23 per cent. lower than the year preceding, although 1884 was lower than any other year on record; compared with twenty years before the total was only one-half. Less than thirty years ago about 7,448 of the population provided one case of penal servitude yearly on the average, but at present the average is one in 28,724. This continuous decrease has been more particularly striking during the last ten years.

In such facts and figures as these, those who are actively engaged in the work of reclamation may well find incentives to perseverance, while the public at large will find in them reasons for not withholding from the St. Giles's Mission such pecuniary assistance as their labours require. Their successful service is necessarily a comparatively costly work; but when the vast saving in taxes as well as in plunder is taken into account, the public only advances its own interests by taking care that such a work does not flag for want of means wherewith to carry it on.

G. HOLDEN PIKE.



THE aisles grow dim, and as by winding ways,
Eager I climb St. Ouen's giddy height,
The silver censers vanish from my gaze
As shooting-stars upon a dusky night.
I hear the chaunted vespers at my feet
Like wordless water-music far and sweet.

On priest and acolyte and people fall
 From western window many a sapphire
 ray ;
 The sculptured knights within the niched wall
 Look not more mute and marble-like
 than they.
 Living and dead, with fingers clasped seem
 praying,
 God and the angels hear what they are saying !

Where am I now ? As if a dream went by,
 And dream still fairer came, I breathless
 gaze,
 Fearing to break by whispered word or sigh
 The rapture of my spirit's deep amaze.
 For earth and life beneath me sleeping lie,
 Only the stars divide me from the sky !

The city gleams with lights that come and go,
 The hills are cut against the opal west,
 The river hath a soft and onward flow,
 As some tired spirit fain to seek its rest,
 Whilst from the far outlying mists of green
 Tinkles some vesper bell of church unseen.

Monk, martyr, saint, and paladin arise
 Around me now in pinnacled ar-
 ray ;
 An hour ago they seemed to touch the skies,
 At last I stand as near to heaven as
 they ;
 And at last 'mid this mute companionship of
 stone
 I cannot feel that I am quite alone.

Ah, me ! the curfew with its silver chime
 Too swiftly breaks the magic of the
 hour.
 With clanging keys I hear the beadle climb
 The cobwebb'd maze of St. Ouen's tower.
 I quit with wistfulness akin to pain
 My visionary world for that of men.

The stars are out. Gurgoyles and image quaint,
 Rare spire, frieze fantastic, oriel,
 Hero and martyred monk, and virgin saint
 Make up a world in which I may not dwell.
 Why do I linger, since I must not be
 One of this mute and mystic company ?

M. BETHAM EDWARDS.



EXPERIENCES OF A METEOROLOGIST IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

By CLEMENT L. WRAGGE, F.R.G.S., F.R.MET.SOC., ETC.

PART III.

SECTION I.—FURTHER NOTES ON THE ADELAIDE PLAINS.

BEFORE giving an account of experiences at Mount Lofty I have yet more remarks touching the climatology and natural features of the Adelaide Plains, and my work at the Torrens Observatory. My hours of observation are 3 A.M., 9 A.M., 3 P.M., and 9 P.M.; also at 9.22 P.M., when it is eight minutes past noon in London, at which time synchronous readings are taken at the chief observatories of the world. At these times all the usual elements are observed in strict accordance with the principles and rules of the Royal Meteorological Society.

I am overwhelmed with the mass of material before me, and notwithstanding some little detail this article can only be a mere sketch in outline.

Imprimis, the weather of South Australia comes under the same classes as in Great Britain—the cyclonic or low-pressure, and the anticyclonic or high-pressure type. The main difference is in the circulation of the winds, as set forth in Bay's Ballots' famous law for the southern hemisphere, "Stand with your back to the wind and the barometer is lower on the right hand than on the left." In these southern latitudes the wind circulates in the same direction as the hands of a watch around travelling barometric depressions, and against watch-hands around regions of high pressure. In the northern hemisphere it is the reverse. Each half, and indeed each quadrant, of a cyclonic depression has its own peculiar weather, depending, moreover, on the surrounding distribution of pressure. Instead, therefore, of the cloudy, saturated conditions which prevail in England with south-easterly winds, as the front part of a storm-area approaches on the plains of Adelaide a depression is heralded by north-east currents; and a glance at the map and configuration of the Australian continent will show the reader that, in the summer time, this wind must be intensely hot and dry. These low pressures travel from the west, and frequently originate in the South Indian Ocean. They skirt the Great Bight, and, overlapping the coast-line, usually pass with their centres to the south of Ade-

laide. Thus the heated air from the interior must be drawn towards the place of lowest barometer.

A few figures from my own observatory will show the very remarkable variations in meteorological conditions between the front and receding portions of such a disturbance, and British workers will agree that the statistics are perhaps without precedent. Remember that the dry bulb thermometer indicates the temperature of the air in the shade, and the wet bulb gives the temperature of evaporation. Heat is lost by the evaporating process, and so when the air is not soaked with moisture the wet bulb reads lower than the dry bulb. Hence the greater the difference between the readings of the two instruments the drier is the atmosphere, and when they both read alike, as was nearly always the case on Ben Nevis, the air is saturated, and such a condition is represented by 100. So, then, the percentage of relative humidity shows the degree of approach to absolute saturation.

On January 13th, 1884, for instance, a disturbance was coming from the west, and the barometer falling. The dry bulb at 9 A.M. read $96^{\circ}5$, wet bulb $74^{\circ}4$, giving a humidity of 24 per cent. The sky was deep blue, and a few wisps of cirrus cloud, which faithfully predict a coming change, were noted. The wind was north-east, sweeping round the south-eastern edge of the advancing depression at a velocity of about twenty-five miles an hour. As the centre approached the wind veered round by north, and at 3 P.M. the dry bulb was $106^{\circ}8$, wet $69^{\circ}4$. Here we have a difference of more than thirty-seven degrees between the two thermometers,* a difference which gives only 10 per cent.† for the humidity of the air instead of 98 per cent., as is frequent in Great Britain in front of an advancing storm. The maximum shade temperature was $109^{\circ}2$, the highest in the sun's rays $154^{\circ}8$ (by the same solar thermometer that a while ago was buried in ice on Ben Nevis), and the temperature of the ground at a depth of one foot was actually $91^{\circ}2$ at

* The thermometers are exposed in Stevenson's double-louved screen, in a perfectly open situation: bulbs four feet above the ground.

† From a calculation based on Guyot's Psychrometrical Tables, which, however, are only constructed for differences between the dry and wet bulbs not exceeding $26^{\circ}5$.

9 P.M. Soon after midnight the centre of disturbance passed by, up went the barometer, and a new set of conditions became established to the relief of every one, so that by next evening temperature had fallen forty-one degrees and humidity increased to 63 per cent., under the cooling south-south-west winds travelling round the rear of the retreating depression.

Can British readers, hugging their fires in January, realise such conditions as the above at the antipodes? Once experience a genuine South Australian "brickfielder," and you will never forget it. Tender vegetation withers as by frost in the old country—all nature seems prostrate. Ants, guided by wondrous instinct, find the wet-bulb thermometer, and eagerly sip the cooling moisture; and if I do not replenish the little water-cup even this will be denied them, for evaporation is proceeding at such a rapid rate that it will speedily run dry. My old cat lies panting in the shade, and wonders to what strange land she has been transported. Yesterday she was hunting native lizards in the sections yonder, but no Australian game tempts her now. I think of "Renzo," poor dog, in quarantine, and wonder how he takes to a colonial summer. Fowls are gasping under the trees, while ducks and geese hobble with pain as they tread the burning ground. Apples are roasting by the sun's rays.

Another disturbance followed this memorable instance five days afterwards. Again the wind went to the scorching north-east, and from a temperature of $84^{\circ}0$ at 9 P.M. in front of the centre when the sky was clear, the thermometer fell to $59^{\circ}9$ in the rear, and the values for humidity were 20 per cent. and 85 per cent. respectively. The latter was obtained under strong south-west winds following violent dust-storms, and before heavy rain. The extreme rear of this depression brought lowering skies and gales, with great rolls of cloud capping the Mount Lofty range, so presenting a scene strongly resembling the Highlands. By January 20th the dry bulb was down to $52^{\circ}9$, and nearly half an inch of rain had fallen. At night there were breaks in the cloud-masses, and ever and anon one glimpsed the Southern Cross shining in the south-east like some sparkling jewel. Thus within a week I registered a range of temperature of more than fifty-six degrees.

So much for two instances of the Adelaide climate in January, and readers will concur that the meteorologist has ample scope for investigation. Such sudden and startling

changes, despite the salubrity of the climate, are trying to many people, and we are thankful that they occur mainly during summer. They are then a result of cyclonic winds drawn from the heated plains of Central Australia, and then veering into cool currents from the Southern Ocean, similarly drawn towards the centre of a low-pressure system; and never was the cyclonic theory better exemplified.

It will readily be understood that the anti-cyclonic type of weather seldom or never develops great energy between November and March, in consequence of the rarefied air rising from the hot interior.*

Gay as the gardens may be with the choicest flowers, maintained by irrigation with the hose from the water-mains, vegetable growth, with some exceptions, is checked during this season. Yet the stinkwort (*Inula suaveolens*), a noxious weed, native to South Europe, grows but too vigorously and flowers in profusion. The couch-grass and the beautiful buffalo grass—the latter introduced from the United States—also grow during summer, and are much used in forming lawns. But the slopes and plains are browned over, and so dry is vegetation, that a piece of glass focusing the sun's rays may set it ablaze. Bush fires rage in the hills despite stringent measures against the careless use of "Tandstickor" matches by reckless smokers, and shed a wild glow, beneath great volumes of smoke, on the flats by night.

It is not until the rains in March and April that growth is stimulated and "feed" appears, so that the South Australian autumn in a measure answers to the English spring; save, indeed, that deciduous trees introduced from Europe are turning yellow and dropping their leaves, and the foliage of the vineyards soon becomes a rich red-brown glorious to behold.

The weather thenceforth to the end of November is generally delightful, especially the early morning in May and June. The native "magpie"† pipes a warbling tune, one of the first signs of the return of day, cocks are crowing, soon we hear the ring of the hammer at the smithy yonder, and so genial is the air that on May 30th (corresponding with November 30th at home), I have noted a temperature of $66^{\circ}2$ at nine A.M. The sky is an Italian blue, dotted with cumuli, at times touching Mount Lofty, or flecked by cloud-masses behind a disturb-

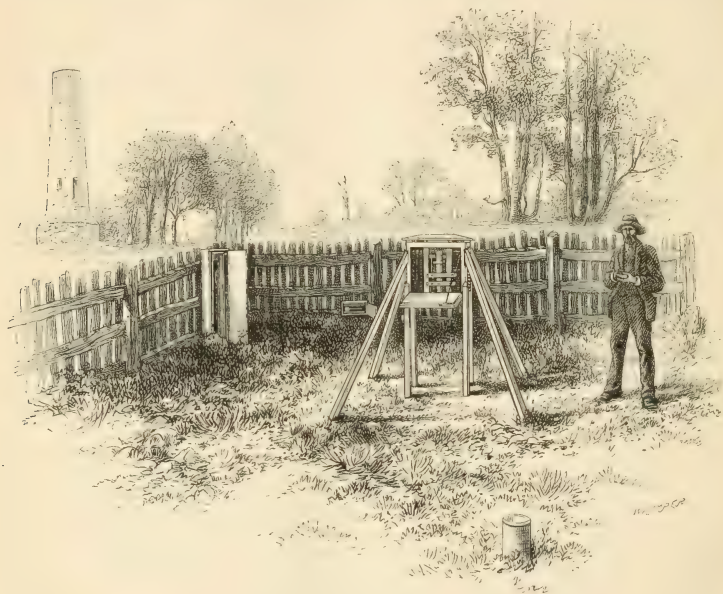
* Mean pressure at Alice Springs, in Central Australia, during January is $29^{\circ}9$, and during July $30^{\circ}5$.

† This bird is the Piping Crow-Shrike, *Gymnorhina tibicen*.

ance, giving beautiful pictures of light and shade, while lowering strati, essentially Scotch in character, sweep the gullies* of the hills. Native swallows are on the wing and swiftly dart hither and thither.

Again, as the anticyclone of the interior gathers energy in June and July, owing largely to the chilling of the land, and the atmosphere becoming more dense, extending tongues of high pressure envelop Adelaide and "back off" the low pressures of the Southern Ocean. Sometimes a huge anticyclone envelops the entire continent, as on

July 14th last, when the highest pressure, 30°·689, was noted. Then are the temperatures lower, averaging 46°·0 at nine P.M.; the heavens at night often without a cloud, terrestrial radiation goes on apace, heavy dews form on the plains, cold air accumulates in the valley of the Torrens, and at early morning an occasional crisp white frost is quickly dispelled by the sun shining obliquely east-north-east. The sun sweeps across the northern sky, attaining an altitude of 31° 38' on June 21st. Therefore at noon he is about two spans† above the northern hori-



The Mount Lofty Observatory.

zon, and casting strange shadows towards the south. Immigrants from Europe fancy that the world is upside down. Although I obtained a temperature of 23°·7 on the surface of the ground in June last, the minimum self-registering thermometer, at an elevation of four feet, seldom falls below 32°·0 F., and the lowest I have yet recorded was 30°·2 on the 26th of that month, when temperature of the soil, at a depth of one foot, had fallen to 49°·2. The records at three A.M. are very

interesting. They are secured by Negretti and Zambra's self-registering turn-over hygrometer, which is connected by electric wires with a clock in my computing-room, so that I have no occasion to "turn out" at that early hour, and can read off at nine A.M. the three A.M. values. By an exquisite contrivance in the blowing of the thermometer-stems accommodation is provided for increase of temperature in the mean time. During

* An Australian gully is synonymous with a Scotch burn. A "creek" is an inland stream, generally on ground comparatively level. The term is also applied to the bed and course where water might flow in wet seasons as "dry creek."

† The extreme span between the middle finger and thumb with the arm outstretched subtends an angle of about 15°. Hence bushmen by spanning along the sun's course, and allowing one span for every hour, can estimate the time of day.

high pressures in June I have, at three A.M. deduced ninety-nine per cent. as indicating the humidity of the air, which is usually greatest during low temperature by night—dry bulb $39^{\circ}9$, wet $39^{\circ}8$. Probably no other local climate presents more extraordinary vicissitudes within a period of six months.

Spring commences very early; indeed, virtually there is no real winter, unless we consider that "winter" is the summer and caused by the periods of withering heat. Snow has fallen on Mount Lofty, but it is a very rare occurrence. I have never seen it. August, September, and October may be classed as spring months. But even as early as the end of June almond-trees bloom, and the landscape later on is very beautiful.

Adelaide and its suburbs are within a narrow belt of latitude especially suitable for olive culture. South Australian wine is exceedingly pure and wholesome. Muscatel, Reisling, and other varieties are largely consumed. No imported article can surpass in excellence the wine of the country. As for oranges, I myself measured an orange grown near Adelaide which was one foot three inches in circumference, and its weight was a pound and a half, equal to those I have seen in the famous groves at Joppa.

How charming is the weather in spring, especially in September and October! The vines are bursting into leaf, and English trees renew their mantle of tender green. The sun has crossed the line, the days are gradually lengthening, and all life revels in the genial air. Sparrows are busy nesting—evidently under the impression that it is April—and give me sore trouble. My terrestrial minimum thermometer is exposed on cotton-wool, and the rascals carry off the wool bit by bit, and loss of readings is the frequent result. The evenings are delightful. Turning to my note-book, I take September 18th, 1884, at nine P.M., as an example of weather at this season under conditions of a falling barometer. The temperature of the air was $58^{\circ}8$, humidity 62 per cent. The maximum shade temperature for the day was $80^{\circ}3$ and the minimum $49^{\circ}8$. The nights are calm and dewy, so still that the slightest sound reaches the ear. The scream of the shrill curlew is heard afar, and the "Australian lark" warbles an evening hymn. Native crickets are merrily chirping, and some solitary frog croaks in the long grass. The heavens are glorious, sparkling with the fires of the southern constellations.

November is practically the first month of

summer, and temperatures over $90^{\circ}0$ in the shade are recorded.

A few more words as to naturalised vegetation. By the settling of the European in this new country, and the consequent importation of wheat and other seeds for agricultural and horticultural purposes, a vast number of troublesome weeds have become domiciled in the colony, and as the South Australian climate is very congenial to certain classes of flora they quickly spread over large areas, despite thousands of pounds expended by the legislature with a view to their extirpation. Indeed, I need not go beyond my own garden to prove the truth of this assertion, and at the same time I shall show how fertile is the soil. When I took over the land it was a piece nearly bare, and ugly. Afterwards I had the ground trenched nearly two feet, excepting a plot which I dedicated to the various instruments. It is now (1886) a botanic reserve, in which the order of "weeds" has asserted its claim to representation, despite my best endeavours to keep my borders clear. I may mention at random the Bathurst bur, *Xanthium spinosum*; Scotch thistle, *Onopordon Acanthium*; sow-thistle, *Sonchus oleraceus*; the Virgin's thistle, *Silybum Marianum*; Cape dandelion, *Cryptostema calendulacea*; the English shepherd's-purse and chickweed, *Capsella Bursa-pastoris*, and *Stellaria media*; trefoils and nettles, besides fennel, hedge mustard, wild oats, and others too numerous to mention, so that Dicotyledons and Monocotyledons have sent forth their delegates with a vengeance. Now nature intended that perfect harmony should exist between the flora and fauna of a country; hence, in her grand economy, we have the sparrows, rabbits, mice, &c., which have become a plague; and alien flora push out indigenous plants, so a corresponding fauna, with the European at the head, eject the native animals, together with the aboriginal, and send them farther and farther into the bush. Thus it becomes a struggle for existence, and the theory of the survival of the fittest is ably illustrated.

But, to return to my garden. In the autumn of 1884 I planted many choice trees and plants. Within two years the verandah (adorned by the Aden canoe) was covered by a luxuriant growth of creepers—tacsonia, passion-flower, jasmine, and hardenbergia. Now, too, I have a thriving young vineyard, embryonic orange and olive groves, and various pines, with specimens of the tecoma, ceanothus, wigandea, oleander, tamarix, hybiscus,

buddlea, bougainvillea, dolichos, yucca, agave, and cordyline; and other tropical and semi-tropical trees are growing rapidly. Even bananas do their best to flourish, and battle bravely with the hot winds. No glass-house is needed. Had I sufficient time I could start a miniature flower-farm for perfumery purposes; my roses are perfection. Arums and lilies flourish by little fountains, and my domain is hemmed in on the north side by a long line of Spanish reeds, *Arundo donax*, classed with bamboos by the settlers, and clumps of the same fully 20 feet high, all planted by my own hand, are here and there. The leaves of this beautiful reed thatched the tent of Achilles, and heroes of old made arrows of the stem (*Iliad*, xi.). So, then, aided by Nature, I "made the desert smile."

Next to flies the greatest bore in Australian housekeeping is the absence of good servants, although wages are nearly double the amounts usual in the Old Country.

As to the natives, but few are seen around Adelaide, except in May, when they come down from the Murray in some force, to receive blankets at the hands of a paternal Government.

SECTION II.—THE MOUNT LOFTY HILLS.

"ADELAIDE'S INHERITANCE,"—such are these beautiful hills according to Mr. Archibald Forbes, worn down by ages of weathering though they are. Mount Lofty itself is a rounded top banked by the native Eucalypts, and on either side is the long backbone of the range, with fertile gullies and saddles sweeping down to the plains in long succession. Though the summit is but 2,334 feet high, yet, as we have seen, during low pressure it may be heavily cloud-capped. This, however, is exceptional in this sunny land, where clear blue skies are the rule.

I was convinced that results of real value to meteorology would be obtained from instruments placed on Mount Lofty; especially if working simultaneously with those at the Torrens Observatory. The difference in height is two thousand two hundred feet. In a word, I determined to start an observing-station there as a tentative experiment, and on the 1st October, 1884, the thing was done. An aneroid-barograph recording the curve of pressure by clockwork (similar to the instrument described in Part I.) was placed in a jarrah box well tarred and pierced with air-holes. This, fitted with a strong lock, I carefully concealed among the rocks lest a member of the genus "larrikin" should discover its where-

abouts and do damage. The larrikin is a creature evolved in Australia, and allied to the "hoodlum," whom I first heard of in California. Self-registering thermometers were placed in a louvered screen, of the Board of Trade pattern, screwed to a post, and a rain-gauge completed the outfit. Once a week I visited my new station to wind and to read off the self-recording instruments, and also during stormy and other interesting conditions of weather. Daily observations were not contemplated.

The barograph was not discovered; so, emboldened by success and the value of the records, I extended operations. By November 1st a fine mercurial barometer with a long scale was in position, secured in a double-sided box, which was screwed to the corner post of a fence enclosing a Government reserve near the apex of the hill. A full-size "Stevenson" screen for dry and wet bulbs and maximum and minimum thermometers was also erected and another gauge added. Then I ventured to bring forth the barograph, which I placed near the barometer, in the hope that such a formidable array of scientific appliances would prove its own protection. A board with a notice entreating tourists to keep away from the instruments was fixed to the fence, a necessary precaution as Mount Lofty is a favourite holiday resort. The notice was respected by Australian men and women, ever loyal and true, but the larrikin, whom they much disliked, turned up after all.

In the city and suburbs his province is to insult respectable people, unhinge gates, wrench knockers, mutilate Dr. Schomburgk's trees, and do other such acts of barbarism. On Mount Lofty he filled the rain-gauges; anon he emptied them; and forced the louvres from the thermometer screen. The other instruments miraculously escaped, and valuable observations were secured at considerable risk.

I can only refer to results very briefly. Tracings from the summit barograph when compared with those from the similar instrument below distinctly show that during anticyclonic weather the barometer on the Mount is lower than around Adelaide, and that when the cyclonic type prevails the barometer is higher at the high-level station than on the plains, disregarding the difference in pressure due to difference of height.* In times of high pressure the downflow of air and "sink-

* In steady weather this difference is 2°·200, the barometer on Mount Lofty reading 27°·766, and that at Torrens Observatory being 30°·056, both reduced to the standard temperature of 32°·0 F.

ing" of atmosphere below the level of the Mount are very apparent; and under low pressure the ascent of air and its accumulation at the higher level is decidedly indicated. Again, my observations prove that shade temperature is frequently twelve degrees lower at the Mount than at Walkerville, the weekly range is less, and the humidity of the air about 22 per cent. greater. The hill climate is, therefore, more equable than that of the plains, and on this account more adapted to the British constitution. The temperature of the ground from two to four feet deep is also lower on Mount Lofty by ten degrees as a mean value. For reasons above stated, I cannot give complete rainfall differences. A few values were secured, and these show that the amount on the summit exceeds that which falls on the lowlands by an average of $0^{\circ}120$ for weekly periods.

From my house the Mount is distant about seven miles in a straight line, but by the route I took it is fully twenty-four miles, and much quicker than going direct, which involves climbing afoot through the scrub. The train-car carried me to Adelaide; then by the Hills Railway to Mount Lofty Station, a ride of nineteen miles owing to deviations and curves in the line. The walk thence to the top made up the distance. The time fixed for the chief weekly readings was 9 A.M., and my wife or an assistant arranged to observe simultaneously below. A sympathetic Government kindly provided me with a pass in return for copies of results, a concession which I appreciated.

Picture the scenery. Each feature is present as I write, vividly contrasting with bleak Ben Nevis. After a run of four miles across the plains to Mitcham the slopes are reached. Two Yankee engines, drawing eight carriages and puffing vehemently, begin to ascend.

Soon we wind round some spur clad with dwarf gum-trees, and pass deep cuttings showing the foliations in the old pre-Cambrian rock to perfection. In places they are covered with a tawny marl furrowed by rain-wash, but glowing in the sunlight and dazzling against the sky. New beauties evolve with every curve as the locomotives, labouring heavily, plough their way upwards. Magnificent panoramas open to view. We look down upon the gullies branching in all directions from the lesser ridges or water partings. Beyond are the plains yellow with the Cape dandelion, and in the distance the glittering sea, with the mail-steamer at anchor in the bay, homeward bound. On we go past Blackwood and Belair, and soon reach the Stringy-bark region, the primæval bush.

The train now winds round some steep slope, and in the dell below is a colonial's home. He has cleared away the scrub and formed very prolific orchards and gardens. All kinds of vegetables and British fruits are grown in profusion. The magpie flies from the passing train, and the jackass laughs from his perch on that ghostly gum. A kind of brake fern now prevails, and the blue flowers of the native flax mingle therein.

Within an hour from leaving Adelaide we reach the Mount Lofty Station, 1,611 feet above sea, and alight.

Around the station the ground has been extensively cleared and palatial residences have been erected in the neighbourhood as summer resorts for the aristocracy of the city. Hence the land has become valuable, and notices of allotments for "cash or credit" appear here and there. Not only so, it is becoming a veritable Hampstead Heath. "Trespassers will be prosecuted" and "No thoroughfare" strike the eye on this side and on that; and yet not distant a stone's throw grows the famous "native cherry"* with the stone outside, and the indigenous grass-tree. Is it not absurd? Away again! A new cut through the bush, and soon I am on another road leading to the Mount. A splendid view is obtained from a point on this path, embracing the country nearly to the southern littoral. Mount Barker, Strathalbyn, the Echunga gold-fields, and other centres—one great territory sufficient to maintain in plenty the entire population of the colony. The rainfall is more abundant† than in the drought-stricken areas of the "Far North."

Within half an hour I reach the summit, as a flock of parrots goes whistling past.

On the side of the apex is a Government tower, erected for survey purposes, and from this the prospect is unequalled.

Usually I did not stay longer than two hours on the Mount; but occasionally I camped and remained all night. Attired in wideawake, belt and flannel shirt, I carried my "swag" and billy-can in thorough bush style, pitched my tent between two trees, slung the water-bag to a bough, and lit a fire—happy as a king. Then the cloud came over, and the picture of the illumined tent peering through the fog was novel in the extreme. On other occasions I left the summit about seven P.M., and came down by the train, which frightens opossums out of their senses. During

* The scientific name of this tree is *Exocarpus Cupressiformis*, a genus of *Trochodendron*.

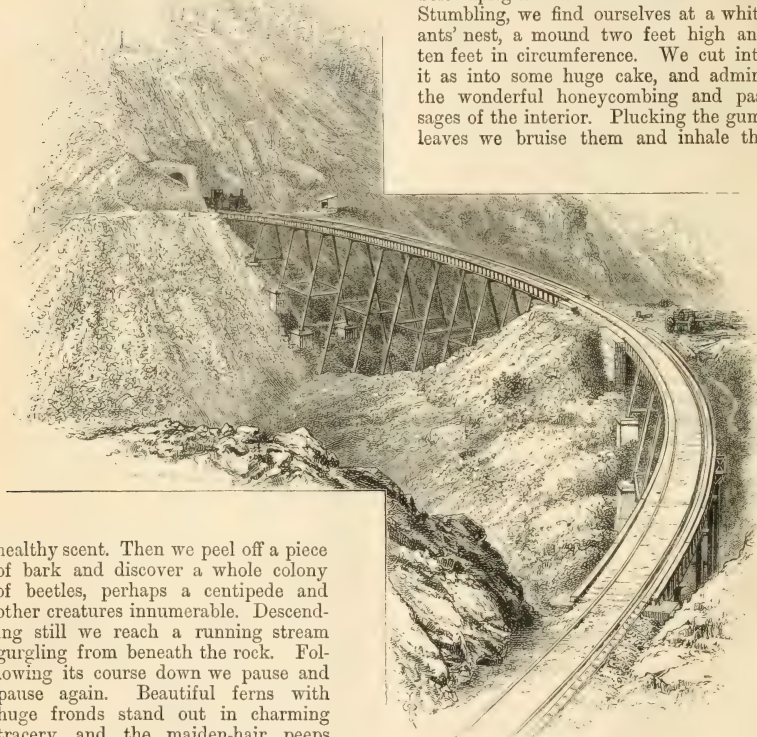
† In the northern or pastoral district of the colony the average annual rainfall is nearly eight inches. In the south it is over thirty inches, and around Adelaide twenty-one inches, from Government statistics.

the light summer evenings* this was very pleasant, and at other seasons I have groped my way in cloud-fog, and enjoyed it. Again, I have left about noon and walked through the bush into Waterfall Gully, and so the entire distance direct to Adelaide.

Come along, reader; we will descend toge-

ther. It is rough work, and be careful not to trip on the loose rock. Suppose it is autumn—the end of May. Passing a tract where the trees are charred by the last season's bush-fire, we enter the thicket. A shrub familiar in British greenhouses, and which we have often admired at the Crystal

Palace, now surrounds us in full bloom. It is the native *Epacris*, and pushing aside its lovely flowers—red, white, and crimson—we force a way. Then we admire some noble monarch, and stand bolt-upright within its hollow trunk. Stumbling, we find ourselves at a white ants' nest, a mound two feet high and ten feet in circumference. We cut into it as into some huge cake, and admire the wonderful honeycombing and passages of the interior. Plucking the gum-leaves we bruise them and inhale the



By the Hills Railway.

healthy scent. Then we peel off a piece of bark and discover a whole colony of beetles, perhaps a centipede and other creatures innumerable. Descending still we reach a running stream gurgling from beneath the rock. Following its course down we pause and pause again. Beautiful ferns with huge fronds stand out in charming tracery, and the maiden-hair peeps forth in tufts behind some nook. Interesting beyond measure are the native bushes, and twigs are plucked for identification.† We come across the “bottle-brush,” the true banksia (*B. marginata*), which carries us back to Eocene times, and we reason that

this native flora is evidently of a belated kind. Soon we come to a swamp, and here are clumps without end of a pretty sedge, *Cladium psittacarum*, and then are seen masses of a *genista* evidently introduced from Mediterranean countries. The day is hot, and the trees give but little shade from their lanciform leaves. Why, there is a black-

* On December 21st the sun sets at 7.12, on June 21st at 4.54 P.M., and rises at 4.44 and 7.9 A.M. respectively.

† *Siphelia serrulata*, *Tetratheca pilosa*, *Platylobium obtusangulatum*, *Pimelia ligustrina*, *Isoetes ceratophyllum*, *Pultenaea acerosa*, and many others.



In Camp on Mount Lofty.

berry-bush—the real thing—and fruit as luscious as in old England! Passing an elder-tree, then a gorge and romantic cascade, we enter Waterfall Gully, one of the most fertile spots in the world. The very type of peace and prosperity is an autumn evening in this picturesque place. The sun's last rays are bathing in strange tints the white trunks of the trees above, and all is still, but for the distant prattle of the settlers' children in the recesses of the glen, the occasional chatter of the now familiar magpie and the gabble of the laughing jackass* going to roost. We continue our walk, threading along through an earthly paradise. But sin has entered this Eden, and many are the aspirants for forbidden fruit. No wonder. Luxuriant orange-groves, heavy with golden balls, bound our view on the right, and a notice warns us of the effects of trespass—"Foot-irons are laid in this garden; anybody runs the consequence." Germans hold this plot, and excellent colonists they are. Then alternate olives, borne down by the weight of berries, lemon and

quince-trees, equally laden, with apple, apricot, loquat, and plum-trees by scores. Orchards here, vineyards there, while interspersed amid these lavish bowers are tall reeds, gracefully bending to the gully breeze; Norfolk Island pines, acacias, aloes, trumpet lilies, bananas, and a fine specimen of the fan-palm. Dotted in between are dahlias, chrysanthemums, roses, geraniums, &c., in one lush of beauty. The English willow and the dull foliage of the native shea oak or casuarina intermingle, giving a ludicrous effect, while giant poplars, in the sere and yellow leaf of an autumn May, proudly survey the whole. On the brae just near is an old shaft sunk for silver-lead. Lower down is a Chinaman's garden, whence "Johnny" sends supplies to market. By the clear stream grows mint run wild, and watercress we gather by the handful. Renzo is with us, shambling along and eager to be back. And now peeps out the Cross in all its glory, and we hasten onward, arriving at Torrens' Observatory two hours after sundown.

* This comical bird is a large kingfisher, *Dacelo gigas*.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

By WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RIVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER LVII.—SENSE AND SENTIMENT.

VERA and Cora are in the apartment which the former calls her studio, a spacious, nondescript sort of place—at once workroom, boudoir, and curiosity shop. The walls are covered with paintings, drawings, and sketches, some of them Vera's own. There are also bronze and marble statuettes, plaster casts, a lay figure, and a large easel. The furniture is all good of its kind, but various in design, as if it had been picked up at sundry times and places—no two chairs being alike—and near a Louis-Quatorze secrétaire stands a wonderfully carved oaken bookcase, black with age and filled with richly bound volumes.

Perfect silence reigns in the room, for it is beyond earshot of street cries and barrel-organs, and Vera is painting her friend's portrait, and very intent on her work she seems.

At length she pauses, and Cora profits by the opportunity to make an observation.

"I don't know whether you are tired of painting, but I know I am tired of sitting still, holding my tongue and doing my utmost to look my best."

"Very well," answered Vera with a smile, as she put down her palette; "we have perhaps done enough for to-day. Let us talk by all means. What about?"

"What pleasanter subject can we have than ourselves and those who belong to us?" said Cora with an answering smile.

"At any rate, it is the one that comes the most home to us. Now, let me hear your confession, for I fancy from your manner that you have something to tell me."

"Something to ask you, rather—though I have also something to tell you. I have been here several times—once or twice to dinner—yet I never meet any young men. How is it?"

"How should I know?" returned Vera with a look of surprise; "I do not invite Lady Leyton's guests, and if I did it would hardly be *comme il faut* for me to ask any men. Besides, we have young men sometimes; we had one last night, a Mr. Angel."

"Was he nice?"

"Charming, as an angel ought to be; and Lady Leyton told me that he is engaged to an equally charming girl. And there

were two young men to dinner on Tuesday."

"Were they nice?"

"Not very. One was taciturn and ugly, the other noisy and vulgar. Mr. Sydney apologised for them afterwards. He said they were business connections of his father's, whom he was occasionally obliged to invite. Yet now, when I think of it, I do meet very few young men, either here or at Mrs. Reginald's."

"Cannot you guess the reason?" asked Cora with a significant smile.

"I suppose because they know so few."

"That is not the reason, my dear. They don't want young men to come—that is the reason."

"But why?"

"But why! Oh, what an innocent you are! It is because of you."

"Because of me!" repeated Vera. "I don't think I should do the poor young men any harm."

Here Cora laughed outright.

"I am sure you would not," she said; "but then, don't you see, they might fall in love with you, or you with them, and that is what the Leytons don't want."

"Fall in love with them! I am sure I should not," answered Vera indignantly. "At any rate with anybody I have seen here."

"Not even with Mr. Sydney?" asked Cora mischievously; "not even with Mr. Sydney?"

"Why do you suggest anything so absurd?" said Vera sharply, at the same time blushing somewhat, and, as Cora thought, seeming a little confused.

"Why do I suggest anything so absurd? I see no absurdity whatever in the idea, and I am sure the Leytons don't. They mean you two to marry, my dear."

"Nonsense!"

"No nonsense at all. I have thought so from the first time I called, when Lady Leyton asked me so many questions about my family, and whether I had no brothers or cousins in London, and also about Mrs. Maitland's connections. If there was a young man in our house, you may depend upon it that he would not be allowed to come to Grosvenor Square, nor you to Bloomsbury Square. And what is more likely or natural

than that Sir James and Lady Leyton should think you an eligible *parti* for their son?"

"Because I am rich, I suppose," said Vera with a scornful curl of her lip.

"That may not be the sole attraction. You have qualities of person and mind, my dear, that might win any man's heart."

"I do not want to win any man's heart," returned the other impatiently. "I have made up my mind not to marry."

"Please don't. I don't mean, don't marry; but don't say you won't marry, for when people say that, the next news is sure to be that they are going to be."

"In that case I retract," laughed Vera. "I will make no resolution at all, or if I do, I shall keep it to myself. *Mais, revenons à nos moutons*, or, rather, *à notre mouton*, which in this case is Mr. Sydney. I do not think he is a marrying man."

"Why? I thought he seemed very attentive to you the other day."

"Oh, yes; he likes a little flirtation. But he does not seem particular with whom, and I heard him say one day that it is time enough for a fellow to marry when he has had his fling—whatever that may mean—and unless I do him injustice, his nature is rather shallow—he is not capable of feeling deep love."

"I quite agree with you; but that will not prevent him from marrying a rich wife if he can. You know whom I mean."

"I think I can guess," smiling, "but all the same, I don't believe he will——" Here Vera hesitated.

"Propose to you," said Cora, finishing the sentence. "I am sure he will. Call me a false prophet if he does not, and before very long too. I wonder he has not done so already."

"And all for my fortune," sighed Vera. "It is a great trouble this fortune, Cora."

"Say, rather, a great blessing; and I think you are beginning to appreciate the advantages which the possession of money confers. Confess, now, you would not have been pleased if these Calder people had gone on with the lawsuit and won the Hardy fortune."

"I should not. I freely admit that I should have been greatly disappointed for several reasons."

"Well, there is no chance of that now; at least, everybody says so. And I cannot tell you how glad I am to know that you are dropping some of the fads you brought with you from Switzerland. I have no doubt your M. Senarcens is a very clever man, but

he is certainly a visionary. It seems to me the very height of absurdity for a young girl in the springtide of life to make herself wretched because she is the inheritor of a great fortune. Rather rejoice at the means it gives you of doing good, both to yourself and others. Take one instance alone. You love art. Is it not much better to paint, as you do, for love of your work, than to work for bread? I wish I were in the same position. Then I should be independent of publishers, editors, and everybody, and do my work in my own way and my own time."

"Yet it must be very pleasant to know that you are earning your own living. You are sure then that you are doing something useful, that you are not throwing your time away. You write, for instance, and your articles and stories find acceptance. There must therefore be some good in them. I paint and sketch, yet I am never quite sure about the quality of my work. People praise it, I know; some because they think it polite, others because I am rich, and one or two, perhaps," smiling, "because they love me."

"You are growing positively cynical, Vera. To which of these categories do you assign me, may I ask?"

"Can you ask, Cora? You are the only person I know to whom I can open my heart and speak as to a dear sister—my best, my only friend," and as Vera spoke, she took her friend's hand tenderly in hers.

"And for that reason you think I am a partial judge. Well, perhaps I am. All the same, I feel quite sure that you are a real artist and could, if it were necessary, make a far better income with your pencil than I can make with my pen; and I think I can prove it to you. I have an idea——"

"Yes, what is it?"

"I will tell you. You know I am doing a good deal just now for the great publishing house of Peter, Paul, and Piper. They bring out whole libraries of illustrated books and employ quite an army of artists. Now, if you will let me, I will show one of the art editors some of your sketches, and ask if he can give the sketcher, a friend of mine, some work."

"That will be splendid!" exclaimed Vera gleefully. "But you will not tell him——"

"That you are an heiress. Certainly not; nor your name. But what name shall I give?"

"Miss Leonino. I am English, of course, but of Italian extraction."

"Nothing could be better. I will take the sketches with me to-morrow, and tell you

what Peter, Paul, and Piper say the next time I come."

"And let the next time be very soon, *ma chère amie*, for I shall be impatient both to see you and hear your news. But I was forgetting, you have something to tell me."

"Have I?"

"You said so."

"Ah, now I remember. It is about that foolish cousin of mine. I thought it might interest you to know, you know——"

"Yes!" said Vera eagerly.

"That he has lost his situation, and the chance of earning £500 a year."

"Then he is no more editor of the *Helvetic News*?"

"Only until the arrival of his successor."

"I am very sorry. It seemed such a nice position for him. Why is he giving it up?"

Cora told her.

"How noble!" exclaimed Vera enthusiastically. "He gives up everything; work that he likes, his means of living, rather than swerve from the path of honour. I admire your cousin, Cora."

"So do I. Yet, all the same, he is a misguided young man."

"In what way?"

"Not for sticking to his principles, but for abandoning the political belief in which he was brought up. Why could not he live and die a Tory, like his fathers before him? He says that foreign travel, his sojourn in Switzerland, and further thought, made him a Liberal. I don't think a sojourn in Switzerland would make me a Liberal. I love our old England, Vera, I am proud of her glorious history and great renown, of her vast empire, and far-reaching influence. And believing that we are indebted for all these things to our ancient monarchy, and to the patriotism and courage of our aristocracy, I am naturally a Conservative. These Radicals would reform all our institutions out of existence, set up a shoddy Republic, with perhaps a cotton-spinner for president, and utterly destroy the continuity of our national history. I don't understand how Alfred can be so blind. I only hope that when he comes back he will see things in a different light and return to the political faith in which he was brought up."

"I know so little of English politics that it would be presumptuous for me to give an opinion," said Vera quietly, "but as between monarchies and republics, my sympathies are certainly with republics."

"That is natural enough; you were brought

up in a republic, a very Conservative one by the way. But when you have lived here a little longer, I hope you will think differently—at any rate so far as England is concerned—and help me to reconvert Alfred."

"He is coming to London, then?"

"He must; he has his living to get, you know."

"Yes, I know," answered Vera thoughtfully, and then taking up her palette she gave a few touches to her friend's unfinished portrait.

Cora seemed surprised.

"I thought you had finished," she said.

"So I had; but it just struck me that the shading of this finger is a little too dark, and I had better alter it before I forget. . . . Oh, Cora, dear," again laying down her palette, "I feel so powerless."

"I expect we all do, more or less. None of us, with our own unaided strength, can effect very much. But when you say you are powerless, you mean, I suppose, that you would like to do something. What is it?"

"I would like," said Vera hesitatingly; "I would like so very much. . . . How shall I put it? I who do nothing, except for my own pleasure, have wealth and a large income. You have only what you earn. Your betrothed is a private soldier in India. You cannot marry because you are poor. Why should this be, Cora? Why cannot I share my fortune with you and make you both happy? And there is your noble cousin, who has sacrificed his prospects to his principles, and may now find it hard even to live—why cannot I help him?"

"For several reasons, Vera. If I know Alfred, he is too proud, or, as you would say, he has too keen a sense of dignity and honour, to accept money without rendering something in return, to become the pensioner of anybody, at any rate, while he has health and strength to fight his own way; and he believes that he has. And as for George and myself, we are quite content to wait for better times; he is not a common soldier, let me tell you, but a sergeant-major. We are both young, and if we are able to marry in a few years we shall do very well. I thank you very much for thinking of us, but——"

"Always those buts," interposed Vera impatiently. "Why need you wait all these weary years? Let him come home and I will—what do you call it?—make a settlement on you. He can find a career here."

"You are very good, my dear; but I'm sure George would not like to leave the army,

and I should not like to ask him. We must wait. I have enough to keep me, while he with his sergeant-major's Indian pay is quite rich."

"I wish I were not quite so rich," returned Vera with a grieved look. "I said just now that I should have been sorry for these Calder people to succeed, and I have so many schemes for the employment of my fortune, that it would be a real disappointment to lose it. But if my schemes are all to come to naught, I do think, Cora, I would rather lose it than keep it."

"Oh, no, you would not!"

"And I should be saved the worry and the responsibility."

"Not by losing your fortune, I hope," said Cora, rising from her chair as an intimation that it was time for her to leave. "There is a better way than that. The burden of a great fortune is almost too heavy for a young girl, I freely admit. You must share it with another—one, if he can be found, whose love for the heiress is as great as his indifference to her fortune, yet who will give his best energies to its wise and faithful disposal."

Vera's only reply was a grave shake of the head and a wistful, almost pathetic smile, as if she deemed so happy an ending of her trouble too improbable for discussion.

"And to console you a little," continued Cora as they went towards the door, "I promise that when George comes home, if we want a little money for furniture, or that, or any other necessary purpose, we will make you our banker."

CHAPTER LVIII.—CORA'S PLAN.

VERA and Cora had become fast friends. A mutual attraction drew them to each other at their first meeting, and their intimacy had grown with every subsequent interview. Cora soon saw that albeit Vera was made so much of by the Leytons and surrounded by so many luxuries, she was practically alone in the world, with nobody to warn her against its temptations and protect her from its dangers, rendered so much greater in her case by her wealth, her strange training, and her enthusiastic temperament. And Cora pitied the girl, taking to her all the more readily that she, like her, had no congenial acquaintance of her own age and sex. Vera, on her part, found in Cora somebody on whom she could lean, to whom, as she herself said, she could open her heart, and reveal without restraint her perplexities, her anxieties, and her troubles. For Cora, though not very much older than the heiress, knew more of

the world and its ways, while the trials she had undergone had strengthened her character and made her thoughtful above her years. Vera could not have had a wiser counsellor or a more useful companion. The elder girl's sound sense and conservative instincts were the best possible correctives for her friend's wild theories and too generous disposition. Her chief fear was that Vera would either be snapped up by some mere fortune-hunter who knew how to ape the virtues she most admired, or that, escaping this peril, she might become the prey of cunning impostors and scheming philanthropists, and waste her substance without benefiting her fellow-creatures. Against these dangers she resolved, if possible, to guard her, a design in which she had so far been greatly favoured by circumstances. Vera's visits to the East End had of late become much less frequent, partly because she had been once or twice egregiously taken in, partly because Sir James Leyton, who viewed these expeditions with little favour, and was addicted on occasion to the use of strong language, roundly declared that, although the trustees would let her have whatever money in reason might be needful to keep up her position, they could not undertake to keep all the beggars in Bermondsey, and all the thieves in Seven Dials. For, as Vera never went on a mission of charity that she did not empty her purse—often against Mrs. Maitland's wish—her demands on the trustees assumed alarming proportions, and she was compelled to hold her hand.

Vera had been some time in London before it became generally known where she lived and how much she was supposed to be worth. For society papers were not yet. But at length an enterprising journalist got hold of a garbled version of her story, and with a few adornments, developed from his inner consciousness, printed it. As a natural consequence the poor girl became speedily involved in a portentous correspondence. Every post brought her an avalanche of circulars, pamphlets, and letters, all of them, of course, being appeals for money. Some of the letters were so pitiful that they wrung Vera's soul, and if she might have pleased herself she would have answered every one of them with a cheque. But at that rate, as Sir James showed her, she would have got rid of her allowance, large as it was (if it had been at her own disposal), in about a week. And then he introduced his ward to an officer of the Mendicity Society, who pronounced nearly all the letters she had received to be the work

of swindlers. In one case—that of the *soi-disant* widow of a lately deceased clergyman, with a consumptive daughter and a crippled boy, to whom Vera sent five pounds—the society prosecuted the writer, a burly ruffian who lived on the fat of the land, to conviction, and made him do a term of hard labour.

These incidents were a sore trouble to Vera, and, though she did not allow them to make any change in her ideals, they lessened her confidence in her own impulses and the soundness of some of M. SenarcLens' theories. For faith in the goodness of human nature was a leading article in the historian's creed, and she began to see that among the poor, as among the rich, human nature had a very base side. A great many more people seemed to want to get hold of her money wrongly than to help her to spend it righteously. In this fact M. SenarcLens would have found further proof of the pernicious influence of wealth, and the need for its forcible distribution; but when she said as much to her friend, Cora observed that even if private property were an evil—which she was far from admitting—it by no means followed that robbery was right; a conclusion that Vera was too clear-headed to dispute.

Cora's plan for shielding Vera from harm, and protecting her fortune from matrimonial marauders, was to marry her to Alfred Balmaine. But in this there was no self-seeking, no mere desire to promote her cousin's interest by providing him with a rich wife. She knew that Alfred was a true man, and believed that he was developing into a strong one. She felt as sure that he would make Vera a good husband as that she would make him a good wife, and she saw no other way of securing her friend's happiness. And more than her happiness—the free growth of her noble nature and the attainment of such of her ideals as experience might prove to be practicable—for in Vera's character Cora discerned great possibilities, and was earnestly wistful that she should turn her opportunities to the best account. But if the girl remained with the Leytons, above all if she married Sydney—whom Cora had set down as frivolous and selfish, if not positively vicious—she would be rendered powerless for good and her fine character irretrievably spoiled. It was to hinder this consummation that Cora had warned her friend against Sydney, and suggested marriage with a man worthy of her love as the best means of insuring her peace of mind and meeting the difficulties with which she was beset. She hoped that Vera would see this man in her cousin, for whom

she had evidently a kindly if not even a warmer feeling, and it would be strange if Alfred had not a tender place in his heart for the fair girl whose acquaintance he had made in circumstances so strange and romantic. When he came to London she would bring the two together, and give them every opportunity to fall in love. And she wanted him to come, for albeit she had warned Vera against Sydney Leyton, and Vera was not blind to the latter's faults, he knew how to make himself agreeable, and saw her nearly every day, advantages that could hardly be over-estimated. Cora fancied, moreover, from her friend's manner, that although he had not actually proposed he had foreshadowed, in some unmistakable way, his intention of doing so. This was the only serious danger Cora apprehended, for albeit Vera would almost certainly refuse him in the first instance, importunity might, in the absence of some strong countervailing influence, ultimately prevail. The opposition that her scheme, if it were known, would encounter from Sir James and Lady Leyton concerned Cora little. She had no idea of taking them into her confidence; Vera was growing older every day; she would soon be of age, and the girl was of so loving and constant a temper that if she once plighted her troth not all the trustees and guardians in the world would persuade her to go back from her word.

Much, perhaps everything, depended on Alfred's speedy arrival.

In the meanwhile one of the events anticipated by Cora came to pass—Sydney Leyton proposed.

As touching rising and breakfast the habits of the Leyton household were somewhat irregular. It was a long time before Vera could reconcile herself to getting up at eight and eating an English breakfast at nine o'clock. At the Boissière she had hardly ever been in bed after five, and for some time after her arrival in London she awoke regularly at that hour—occasionally even did so still, and painted or wrote two or three hours before anybody in the house was astir; but she gradually fell into the ways of the family, and now seldom appeared down-stairs before nine o'clock, when she breakfasted with Sir James, for Lady Leyton breakfasted in bed, and got up at eleven. The knight being mostly in a great hurry to get to business ate quickly, and left Vera to finish her repast at leisure and alone. For she was rarely joined by Sydney, and had only the vaguest idea either when he went to bed or

at what time he rose. But there were rumours in the house that he sometimes did not come home until four or five o'clock in the morning, and that Shands (the butler) often took up his brandy and soda (with which beverage Mr. Sydney generally began the day) between twelve and one P.M. As moreover he almost always lunched at his club, and frequently dined out, there were days when Vera did not set eyes on the young fellow. Breakfast was the last meal at which she expected to see him, and when one morning, shortly after Cora's visit, he appeared on the scene just as his father's brougham was leaving the door, she was not a little surprised. She offered to pour out his tea for him, an offer which he accepted with an unnecessary profusion of thanks.

Sydney did not look nearly so well as when he first returned from his *tour du monde*. His burnt brick complexion had become the colour of a flagstone; he had shaven his beard, thereby revealing a rather retreating chin and an undershot lip. He had grown thinner, too, and looked both a smaller man and less manly than of yore. London life was telling on him.

These were Vera's thoughts as she poured out Mr. Leyton's tea. She noticed, too, that he seemed preoccupied, and was less voluble than usual; which was perhaps because his father had spoken to him the night before rather sharply about his lavish expenditure, and hinted that he must pull up and settle down; for the old knight, though rich, had no idea of letting even his favourite son make ducks and drakes of his money. This incident had turned the young man's thoughts to Miss Hardy and accounted for his early rising. He knew the coast was more likely to be clear at that time than at any other, and he had resolved to make her his wife, as much because he admired her as that he might spend as much money as he liked without fear of incurring paternal admonition. But he had not quite decided how to pop the momentous question, and though doubting little as to the result, he could not help feeling just a little nervous. Hence his taciturnity.

Beside Vera's plate was a portentous pile of letters and circulars, all either containing requests for money or invitations to patronize something which involved giving. Most of them, by Sir James Leyton's advice, were left unnoticed; the few to which replies were deemed expedient being answered by a lithographed letter, in the knight's name, to the effect that as Miss Hardy was a minor

she had no money at her disposal for the purpose in question.

"These people seem to worry you as much as ever," said Sydney, as he sipped his tea; "why, you get as many letters as a Minister of State!"

"Too many. They made me unhappy at first; but now I am getting used to them. All the same, they must be looked over, there might be something important among them—private letters, for instance—but circulars I throw into my waste-paper basket unopened."

"They are a great nuisance. You should really have somebody to take this trouble off your hands, Miss Hardy," and as he spoke he drew his chair a little nearer to hers.

"I think less of the trouble than of the lost time and wasted money. The price of this paper and these postage stamps would keep a poor man a week. I wonder how much is spent in London every year in making appeals for charity? It seems a great shame."

"You are quite right. It is a great shame. And some of these so-called charitable organizations are great swindles, kept up solely for the benefit of officials. They help themselves, and defraud the poor—defraud them of some thousands a year. I sometimes think that I should like to devote myself to exposing the depredations of these people, and vindicating the rights of the disinherited."

The chair came still nearer.

"It would be a noble task," said Vera, rather surprised at this outburst, for Sydney had delivered himself with considerable energy.

"Let us undertake it together, Vera. Let us work hand in hand." (Here the chair was drawn nearer still.) "I know your views, and sympathise with your aims. More, Vera, I admire you. I love you with all my heart. I know you are too good for me, but I will do my utmost to render myself worthy of the love and confidence—both love and confidence—which I hope you will not refuse me;" and he tried to slip his arm round her waist, but Vera, pushing her chair back, evaded him.

"You act the part very well, Mr. Sydney," she said, laughing; "very well indeed."

"I do not understand. What part do you mean?" he asked, with a nonplussed look.

"The part of an enamoured swain."

"It is no part at all. I am awfully in earnest, Vera. I admire you. I love you with all my heart."

"So you said just now. You have had your fling, then?"

"I beg your pardon, but really, you know——" stammered the young man, turning very red.

"I happened once to hear you say that you should not marry until you had had your fling, so I thought——"

"That—that was only a joke, you know. But I am in earnest, real earnest. I am, indeed. Won't you take compassion on me, Vera? Ever since we first met I have admired you. I love you with—from—yes, from the bottom of my heart. Believe me, I——"

"I think I have heard something of that sort before," said Vera, smiling at his confusion. "But had you not better wait until I am of age and come into my fortune? Those Calder people may possibly go on with the suit after all—and win it."

"No, they won't," exclaimed the young fellow eagerly. "I have satisfied myself on that score. Your fortune is quite safe."

"I am glad you think so, Mr. Sydney," returned Vera quietly. But there was a touch of sarcasm in her manner and her voice which suggested to Sydney that he was making rather a mess of it.

"I mean—I should love you all the same, fortune or no fortune," he said desperately. "It is you, your own precious self, I care for. Will you not listen to me, Vera? won't you say yes?"

"Not at present. I have not had my fling yet;" and with a merry laugh she tripped lightly from the room.

"Confound it," muttered Sydney angrily, "what a fool I have made of myself! I had no idea proposing was such a confoundedly awkward business. What rot I did talk, to be sure! And that was a deuced awkward slip about the fortune. However, she did not refuse me; that is one comfort. I must try again. There is nothing like perseverance, my father says."

CHAPTER LIX.—DISAPPOINTMENTS.

BEFORE leaving Geneva, Alfred Balmaine informed the manager of the *Day* of his approaching departure, and that, after a time which he mentioned, he should be reluctantly compelled to discontinue his connection with the paper in Switzerland, but he ventured to express the hope that he might be permitted to resume it in London.

The reply he received was prompt and gracious. The manager greatly regretted that Alfred was leaving Geneva, thanked him

for his contributions, hoped to have the pleasure of seeing him on his arrival in London, and, as Alfred thought, more than hinted an intention to give him a permanent place on the editorial staff.

This letter removed a weight from Balmaine's mind. A position on the *Day* would be a living and something more. There was no telling to what it might not lead, and he probably built more castles in the air than the circumstances altogether warranted. Anxiety about his future was dismissed, and he resolved to travel to England through North Switzerland and South Germany, do the Rhine country, and possibly see something of Belgium and Holland. The journey thus lengthened might cost him a few pounds more, but considering that he was now almost sure of a place on the staff of the *Day*, he felt that he could well afford the outlay, and it might be a long time before he had another equally favourable opportunity of enlarging his experience by Continental travel.

So a fortnight after the arrival of his successor he took leave of Geneva, and set out on his travels, first writing to Cora that he should probably reach London in three or four weeks, but that he could not quite fix the day, and that she must expect him when she saw him; he meant to take her by surprise.

Balmaine enjoyed his tour immensely, especially in the grand country of the Völder Rhein and the Black Forest; but it made a larger hole in his pocket than he had reckoned on, and if he had been less sanguine about getting a place, the lightening of his purse would have caused him serious misgivings. In any case it was only prudent to husband his resources, so, on reaching London, instead of going to a big hotel he put up at an inn in Finsbury Pavement, which being recommended to him by one Switzer and kept by another, was not likely to be very expensive.

The morning after his arrival he went to the office of the *Day*, not without a sense of misgiving, for as the critical moment drew near doubts as to the issue on which he had hitherto so confidently counted began to rise in his mind. What if he should not get a place after all! And as he had never before had an interview with so important a personage as the manager or editor of a great daily paper, he rather feared this one would be as difficult of approach as a Minister of State and as sparing of words as an ancient oracle. But he had hardly sent in his card



"Do you think I am such a scoundrel?" began Corfe furiously.

when he was asked to step up-stairs and ushered by a remarkably courteous attendant into the great man's room. He found in Mr. Nonpareil a plain-visaged, bald-headed gentleman, more than middle-aged, sitting before a large writing-table between two huge letter baskets. As Alfred went forward to take his outstretched hand, it struck him that if the famous manager were to doff his coat and put on an apron, he would be the very *beau idéal* of a country greengrocer. And the manager's manner was as homely as his appearance. He requested his guest to take a seat, said how pleased he was to make his acquaintance, and spoke so warmly about his services to the paper, that the young fellow felt quite reassured, and saw himself in imagination one of the *Day's* sub-editors or reporters, possibly a leader-writer—and he had heard that the pay of a leader-writer was £1,500 a year. Mr. Nonpareil made many inquiries about Switzerland, asked his guest's opinion about France and the probability of a revolution in Spain, and kept him a long time in talk without once referring to the subject nearest to his heart. At length Alfred, unable to bear the suspense longer, answered a not very clear exposition of the manager's views on the land question by mentioning that he had come to London in search of employment, and reminding him of the hope he had held out of finding him a place.

"I don't think I said that," replied Mr. Nonpareil, his manner suddenly becoming hard and unsympathetic. "I said I should be glad to secure your services."

"I beg your pardon," said Balmaine, feeling himself grow hot all over, "but is not that pretty much the same thing?"

"Not at all. I should be glad to secure your services if it were in my power—if you were to return to Geneva, for instance, or there was a suitable opening here. But I am sorry to say there is not. There is hardly work for the present staff, and I think we have the names of some fifteen hundred eligible candidates in our list."

"No chance for me, then," said Alfred, in a voice faint with disappointment.

"I fear not at present," returned the manager, in his more kindly manner. "At any rate, not on the staff. But the paper is always open to you, and any contributions you may offer will receive favourable consideration. Should anything arise more—of a more permanent character, I will let you know."

"And that is all!" said Alfred. The

words literally escaped him. They were the involuntary expression of his thoughts, and were no sooner uttered than he became aware of their impropriety.

"And a good deal too," returned Mr. Nonpareil sharply. "There are hundreds of pressmen in London who would only be too glad to be numbered amongst the *Day's* outside contributors, and have their names in my book. What is your address? I may have occasion to communicate with you."

Balmaine gave him the address of Cora's lodgings in Bloomsbury, and after a friendly hand-shake from the manager, took his leave.

It was a terrible blow for the young fellow. His spirits fell at once below zero, and the confidence and elation with which he had been rather unreasonably buoyed up gave place to a sense of depression more unreasonable still. He walked along Fleet Street, looking neither to the right nor the left, so unconscious of what was passing around him that, as he crossed over to Chancery Lane, he narrowly escaped becoming the victim of a reckless hansom cabman.

"The paper is always open to me!" he soliloquised bitterly. "So it is to anybody who can write a readable article, which takes the editor's fancy. What a fool I was to take what Nonpareil said about securing my services seriously. It meant no more than the 'your obedient servant' with which he concludes his letter, and putting my name in his book is just humbug. It was a mere bit of politeness, and I shall never hear from him again. No more *Day* for me. And I have barely forty pounds left. What shall I do when that is done? If I only knew somebody who could give me a word of counsel or, better still, a few introductions!"

And then he bethought him of Furley, and the idea crossed his mind to call on that shrewd and successful journalist and ask his advice. But the idea was conceived only to be dismissed. Furley could neither understand his scruples nor sympathise with his views, and he would certainly think, perhaps roundly tell him, that he was an arrant fool for leaving the *Helvetic News*, and decline to help further a man who let principle stand in the way of advancement. He would go and see Cora. She was more sensible than a good many men, and a talk with her might help to raise his spirits.

But another disappointment was in store for him. He did not find his cousin at home. She had gone for a few days to Hastings with Mrs. Maitland, whose labours among

the poor had impaired her health. The maid who answered the bell gave him Cora's address, and thought Miss Balmaine would be back the day but one following.

It was not much, and Alfred felt vexed with himself for letting the incident affect his spirits; but he could not help it, and his depression became greater. He had counted so much on a talk with Cora, and now he should not see her for two, perhaps for three or four days. But it was his own fault. Why had he not come straight to London, instead of fooling away his money in Continental travel?

Turning away from Bloomsbury Square, he wandered mechanically westward, without thinking whither he was going, and went on till he reached Hyde Park. By this time he had become tired, for the day was warm and the flags were hot, so he sat down on a convenient seat and proceeded to solace himself with a smoke. But as he was on the point of lighting up he hesitated. The contents of his cigar-case were part of a lot he had brought from Geneva, and, though of very fair quality, had cost him only ten centimes apiece.

"Can I afford it?" he thought. "The next cigar I buy—whenever that may be—will cost me threepence or fourpence. I must make this go a long way, and—yes—I will buy a pipe and a few ounces of common tobacco. But this must certainly be the last cigar to-day."

As he threw down his match he happened to look up, and saw something which effectually diverted the current of his thoughts, and put out his pipe in more senses than one.

Miss Hardy was riding past on a thoroughbred horse, accompanied by a gentleman equally well mounted, and followed by a belted groom. Her companion seemed to be paying her great attention, and right well Vera looked. Her cheeks were rosy with exercise, her eyes sparkled with pleasure, and her riding-habit set off her fine figure to perfection. She did not see Alfred, and as she and her companion cantered towards Rotten Row his thoughts grew bitterer than ever.

"I do not think she would have noticed me if she had seen me," he said to himself. "Why should she? I am a poor wretch of a journalist out of place and she is a millionaire heiress. True, I put her in the way of getting her fortune—but what does that matter? I wonder if she is engaged to that fellow. It looks so. He seems very devoted and she delighted. *Tant mieux*. She is nothing to me and never can be. I made up my mind to that long ago. Why should I

let it worry me? I won't. I will think about something else."

A vain resolution. He could think about nothing else, and so far forgot himself as to smoke a second and even a third cigar without its once occurring to him that he was committing an extravagance. But after a while he came to his senses, and wended his way towards Finsbury Pavement (an omnibus would have cost him fourpence); and as a further measure of economy he dined at a confectioner's shop on a cup of chocolate, a chunk of brown bread, and a lightly boiled egg—by which, as compared with dining at the Edelweiss Hotel he saved eightpence—and spent the evening in smoking a pipe and making vain efforts to read the evening papers.

His campaign in London had opened badly, and he went to bed full of gloomy forebodings, and passed a restless and dreamful night.

CHAPTER LX.—MILNTHORPE'S FRIEND.

THE next day Balmaine, whose "white night," to use a French phrase, had still further lowered his spirits, called on Warton. The managing clerk, who did not know he had left Geneva, though delighted to see him, was beyond measure surprised to learn that he had severed his connection with the *Helvetic News*, and evidently thought him a great fool for giving up so good a position for so inadequate a cause.

"What difference does it make to you which side the paper takes?" he said. "A journalist should be like an advocate, ready to plead for the side which retains him."

Alfred in his depression began to think that he perhaps had been a fool. So far, at least, as he was concerned, honesty did not seem to be proving the best policy which he could have adopted. But seeing that Warton could neither understand his scruples nor enter into his feelings, he let the subject drop, and inquired what was the latest news from Calder.

"Saintly Sam and the Hardy Fortune Company are knocked into a cocked hat," said the clerk gleefully. "Ferret is as mad as a meat axe, and the Hon. Tom thinks he has been regularly taken in, and would jilt Lizzie if he dared."

"They are engaged then?"

"Rather, and the Hon. Tom is going to stand for Calder at the next election. He does not like the idea of losing his share of the fortune though, and his people don't much like the match, I am told. But if he

does not stand to his guns Sam will breach him to a dead certainty; and Ferret, you may be sure, would make him pay swingeing damages."

"Has the Fortune Company collapsed then?"

"Not altogether. Sam and Ferret still show fight. But it is all gammon, and they know it. Bless you, they haven't a leg to stand on. Even if they could prove their John Hardy is the John Hardy, what would it amount to? The estate is distinctly bequeathed to Miss Vera Hardy, and she will get it, my boy. What will she stand, do you think?"

"Stand! What do you mean?"

"How much will she give us when she comes of age? It won't be long."

"I have no idea, Warton. But I am sure she will deal liberally with you."

"And you? You have done the lion's share of the work, and deserve the lion's share of the reward."

"I won't take a penny from her. Not a penny," said Alfred emphatically. "What do you take me for?"

"I could tell you," replied the clerk drily; "but you might not like it. But I know one thing. If I were you I would take her. That is the reward you ought to have."

"Don't talk nonsense," said Balmaine severely. "How do you like your place?"

"Excellent well. Old Artful is a trump. We get on capitally. And there is always something going on here. It is not like dull old Calder, and I am better off than ever I was in my life. We have got a comfortable shanty up Notting Hill way, and the family seems to have reached its maximum—thank heaven for that. Won't you come and take pot luck with us to-night? Say half-past six. Mary will be awfully glad to see you. Here is my address" (handing him his card).

The invitation was accepted, and the two friends spent the evening in talking about Calder and old times; Alfred being further entertained with an amusing narration of Mrs. Warton's impressions of London, and an account of the remarkable sayings and doings of little Tommy, the managing clerk's son and heir.

On the day following Balmaine made another visit to Bloomsbury Square, and to his great satisfaction found Cora at home.

Her sharp eyes were not long in detecting the uneasiness of his mind, and the two had no sooner exchanged greetings than she asked him plumply what was wrong.

He told her of his interview with the

manager of the *Day*, but said nothing of his meeting with Vera in the Park, albeit in spite of his utmost efforts, this incident was causing him much more disquiet than the other, which, now that he had taken time to think, he no longer looked upon as the terrible misfortune it had at first appeared.

Cora laughed.

"Why, Alfred," she said, "I gave you credit for more spirit. The *Day* is not the only paper in the world, and you have it all before you—the world, I mean—and you have time to turn round. Your money is not all done?"

"Nearly," returned Alfred dolefully. "When I have paid my bill at the inn I shall not have more than forty pounds left."

"Forty pounds! Why, what have you to mope about? How many scores of thousands are there in London who, with forty pounds, would consider themselves passing rich; how many who, to have your youth and health and brains, would give all they possess! Forty pounds will keep you twenty weeks—perhaps longer if you are very careful—and surely by that time you will be able to make more than a hundred a year. I will introduce you to Peter, Paul, and Piper. They are very nice people, and can, perhaps, find you something to do. And if I were you I should certainly send some articles to the *Day*."

"I mean to do," said Balmaine briskly. "I thought at first that Nonpareil's saying the paper was open to me was, like the rest, a piece of humbug. But perhaps he meant it. Anyhow I shall try. There are a good many Swiss papers at the inn. I fancy Swiss subjects will have the best chance, and I shall knock a few articles together. I had better do that than nothing, even if they should not be accepted."

"Decidedly. But you must not stay at the hotel, cheap as it is. You can find quarters in this neighbourhood a good deal cheaper—in Regent's Square, for instance, there are always lodgings to let. And I am sure, when you get known—which will, of course, take a little time—you will do very well. Why, I am making more than three pounds a week myself, and you as an experienced journalist ought to do far better."

"Experienced journalist!" returned Alfred, rather bitterly. "Why experienced journalists absolutely swarm, the *Day* alone has the names of 1,500 applicants on its list."

"Yes, and I dare say three-fourths of them are good for nothing, and never wrote a line, much less a leader, in their lives, whereas you

have won your spurs and can show excellent credentials. All the same, I think you have been very foolish—not in giving up your place if you could not conscientiously keep it, no true Balmaine would do otherwise—but in deserting the old flag. However, I will say nothing about that now. But there is no reason in the world for despondency, or even discouragement."

After some more talk, Alfred set out on his hunt for lodgings; which he found, as Cora had suggested he might, in Regent's Square, and a close calculation showed him that he could live, and not uncomfortably, within the amount she had mentioned—two pounds a week. Before he went she asked him to take afternoon tea with her and Mrs. Maitland on the day but one following.

"You will perhaps meet somebody you know," she said.

"Somebody from Calder?" he asked.

Cora shook her head and smiled significantly.

"No; nobody from Calder. You will see."

He asked no further questions, but he knew what she meant, and although he kept saying to himself that Vera was nothing to him and never could be, and his prospects were not a whit better than they had been the day before, he went away full of courage and hope.

After he had arranged about his lodgings, Balmaine went to the Edelweiss Hotel to pay his bill and fetch away his belongings. While putting his papers together he came upon Milnthorpe's letter of introduction, which, until that moment, he had entirely forgotten. It was addressed to "Abraham Wilkins, Esq., 55, Leadenhall Street."

"I will call with this to-morrow," thought Alfred. "I don't suppose anything will come of it, but it would not be courteous to old Milnthorpe not to present his letter."

Rather to his surprise he found Mr. Wilkins splendidly installed in an extensive suite of offices, occupied by troops of clerks. Milnthorpe's friend was evidently a financial or mercantile swell of the first water; but the letter acted as an open sesame, and Alfred was ushered at once into the great man's private room. As touching his personal presence, however, Mr. Wilkins was by no means a great man, being rather of the Tittlebat Titmarsh order of creation. But he had a big head on his rather narrow shoulders, and his keen grey eyes and massive jaws showed that he possessed in high measure both shrewdness and strength of will. His first question was concerning Milnthorpe,

whereupon Alfred told Mr. Wilkins exactly what his friend had charged him to say.

"I am glad he's doing pretty well," said Wilkins, though dubiously, as if he were not quite sure of the fact; "but if he would come here I think he might do very much better. However, if he cannot be persuaded, I suppose he must remain where he is. And now what can I do for you, Mr. Balmaine? I have no hesitation in saying that in times past I have been under great obligations to Mr. Milnthorpe, and if I can oblige you I shall only be too glad."

Alfred told him frankly that he was a journalist, very much in want of work.

"Well, I can perhaps do something for you," answered the merchant, after a moment's thought. "But not just now. I run down to Liverpool to-night, and sail for America to-morrow morning."

"For America!" exclaimed Alfred in surprise; thinking the something Wilkins proposed to do for him would be a long time in coming to pass.

"Oh, that is not much," said the other smiling. "I shall not be more than four or five weeks away. When I come back I will drop you a line, and you will perhaps do me the pleasure of dining with me in Palace Gardens, Mr. Balmaine."

Alfred expressed his thanks and said he should be very glad, but he went away without much hope of help from Mr. Wilkins, and resolving for the future to expect nothing from anybody, and to win success by his own efforts.

CHAPTER LXI.—GETTING ON.

VERA was there. The traditional lover is always supposed to appear at a trysting-place far too soon; but Balmaine did not show up at Bloomsbury Square until several minutes after the time his cousin had fixed. Truth to say, albeit he felt in his heart that he loved Miss Hardy, he did not consider himself in any sense an aspirant for her hand, and greatly doubting whether it would conduce to his peace of mind to see her again, he hesitated for some time whether to keep the appointment or not. But he did keep it, and, despite his doubts, there can be no question that if he had not found Vera at Mrs. Maitland's he would have been disappointed more than a little; for Alfred was not immaculate; he had not always the courage of his convictions, and people in love are seldom consistent.

She greeted him with all the cordiality of an old friend, and when they shook hands

a slight, yet, as Cora, who narrowly watched her, thought, a tell-tale blush overspread her face and neck.

"What a long time it is since we have seen each other!" she said, dropping inadvertently into a French idiom.

"It is not so long since I saw you, though," answered Balmaine gaily, for the magic of her presence and the touch of her hand had for the nonce conjured away all his sage resolutions.

"How—when?" asked the girl in surprise.

"On Monday afternoon in Hyde Park."

"Yes, I was out riding with Sydney Leyton on Monday. But how stupid of me not to see you! I am so sorry."

She spoke with evident sincerity; but it did not escape Balmaine that she mentioned her companion as "Sydney;" neither did the shade that passed over his face escape Cora.

"What a fine horse you ride, and how well you ride him!" said Alfred. "I had no idea you were such a horsewoman."

"Oh, I have learnt that and some other accomplishments since I came to England. Lady Leyton insisted on my taking lessons in riding, and Sir James bought me Reindeer. You like him?"

"Immensely. I saw no handsomer horse in the park. He is almost as handsome as his mistress."

"Come, he is getting on," thought Cora.

"Vous me moquez, Monsieur Balmaine," said Vera with a blush; yet she did not seem displeased. "But you are right about Reindeer. He is a fine horse, and as good as he looks—as courageous as a lion, yet as gentle as a fawn. I can rule him with a word. I think he is as fond of me as I am of him."

"Fortunate Reindeer!" thought Balmaine.

"But, do you know," she continued, "I never feel quite comfortable when I am out riding."

"I am surprised at that. Why?"

"I cannot help thinking of the unfortunates who have no horses. And when I see some poor old man or woman trudging along, carrying a big pack or a huge basket, I almost feel as if I were doing wrong—that it is they, not I, who ought to have a horse."

"You foolish girl," put in Cora; "when will you have done with these nonsensical, communistic ideas? What could your poor old woman do with Reindeer if she got him? Would he carry her and her basket, do you suppose?"

"Not very well," replied Vera, smiling;

"but the money it costs to buy and keep horses like Reindeer would keep a great many old women, *ma chère*, and it seems so selfish to be indulging in luxuries when so many of our fellow-creatures have not even necessities."

"An admirable sentiment, Miss Hardy, but not to be accepted without a good deal of qualification," observed Balmaine. "If you, and everybody else who possesses a *cheval de luxe*, were to sell them, it would make no perceptible difference in the sum of human misery—probably none whatever. And if all were like-minded, where would you find buyers? Thorough-bred horses are not of much use between the shafts of a cart. You would not like to have Reindeer shot, I suppose?"

"*Quelle horreur!* No," exclaimed Vera, "not for the world!"

"Then you or somebody else must keep him, and if you keep him you may as well ride him. And in keeping him you help to keep others. Your groom, for instance, and saddlers, harness-makers, farriers, farmers, labourers, and no end of people."

"Perhaps you are right, Mr. Balmaine," answered the girl pensively, "and it is pleasant to think that keeping Reindeer is not only a pleasure to me, but a benefit to others. I suspect, though" (smiling), "that a fallacy lurks somewhere in your argument. I should like to ask M. Senarclens what he thinks."

"Bother M. Senarclens!" interposed Cora impatiently. "That man is becoming a perfect nuisance. And do please cease arguing about a subject which I am sure neither of us understand. Let us have some music. I am sure Alfred would like to hear you play something, Vera. Would not you, Alfred?"

Alfred said there was nothing he should like better, unless it was to hear her sing.

He heard her do both, and albeit Vera's execution left something to be desired, which, considering her opportunities, was perhaps not to be wondered at, she sang and played fairly—Alfred thought divinely, and he was enthusiastic in his praises. After a while Cora, seeing that matters were progressing to her satisfaction, made an excuse to leave the lovers (as she already chose to consider them) alone, and they had a delightful talk about Switzerland, the Jura, the Alps, and the lake, and Vera took an opportunity of saying how much she applauded his resolve to give up his place rather than be recreant to his principles, on which the young fellow was foolish enough to think (though he did

not venture to say) that her approval more than repaid the loss and disappointment he had sustained.

The talk went on a long time, and would probably have gone on longer had it not been interrupted by a loud knock at the door, followed by the announcement that Sir James Leyton's carriage had come for Miss Hardy.

When she was gone Balmaine asked his cousin whether he ought not to call on the Leytons.

"I would not if I were you," said Cora; "and I really do not see why you should."

"I am sure I don't want to," returned Alfred carelessly. "They seem to be very grand folks, and grand folks are not much in my line."

"The Leytons are not, at any rate. They gauge people by their wealth, and would look upon a poor journalist as a nobody. As for Vera, you will see her here. She generally comes on a Wednesday, sometimes oftener."

Balmaine made no answer. For though he had a strong feeling that the less he saw of Vera the better—if, as he meant to do, he remained true to his resolve—he could not bring himself to refuse the opportunity of meeting her offered by his cousin, and the following Wednesday, and a good many other Wednesdays, generally found him in Bloomsbury Square, and he was seldom disappointed in seeing Miss Hardy. Sometimes, when the Leytons chanced to be out, she spent the evening there, and they had high tea, followed by little improvised concerts, in which Balmaine, who sang a good song, took part: yet, though he fell deeper and deeper in love, he gave Vera no other intimation of his feelings than a tender deference of manner and the homage of an admiration which he could not conceal.

Cora had meanwhile mentioned his name to her friends Peter, Paul, and Piper, and the firm granted him an interview and offered him work. It was not much—the translation of a French manual into English—and the pay was not high; for, as Mr. Piper explained to him, professional translators work for small pay, and there is generally so little profit in translated works that publishers cannot afford a high rate of remuneration for them. But some translators' English is utterly destitute of style; and as Alfred wrote forcibly and well, the firm were willing to give him rather more than the ordinary rate.

"All the same," said Mr. Piper pleasantly, "I would not advise you to undertake it if you have anything better to do."

Alfred, frankly admitting that he had no-

thing better to do, accepted the offer and did the work—did it so well that Peter, Paul, and Piper gave him even a pound or two more than the highest rate they had bargained for, which was so very unlike a publisher, that most people, especially those who are authors, will probably be disposed to doubt the statement. But the race of fair-dealing publishers is not quite extinct, and Peter, Paul and Piper never adopted the sharp practice of their less scrupulous fellow-tradesmen; never for instance paid an unfortunate writer his royalties in a nine-months' bill, or gave him no more for the copyright than they got from America for the advance sheets—and their ever increasing prosperity was a proof that fair dealing is the surest guarantee of success.

For the rest, Balmaine worked with all the energy inspired by an ardent desire to succeed in his calling, and a strenuous resolve not to be satisfied until he had attained a position at least equal to that which he had surrendered. He wrote an article or two every day, which were accepted in the proportion of about one to three. He made offerings to many journals, sent contributions to magazines, and proposed papers to the editors of several reviews, who either answered him by a note (lithographed beforehand), saying they regretted not being able to find room for his article, or not at all. Editors of reviews are the most inveterate of flunkies; their contributors must either be lords or "lions," and Balmaine being neither noble nor famous, had no chance. All the same, he felt that he was getting on. By working ten or twelve hours a day he contrived to earn nearly as much as a shoeblick or crossing sweeper, and one way and another he could see his way to the end of the year. It was not so much that he was badly paid, as that so many of his papers were either rejected or their insertion unconscionably delayed.

CHAPTER LXII.—CORA'S REMONSTRANCE.

VERA, albeit more restrained and less impulsive in her manner than when Balmaine had first known her, was always gracious and friendly, and she treated him with the unbarrassed frankness of a sister; but their relations remained on the old footing, for though Mrs. Maitland regarded them as almost affianced lovers, no word of love had, as yet, passed between them. But this state of things did not suit Cora's views at all. Delays were dangerous. Young Leyton might propose a second time; and if Vera got it into her head that Alfred did not care for

her, she might be persuaded to accept the other. If, moreover, it should come to Lady Layton's ears that Alfred was a frequent visitor at Bloomsbury Square, she would of a surety put a stop to Miss Hardy's visits. Altogether Miss Balmaine's match-making scheme was not making the progress she desired, and being a young woman of resolute will, earnestly solicitous for the happiness of her cousin and her friend, she took the former roundly to task for what she was pleased to call his stupidity.

"I wonder what you are thinking about, Alfred?" she said one day when he had put in an appearance half an hour before Vera was expected, and an hour before she came.

"Whether I shall earn thirty shillings or two pounds this week, and if I can afford myself a new overcoat," he answered with affected seriousness.

"You may afford yourself a good many overcoats if you will only act as you ought," she said, going as was her wont, straight to the point.

"As how, dear coz?"

"Propose to Vera."

"That would not be acting as I ought."

"Why? You love her."

"Who says so?"

"I say so. Do you think I am blind? You love the very ground she treads on."

"Well, Cora, I have never had any secrets from you," returned Balmaine gravely, after a long pause, "and I will not deny that Vera is very dear to me. But what difference does that make? Here I am, a poor wretch of a journalist, earning with the utmost difficulty thirty or forty shillings a week. How can I ask a girl with I don't know how much money to link her fate with mine? What would the world say?"

"That you were a very lucky fellow."

"No; they would say I was an adventurer, a fortune-hunter, who had taken a mean advantage and entrapped Vera into a *mésalliance*."

"A *mésalliance*! The *mésalliance* would be the other way. The Balmains are an old county family, and poor Vera is literally a girl without a grandfather."

"But a ruined family; and money nowadays counts for more than blood. Besides, the very fact of my belonging to an honourable family is another reason why I should not be guilty of a dishonourable action."

"A dishonourable action! Do you know, Alfred, you are talking great nonsense? How can it possibly be dishonourable to marry any good girl whom you love? What difference can it make in the point of honour

whether she has two hundred or two million pounds?"

"A great deal. All the same, it is a matter rather of sentiment than reason. Others may not feel as I feel; *chacun à son goût*, you know."

"Well, I won't reason with you then. Only if you are resolved not to marry Vera, you and she must cease to meet. I cannot let you make a sport of the poor child's affections."

"I make a sport of her affections! What do you mean, Cora?" exclaimed Alfred aghast.

"What I say. Neither more or less. You do all in your power to make her love you, and yet you say you won't marry her."

"But she does not love me."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Well, I see none of the signs that are supposed to bespeak love. Nothing could be more frank and friendly than her manner. To me it seems altogether too friendly for love. There is none of that shyness and constraint, that tender embarrassment and sweet confusion, which young girls who love always show."

"You speak as if you had been reading the subject up in a sentimental novel; but you forget that Vera has not been brought up as other girls: she has not the same ideas, and neither shows nor conceals her feelings in the same way. I certainly think you are letting an overstrained sense of delicacy stand between you and your mutual happiness. But frankly, I am more concerned for her happiness than for yours. You are a man and can take care of yourself, but she is a young girl, placed in a most invidious and exceptional position. Has it never occurred to you how great is the risk of her becoming the victim of some needy and unscrupulous fortune-hunter? You, at least, are not a fortune-hunter, let the world say what it may. Your scruples are highly honourable, Alfred—that I freely admit—but in this instance you are mistaken. You will be doing wrong, very wrong, both to yourself and her, if you do not marry—"

"Miss Hardy," said the maid, throwing open the door, and Vera, stepping into the room, embraced her friend and gave Alfred the friendly and unembarrassed greeting which he had hitherto looked upon as one of the indications that she did not return his love. On the other hand, she was less bright than usual, had little to say, and as Cora did not seem to be in her usual high spirits, and Alfred, absorbed by the thoughts which her remarks had suggested, conversed with

effort, and often at random, the reunion was less successful than usual.

On the plea that she had a headache, Vera left early, and shortly afterwards Alfred, who had several hours' writing to do before going to bed, took leave of Cora and Mrs. Maitland and returned to his lodgings. There he found two letters awaiting him, both of which, as the sequel proved, were fraught with important consequences, as well for himself as for others.

One came from Mr. Wilkins, whom by this time he had almost forgotten. It was of the very briefest, containing merely an invitation to dinner and an expression of regret that, owing to his having been detained longer in America than he expected, he had not been able sooner to carry out his promise.

The other letter was from Warton, and brought strange news. "Something very unpleasant," in connection with the Hardy Trust, had turned up. The company had reopened the campaign, and this time they seemed to have hit on a real flaw, which, though it might not make Saintly Sam's fortune, was likely enough, according to present appearances, to deprive Miss Hardy of hers. Could Balmaine call at the office on an early day? Mr. Artful would much like to see him.

CHAPTER LXIII.—A PLOT.

THERE used to be a house of entertainment at Paris, known as the Hôtel des Miracles, Rue des Apôtres, names which, since the advent of the third Republic, have been changed for others more in harmony with the ideas of an age and a country which does not believe in anything particular.

The Rue des Apôtres was a narrow street on the left bank of the Seine, a street of tall houses and small shops; the Hôtel des Miracles, a narrow building of five stories, flanked on one side by a wine shop, on the other by an ancient *porte cochère* and a *débit de tabac*. Behind the double front door was a recess, wherein slept—with a cord round his arm, so arranged that nobody could enter without rousing him—Auguste, the single porter and general factotum of the establishment; for Madame Merveille could not afford—or thought she could not afford—two porters, and she did not choose to supply the whole of her twenty or thirty lodgers, some of whom she hardly knew by sight, with latch-keys.

On one side of the entrance passage was a dining-room, capable of accommodating comfortably a score or more of diners; on the

other, Madame Merveille's cabinet, in which she received her visitors and kept her books. Behind was the kitchen. All the rest of the house consisted of bedrooms, the Miracles being both an ordinary inn and an hotel *meuble*. Most of Madame Merveille's guests were, indeed, lodgers only. Some of them she seldom saw, except when they paid their bills—nor always then, for as often as not they left the money with Auguste, either before Madame got up or after she went to bed. But she had also regular *pensionnaires*, whom, being a good soul and a sensible woman, she treated well and charged moderately. Boarders, who proposed to make a long stay, she would rate as low as thirty or forty francs a week, giving them a good bedroom on the fourth story, three meals a day, and wine at discretion. Madame Merveille's liberality in the matter of wine did not lose her anything, however, for the more her lodgers drank of it the less they were likely to eat. She knew that a litre of *vin ordinaire* at fifty centimes, taken with a meal, provokes appetite as little as it promotes digestion.

It is hardly necessary to say that the Hôtel des Miracles was frequented almost exclusively by Madame Merveille's compatriots, the vast majority of foreign visitors being as ignorant of the existence of the Rue des Apôtres as was the worthy landlady of the English tongue. Nevertheless, a few weeks before Alfred Balmaine received the startling communication from Warton, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, three Englishmen, not unknown to the reader, were under Madame Merveille's roof.

One was Vernon Corfe; the other two were Saintly Sam and Lawyer Ferret. They were sitting at one end of the table in the little *salle à manger*, which had evidently just been the scene of a repast, and as the regular diners, according to their wont, had betaken themselves to a neighbouring café and elsewhere, the three men had the room to themselves.

"This seems a nice little house," Saintly Sam was saying.

"And not half a bad dinner either," observes the lawyer, sipping his coffee and proceeding to light a cigar.

"I should think so," puts in Corfe, "you would have had to pay five francs for such a dinner on the boulevards, wine not included. But it was not merely for the sake of economy that I asked you to come here. It is so much quieter than the big hotels on the other side of the Seine, and more out of the way, you know."

"And more Frenchy," remarks the chairman of the Hardy Fortune Company gravely. "When I am in France I like to be Frenchy. But what are we here for? That's what I want to know. You invited us to meet you on important business connected with our claim to the Hardy fortune. You said you had important disclosures to make, which would insure us getting the fortune. We lunched at the station at two o'clock; we drove straight here, and found you waiting for us. You said, as dinner was just ready, we had better not go into business till after. Ferret and me were quite willing, being uncommonly hungry. But now as we have satisfied our appetites and all's quiet, let us go into things without any further loss of time. Is not that quite right, Ferret?"

"Quite right, Mr. Hardy. And Mr. Corfe must not forget that our time is precious."

"Yours is, Ferret, to judge by your bills," returns Sam, laughing slyly at his own joke. "This journey will cost a bonny penny too. However, that is neither here nor there, if this gentleman will put us in the way of getting our rights."

"I both can and will—on conditions, Mr. Hardy."

"Conditions! That means brass, I suppose? Well, make your proposals, Mr. Corfe, and I'll give you my answer. But first of all, tell us what you have got to sell—for that's what it amounts to, I reckon."

"I can easily do that," says Corfe quietly, handing Sam a cigar and lighting one himself. "Well, I think I may say I know as much of the ins and outs of this business as you know yourselves. As for the facts, they are notorious, while as for the law, I have taken advice from a very clever English barrister, a friend of mine who lives in Paris, because, like some other people, he finds it a more convenient place of residence than London. Now it results from what he says, and I know, that as affairs look at present, you have not a ghost of a chance——"

"Come, come; I am not at all sure about that," interrupts Ferret.

"But I am, and you know I am right, Mr. Ferret," answers Corfe firmly. "I repeat it, you have not a ghost of a chance. What does it matter where old John Hardy came from, or whether he was Mr. Hardy's grandfather or great uncle, or whatever else you may call him? Vera Leonino—Miss Hardy, I mean—is the heiress. Even if there was no will, she would inherit, and there is a will, leaving her everything. And

there can be no question about her being Philip Hardy's child. It can be proved in half-a-dozen ways."

"If that's your opinion, what did you mean by that letter you wrote us, and what are we here for?" asks Saintly Sam angrily.

"Wait a minute. Suppose Vera's father and mother were not married, or, what comes to the same thing, she cannot prove they were, how then?"

"Then I do believe we should get the fortune," says Ferret. "It is my firm conviction we should. At any rate, she could not get it; I'd take good care of that."

"But they were married, and I can prove it."

Here Corfe paused for a reply, and the other two gazed at him in blank amazement.

"What the mischief do you mean?" demands Ferret.

"Where is the flaw?" exclaims Hardy.

"I said I could prove it. But nobody else can; and if it's made worth my while—do you twig now?" asks Corfe, leaning back in his chair and leering wickedly at Ferret through the smoke of his cigar.

"I think I do. But I don't understand how you have exclusive possession of the proofs."

"I will enlighten you. Philip Hardy was married at a town called Balafria, in Lombardy. It was more than half burnt down during the war of 1859, and the church, public offices, records of births, deaths, and marriages were utterly destroyed. But Philip Hardy had taken the precaution to obtain properly attested and legalised copies of the documents necessary to prove his marriage. Those copies were in his possession when he died; they are in my possession now."

"How did you come by them?"

"That is my business. But I will say this much, that it was quite by accident."

"You mean you did not steal them," says the lawyer bluntly.

"No, I did not steal them; though I do not see what it would matter to you even if I did."

"But how are we to know, first of all, that these papers are genuine, and, secondly, that duplicates—certified copies—are not to be obtained at the place you mentioned just now—Balafria?"

"Firstly, by going with me to the Italian consul, who will tell you they are genuine; secondly, by trying to get certified copies, when you will be told that none are to be had. If you like I will go with you to

Italy, and you can make personal inquiry on the spot."

"That seems right enough, as far as it goes. And now we come to the most important question of all. How much do you want?"

"Ten thousand pounds."

"Ten thousand devils!" exclaims Saintly Sam, startled by Corfe's modest demand into unwonted coarseness of language. "I'll see you—— Come, Ferret, let us go. He's mad."

"If he is in earnest he is; but maybe he is not. Do you really mean, Mr. Corfe, that you expect us to give you ten thousand pounds for these certificates?"

"Certainly, and they are cheap at the money. The other side would give me ten times as much."

"Why don't you treat with the other side, then?"

"Because I don't want Miss Hardy to get the fortune. She would marry that scoundrel Balmaine, and I hate them both. However, that is nothing to you. Will you give ten thousand for two millions or not?"

"Yes, and as much more as you say the other side will give, if you will insure us getting the two millions."

"Why, you said just now that if Vera could not prove she was born in wedlock you were absolutely sure of getting it."

"I said it was my firm opinion we should. It is my opinion still. But I am not infallible. The Court of Chancery might not take the same view of the case. There is always the glorious uncertainty, you know. And assuming that all you say is true, how can we tell that there does not exist somewhere a second attested copy of the marriage register? Suppose, for instance, that Philip Hardy had it in duplicate, and the duplicate should be found among his father's papers, or in possession of some of his wife's kinsfolk—how then?"

"That is impossible."

"Not a bit of it. Missing documents are apt to turn up unexpectedly sometimes. Anyhow, the contingency is to be taken into consideration, and though the papers you have got hold of may have a certain value, they are not worth anything like the value you put on them."

"How much will you give then?" asks Corfe, lowering his tone as he found that this rough Lancashire lawyer was not quite so easily to be imposed upon as he had thought.

"What do you say, Mr. Hardy?" says

Ferret, turning to his client. "Would you give a thousand—supposing, of course, all as this gentleman says can be proved?"

"No; I would not. In my opinion five hundred would be twice too much. But we will say five hundred; and one way and another the risk is so heavy that I don't much care whether Mr. Corfe takes it or not."

"Five hundred—only five hundred pounds!" exclaims Corfe, now in his turn moved to indignation. "I'll see you both hanged first."

"Thank you. I think we are quite as likely to see you hanged first, Mr. Corfe. You refuse our offer then? In that case we may as well go back to-morrow, Mr. Hardy."

Corfe reflected. It is mortifying to get only five hundred pounds when you have been expecting ten thousand, and counting confidently on five. But five hundred is a nice sum, and Corfe was in need of money. As for the other side, his story about revenge was only half true. Revenge may be sweet, but hard cash is sometimes sweeter; and Corfe had written to Artful and Higginbottom, offering to sell them "some very important information relating to the Hardy Trust;" but as Artful knew him to be a scoundrel, and would not have believed him on his oath, he left the letter unanswered. For this Corfe owed the lawyer a grudge, and the desire "to be even with him" and "put a spoke in Balmaine's wheel" at the same time, was, probably, not without its influence in deciding him to accept Sam Hardy's offer. In any case he did accept it—after a short wrangle and a vain attempt to get more.

"I know I am a fool for making such a bargain," he said, "but if it was not that I want so much to serve those beggars out I would not take a centime less than ten thousand."

"We have nothing to do with your motives, Mr. Corfe," answered Ferret curtly, "but the more I think about it the more I feel sure that five hundred is more than enough. How can we tell that these documents are not forgeries after all? Such things have happened."

"Do you think I am such a scoundrel?" began Corfe furiously. "Let me tell you——"

"Come, come, there is nothing to get into a passion about," interrupted the lawyer. "I did not say it was so; I merely suggested the possibility of such a thing. I think we may look upon this business being settled, Mr. Hardy—subject, of course, to the proofs promised by Mr. Corfe proving satisfactory."

"That's the main point, I reckon. Let us make as sure as we can, whatever else we do. It's a good lump is five hundred pounds."

"Yes; we shall have to make a trip to Italy, and the sooner we start, I think, the better."

This idea was at once acted upon. They started the very next afternoon, and ten days later Corfe received a draft on London for the sum in question—after giving up Philip Hardy's marriage certificate, which Mr. Ferret very carefully burnt.

CHAPTER LXIV.—A HAPPY THOUGHT.

WHEN Balmaine called on Mr. Artful, as he did the very next day after receiving Warton's letter, the nature of the flaw in Miss Hardy's case, discovered by the Hardy Fortune Company, and of which they seemed determined to take every advantage, was fully explained to him. "There could be no question," he said, "that Philip Hardy and Vera's mother were really married, and that Vera was born in wedlock. This, Philip's letters to his father, announcing his marriage and the birth of his daughter, together with the evidence of Martino and Gabrielle Courbet abundantly proved—from a moral point of view; and if there were no opposition to Vera's claim, the Court of Chancery and the trustees would doubtless consider these proofs as sufficient. But in the event of her legitimacy being disputed—if it were asserted by parties claiming to be John Hardy's legal representatives that she was born out of wedlock, then it would be necessary to prove the marriage strictly, either by producing a properly certified copy of the marriage register, or witnesses who could testify that the union had been solemnized in accordance with the laws of the country where it took place."

In anticipation of this difficulty Mr. Artful had some time before requested the British Consul at Milan to procure and forward him this essential document, but he was informed in reply that all the public records of Balafria (where Mr. and Mrs. Hardy were married), having been destroyed during the war of 1859, his request could not be complied with. This was unfortunate, but as the Hardy Fortune Company seemed to have given up the contest, and no other claimants were forthcoming, he had assumed that they (the trustees) would have a walk over and given himself no further concern in the matter. Now, however, that their opponents had thrown down the glove—in other words filed a bill—and openly challenged Vera's legiti-

macy, it had become necessary to act with vigour and despatch.

"I suppose they have found out that no certificate is producible," said the lawyer; "how, I cannot conceive. In any case, it is a dirty trick and quite like that rascal Ferret. But these Calder people can take nothing by their motion, for even if they should succeed in depriving Miss Vera of her fortune, they will not get it. I can promise them that. And they are, perhaps, counting without their host, after all. There were witnesses of the marriage, of course. We must try to find them."

"And that would do as well?"

"Quite as well."

"Don't you think Ferret knows all this?"

"Of course he does. But he wants to run up a big bill of costs, and so advises his clients to fight, even though he knows that, whatever may be the issue, they have not the ghost of a chance. But the great point now, so far as we are concerned, is to hunt up the witnesses of the marriage. Will you undertake the task?"

"Go to Italy, you mean?"

"Yes; you are just the man. You know the case, you know the ground, and you know what we want. Will you do it? You may name your own terms."

"Very well; I will go and do my best," said Alfred, after a moment's thought. "When would you like me to start?"

This time Balmaine did not refuse payment. The world's buffets were beginning to wear off the edge of his Quixotism, and he really could not afford to throw away several weeks' time, even in Vera's service, or rather in the service of the Hardy fortune, which, as likely as not, would never be hers.

"When would I like you to start?" repeated the lawyer. "Well, I don't know that there is any particular hurry. Say in a week's time. Will that suit you?"

"Perfectly."

"In that case we may consider the matter as settled. Look in between this and next Monday and I will give you your instructions, and what is quite as necessary, a supply of cash. These people have fired the first shot—filed their bill—but we need not put in an answer just yet. When we do, it will be to pray the court to administer the trusts of the will."

"But that will be a surrender, won't it?"

"Oh dear, no. The court will review the facts and decide the case on its merits. The Calder Company will produce their proofs—if they have any—and their supposed claim

will doubtless be urged by competent counsel. We shall, of course, represent Miss Hardy, and I have no doubt that, whatever may be the issue, the Vice-Chancellor will allow the costs out of the estate."

Balmaine did not say, albeit he thought, that Ferret was, perhaps, not the only solicitor in the world who liked to make a big bill of costs. Neither did he hint to Mr. Artful that the prospect of Vera losing her fortune was far from displeasing to him. In point of fact, he left the office in Lincoln's Inn Fields in a happier frame of mind than he had known for many a day. It was probably this serenity of spirit that suggested a happy thought—and happy thoughts are often more fruitful in results than hard work. As he turned into Fleet Street it occurred to him that it might not be amiss to call on the manager of the *Day*, tell him that he was bound for North Italy, and ask if he could do anything for the paper there. He by no means anticipated a favourable answer, but there was just the off-chance that it might be favourable; if it were not, he would be no worse off than before.

Mr. Nonpareil received him somewhat less cordially than on the occasion of his first visit. The manager was evidently both very much occupied and pre-occupied. Balmaine seeing this, explained his business in the fewest possible words.

"Going to North Italy, are you?" said the manager. "Well, we have no correspondent there, and if anything should occur—anything very particular, you know—you might send us an account of it. But you had better see the editor. He may, perhaps, suggest something. You know him, of course?"

"Only by name."

"Indeed? Well, I will send in your name and tell him you will call this evening—shall we say nine o'clock? Good. The porter below will tell you how to proceed."

On this Balmaine made haste to take his leave, and when he got below addressed himself to the porter for an explanation of the manager's rather enigmatic instructions. Obtaining access to the editor of the *Day* seemed to be an undertaking of some difficulty. He was first of all to knock at a certain door in the court, pointed out by the porter, and ask if Mr. Manifold was in the office. Should the answer be in the affirmative, Balmaine must cross to a door on the opposite side of the court, press a button, the position of which the porter minutely described to him, and when the attendant came hand in his card. He would then, if

Mr. Manifold was able to see him, be favoured with an interview.

All this Alfred did. He knocked at one door, and after ascertaining that the manager was in, pressed the button of the other, whereupon it was slowly and cautiously opened and he was let inside.

"You want to see the editor?" said the attendant, and, without waiting for a reply, he led the way up a broad flight of stone steps, then along a corridor to a door, and throwing it open, told Alfred to be pleased to take a seat until the editor came, and then incontinently withdrew. It was a large, well-furnished room, with sofas, easy-chairs, a long table, and a handsome bookcase—not in the least like the "den" of the traditional editor.

Alfred sat down in the twilight, feeling almost as if he were engaged in some conspiracy, and wondering what like was the man who forged the thunderbolts of the *Day* and wielded the power of a minister of state, how he would be received, and thinking what he should say. He had ample time for reflection. Mr. Manifold did not put in an appearance for a full half-hour, and when he did come the door opened so quietly, and he entered so softly, that before Balmaine became aware of the editor's presence he was half-way across the room.

"How do you do, Mr. Balmaine?"

The great editor spoke as softly as he walked—a man of middle age and middle height, with a high forehead, a pale, intellectual, weary face, bent shoulders, and grizzly hair. He looked to Alfred like an overburdened Atlas, a mentally strong man, perhaps, yet whose physical strength was not equal to his day.

"I'm glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Balmaine," he said. "Your letters from Geneva were very good. I am sorry for our sake that you have left. What can I do for you?"

Alfred told him of his proposed journey to Italy.

"Well, if you can find any good subjects, and send us a few letters, I will do my best to use them. Italy is always interesting, and I think the time is not far off when she will complete her unity by the redemption of Rome. France and Prussia are ready to fly at each other's throats, and when they do, the Temporal Power must come to an end."

"You think there will be war then?"

"I look upon a war between France and Prussia as inevitable. France cannot lose her supremacy in Europe without a struggle.

The unification of Germany would be fatal to her supremacy, and Napoleon will try at all hazards to hinder its consummation. Yes, sooner or later, and rather sooner than later, we shall have a European war."

As he spoke the editor rose from his chair, and Balmaine taking this as a hint that the interview was at an end, "made his adieux."

He went away in good spirits. Something might come of the interview after all, for it would be strange indeed if he could not find matter for a few letters in North Italy, letters which might possibly lead to a permanent connection with the paper. Balmaine having a sanguine temperament could not help being hopeful, any more than he could help being unduly depressed under disappointment, for one extreme begets another. Circumstances in the present instance did not, perhaps, justify great expectations; but when, two or three days later, he dined with Mr. Wilkins, that gentleman made him a proposal which offered tangible grounds for encouragement. It was to take the editorship of a monthly commercial and financial magazine, "to be run," as Mr. Wilkins put it, in connection with a similar undertaking in the United States.

"But I know so little about commerce and finance," said Balmaine.

"You will soon learn," was the answer. "I can get you facts and information. You will only have to put them into shape. It will not take very much of your time."

The salary was to be two hundred a year, and, as the enterprise could not be launched for two or three months, there would be ample time before its inception for the contemplated journey to Italy. Alfred, of course, accepted the offer with both hands, and went away as much rejoiced as if he had come into a fortune as big as Vera's, or that which ought to be Vera's. With two hundred a year and his other earnings he would be almost as well off as if he had retained the editorship of the *Helvetic News*. Cora, whom he saw on the following day, though she congratulated him, did not seem as much surprised at his rise in life as he had expected.

"Of course you will get on," she said, "better, I dare say, than if you had stayed at Geneva. But what a terrible thing this is about poor Vera and her fortune! I declare I am quite ashamed of Calder. Saintly Sam is a wretch and Ferret a villain. They cannot get the fortune themselves and they are trying to take it from Vera! But I do hope they won't succeed! You must find these witnesses, Alfred."

"What does Vera say about it?"

"Not very much. She will be here soon and you can ask her yourself."

Cora, as Alfred had already discovered, was not in the most serene of tempers. Truth to say, she was greatly perplexed by the turn things were taking. For months she had been trying to make Vera and her cousin fall in love with each other, and now when the goal was in view and she had almost persuaded Alfred to propose, came this stroke of the Fortune Company; and though she hoped for the best, she could not conceal from herself that her friend was in imminent danger of being reduced to penury. Cora, though not mercenary, was essentially practical, and being blessed with a more than average share of common-sense, it seemed to her that in the changed condition of things it would be nothing less than a misfortune for Alfred and Vera to become engaged. How could her cousin, with the two hundred a year, of which he was so proud, and a few pounds more precariously earned, keep a wife? Yet with the proverbial perversity of lovers, they would probably regard the present as being an especially propitious time for an exchange of vows and the swearing of everlasting constancy. But what could she do, without laying herself open to the imputation of being actuated by unworthy motives, to avert this consummation? And was not she herself a poor girl, engaged to a poor man? Taking all this into consideration Cora came to the sensible conclusion to let matters take their course.

"I have meddled and muddled," she thought, "and, perhaps, if I meddle any more I shall only make the muddle worse. I'll leave it to Providence. People who do not possess the gift of foresight have no business to weave elaborate schemes for the benefit of their friends. They may not prove beneficial after all."

CHAPTER LXV.—BALMAINE PROPOSES.

THE cousins were still discussing the iniquities of Saintly Sam and his familiar spirit, as Ferret was called at Calder, and the chances of the chancery suit, when Miss Hardy was announced. She did not appear to be much concerned, while, as for Alfred, his spirits seemed higher than ever. A bad sign, thought Cora. She knew her cousin's impulsive nature, especially in affairs of the heart; and remembering how easily declarations are made she feared the worst. As ill-luck would have it, too, Vera had hardly come in when Miss Balmaine was called out. No invented

excuse this time, but a call of real necessity. The cook had scalded her foot and fainted. There was a terrible hurry-scurry in the kitchen, and in the absence of Mrs. Maitland Cora was compelled to descend to the basement and take the part of mistress.

"Are you very much concerned at the turn things have taken, Miss Hardy?" asked Balmaine rather vaguely when they were alone.

"About the poor cook, you mean? Yes, I am very sorry. I fear her foot is badly scalded."

"No, I don't mean about the poor cook. I mean about the Fortune Company, and the possibility that——"

"—The fortune will never be mine," said Vera, finishing the sentence. "Yes, for some reasons I am sorry. I shall have to abandon plans on which I had rather set my heart; and I must give up Reindeer—poor Reindeer! What will become of him, I wonder?" sighing.

Happy Reindeer, thought Alfred.

"But I am far more glad than sorry, Mr. Balmaine," she added with brightening eyes, and a look that confirmed her words.

"Glad to lose a fortune of two millions! How many there are who would give their very souls for a few years' enjoyment of such wealth."

"They are very poor creatures then. They can never have known what it is to be rich."

"That is very probable, I think. They would like to know though. And if the wealthy did not find that their wealth gives them more pleasure than pain they would not cling to it so tenaciously."

"They have perhaps never known what it is to be poor," said Vera innocently.

"Perhaps not," returned Alfred with a smile. "All the same, it is not pleasant to be poor, or to feel that you are in danger of being poor. But, do you know, I think people are none the worse for having felt, once in their lives, the pinch of poverty. The experience enables them to sympathise all the more with those who are less well off than themselves. It makes them more generous too; for, if you notice, our greatest public benefactors are generally men who have risen, and who some time or other have known what it is to be poor. If you hear of anybody giving or bequeathing a large sum of money for the promotion of learning or the alleviation of poverty it is almost sure to be a self-made man, hardly ever a great noble or wealthy squire. The millionaire pill-maker who died the other day is said to have given

and left more than half a million for charitable purposes; but the banker-peer who died at the same time, and was worth six millions, did not leave a pound of it for any higher object than the aggrandisement of his family."

"I don't much admire pill-makers," said Vera, "but I honour that man far more than the peer. The peer was an egotistical wretch!"

"I would not say that. He was selfish certainly, but he acted according to his lights. He had never gone through a course of poverty. I don't mean penury. And you, Miss Hardy, if you had been all your life cradled in luxury and brought up as a great heiress, would not have looked upon your fortune as a responsibility too heavy to be borne."

"Thank Heaven, I was not. I would rather be a Vaudois milkmaid than a great heiress."

"There, I think, you are wrong. For a great heiress may, if she likes, become a milkmaid, but a milkmaid cannot very well become a great heiress. The one has a choice of destinies which the other does not possess. I am not sure either that the lot even of a Swiss milkmaid is altogether to be desired. In summer time and fine weather it is all very well—poetic, romantic, and healthy—but in winter, I should think, the calling has its drawbacks. And, I fancy, milkmaids have not much opportunity for the cultivation of literature and art, and you love literature and art, Miss Hardy."

"How practical you are, Mr. Balmaine. But you misunderstand me. I meant that I would rather be brought up as a Vaudois milkmaid than as great heiresses are generally brought up. You speak of literature and art. Well, I have met at the Leytons some girls who are said to be very rich, and I am sure they have fewer ideas than any milkmaid in our commune."

"And what arrangement could be more admirable?" returned Alfred with assumed gravity. "Dame Fortune is much less capricious with her gifts than we sometimes give her credit for being. She gives Swiss milkmaids ideas and idealess English girls money. It is only rarely, as in your case, that she bestows on the same fortunate maiden both money and ideas."

"You are in a merry humour, I think, Mr. Balmaine. Fortune is capricious whatever you may say. And I'm not the exception you would make me. You are pleased to say I have ideas, but I have not the money—that is as good as gone."

"Not yet ; and it may not go. You are still the heiress presumptive, and if I can find the priest who married your father and mother, or one of the witnesses to the marriage, as I hope to do, you will be the heiress in fact."

"You hope to find them—really now?" and she looked straight up to him as if she would read his thoughts. She was sitting on a low chair knitting, an accomplishment in which, like most Swiss-bred young women, she excelled ; he on a higher one not far from her.

What did she mean ? Had she guessed ? Could Cora have told her ?

"I shall do my best to find them as in duty bound. But——"

She looked down again, and went on with her knitting. Alfred's heart beat wildly, and for a minute or two neither spoke a word.

Vera was the first to break silence, but only by a single word—"Yes?" the "Yes" interrogative, not affirmative. It was an invitation to Balmaine to complete his sentence.

"I should be glad not to find them if I thought—if I thought—if I thought" (impetuously) "that you love me as I love you, Vera."

He did not intend to speak thus ; the avowal was uttered, as it seemed to him, without any volition of his own.

"And whom should I love if I love not you?" she returned in a low yet collected voice. "Have you not always been good to me, rendering me many services and placing me under great obligation ? And have you not always shown yourself chivalrous and high-minded ? In that so like M. Senarclens, though in many things so different, caring more for high principles than material advantage."

"And, then, you do love me, dear Vera?" exclaimed Alfred in an exultant voice, taking her unresisting hand in his.

"Have I not said so ? Yes, I love you, Alfred Balmaine, and you are mine and I am yours until death do us part—*n'est-ce pas*?"

"It is so. But——"

"But?"

"I mean that though I love you more than I can tell, the avowal was made on the impulse of the moment. I had made up my mind to keep my love to myself, lest people should say that it was mercenary love, and that I cared more for your fortune than yourself."

"What, Alfred Balmaine !" she exclaimed, rising from her chair with an indignant gesture, "do you know me so little as to suppose that I heed what people say, or that

I would not, if you asked me, give this fortune away—scatter it to the four winds of heaven?"

"I did not know that you loved me then, dearest," said Alfred, putting his arms round her, and sealing their betrothal on her lips.

"But you know now," she answered smiling, as she pushed back the curls from his forehead and looked lovingly into his eyes. "And were you not just a little selfish in hiding your love because you feared to share my lot?"

"Feared?"

"Yes, you were afraid of what people would say. I have a strong persuasion that the fortune will never be mine ; but if it should, you will help me to bear the burden, will you not ? With your help I do not think I should feel it to be a burden. You will not mind what people may say, now ?" A strong emphasis on the "now !"

"Now that I know you love me," returned Alfred passionately, "let them say what they like. And perhaps, after all, I was wrong in resolving not to speak to you of my love, but I thought it my duty. I could not bear the idea of being considered a fortune-hunter—perhaps by you, certainly by others."

"It is as Cora says ; you are too sensitive on the point of honour—too Quixotic ; or is it pride?"

"Perhaps. And Cora—did she ever hint ? You know what I mean—she guessed my secret."

"Your cousin has always been good and kind," answered Vera evasively, "and very anxious to promote your happiness and mine ; but don't tell her of this, nor anybody else."

"Not tell Cora!"

"Not just now. Leave that to me. And as you are going to Italy so soon, and may be away for some time, it would be well, I think, to keep our betrothal a secret for the present."

"Your will is my law, Vera. And there is another reason for keeping it to ourselves. You may be made a ward in Chancery, and it might not please the Lord Chancellor to sanction our engagement."

"But when I am *majeure*?"

"Then you will be your own mistress. How do the Leytons take the change in your prospects ? Are they as kind as they were ? And you——"

"There is somebody coming !" interrupted Vera, withdrawing from his side and sinking into her settee.

The next moment the door opened and Cora appeared on the scene.

"It is not so bad as I thought," she said. "Jane was more frightened than hurt. Fancy a big stout girl like her fainting because some not very hot water fell on her foot! And what have you been talking about all this time?"

"I was just asking Miss Hardy how the Leytons take the change in her prospects," replied Balmaine carelessly; "if they are as kind as they were when she was regarded as an undoubted heiress."

"The very question I was going to ask her myself. It must make a difference. If the Leytons are not kind to you, dear—if you are not comfortable—you must come here. Make your home with us. Nothing would give Mrs. Maitland and me more pleasure."

"A thousand thanks, Cora dear. You are really too kind; and I need hardly say that I would rather be your lodger than the Leytons' guest. But I do not feel that I ought to leave them just now, even if I could—as to which, being a minor, I am not quite sure. Whatever may be their motive, Sir James and Lady Leyton have been very kind to me, and are so still. When Sir James told me of what he called the weak point in my armour, which the Fortune Company have discovered, I said at once that I must set about earning my own living. But he would not hear of it—seemed almost angry indeed—and said that until the court decides otherwise I am the heiress and his ward and must remain his guest. I have, therefore, no alternative. But once the case is decided against me, and I think it will be, I shall certainly come away. I could not bear to be dependent on the Leytons—nor on anybody else."

"You are quite right. You have no need to be dependent on them," said Cora warmly. "Have you any idea how soon you will know your fate?"

"No; but I hope soon. I have asked Sir James that no unnecessary delays may be interposed, and he has promised that he will use his influence in that sense with Mr. Artful."

And so the talk went on, but not for very long. The carriage came earlier than usual. There was to be feasting that evening in Grosvenor Square, and Lady Leyton had asked Vera to be back in good time. So she went out of the room with Cora "to put her things on." When the two returned, a few minutes later, Balmaine saw at a glance that his cousin knew all.

"Well, you are a nice pair," she said, in

spite of her doubts pleased, though dubious withal as to the prudence of an engagement in present circumstances. "You choose the very moment when one is suffering from a reverse of fortune and the other is perhaps on the point of losing her inheritance to become engaged! All the same, I am very glad, and wish you every happiness. But how do you propose to keep a wife, Alfred?"

"I think I can," was the confident reply. "I am not doing badly, and you said only just now that you thought I should do well."

"Always sanguine," put in Cora with a smile.

"You forget me, I think, Miss Balmaine," exclaimed Vera proudly, and with more than pretended warmth. "Whatever happens, I shall not be dependent on Alfred. Do you forget what that nice gentleman—Mr. Roberts is not his name? at Peter, Paul, and Piper's said when you introduced me to him as Miss Leonini? He said I could easily earn five or six guineas a week with my sketches. There now!"

"And if the worst comes to the worst," added Alfred gaily, "we can do as you and George are doing—wait and hope."

CHAPTER LXVI.—FAILURE AND SUCCESS.

THE Leytons were not, as may be supposed, altogether disinterested in refusing to let Vera go. Their motives were rather mixed. They felt instinctively that it would look mean and expose them to unpleasant remark if they turned their backs on the girl the moment her prospects worsened—after they had made so much of her too. Then, again, Lady Leyton, in her selfish, indolent way, liked Vera—her presence made the house brighter, and it was pleasant to have her to talk with and to read aloud, take her on shopping excursions, and consult on the all-important question of dress, for Lady Leyton had discovered that her young guest was gifted with exceptionally good taste. It had even occurred to her ladyship that if Vera should lose her fortune it might be well to engage her as a permanent companion and secretary—at a good salary, of course, for the Leytons were not stingy people. The arrangement would both contribute to her own comfort and gain her credit with her friends generally and the world at large.

Sir James had also a personal reason for desiring to keep Vera. He hated to breakfast alone, and if she went away that would

be his fate for at least six mornings in the week.

Husband and wife of course talked the matter over.

"It is very well," said Sir James, after they had arrived unanimously at the conclusion that Vera should continue as their guest and be treated—for the present at least—as she had been. "It is very well that Sydney has not made any advances—and I rather pressed him to do."

"I look upon it as quite providential," answered the lady. "Of course he won't think of such a thing now."

"Of course not. Trust Syd; he is too wideawake for that. I wish he would get done sowing his wild oats though."

"Marriage would steady him, don't you think?"

"Very likely. But wait a bit. Vera will perhaps get her fortune after all. It will be a dreadful shame if she does not."

The worthy couple little thought that their son had proposed to Vera twice and been refused each time.

Sydney Leyton was far from being a man of noble nature; but even ignoble natures may have generous impulses. He felt his first repulse keenly, for though he did not love Vera passionately, he liked her well, and respected her even more than he liked her; and he inferred from her manner when he made his first proposal that she rather despised him. So when he heard that she was likely to be bereft of her fortune he resolved to ask her a second time to be his wife, if only to show her that he was not the frivolous fortune-hunter she thought him. If she accepted him he would stand to his guns, whatever his father and mother might say, and if she did not he would have the satisfaction of knowing that he had behaved well and deserved Vera's good opinion.

She refused him, as he had rather feared—perhaps if he had analysed his motives rigidly he would have said hoped—but in a very different fashion from the first time—seriously, and with many expressions of sympathy and regret. She could not love him, she said—from no fault of his—and to marry a man whom she did not love would be a double wrong, a wrong to him and a wrong to her; but she should always take the warmest interest in his welfare, and hoped to see him one day a Member of Parliament and a great man.

It is probable that the refusal so graciously given pleased Sydney quite as much

as an acceptance would have done. He expressed a hope that they should always remain firm friends, and assured Vera that he would do his very best to protect her interest and defeat the machinations of Saintly Sam.

It was partly out of consideration for Sydney that Vera wanted to keep secret her betrothal to Balmaine. It might hurt his feelings, she thought, if he were to know that almost the day after she refused him she had accepted another.

Before Alfred left for Italy the lovers had one more stolen interview—short but sweet—contrived by Cora. It was agreed that during his absence, which he was to make as short as might be, they were to write to each other as often as possible.

"Write to me at Grosvenor Square," said Vera; "I have so many letters that one more or less will never be noticed, and nobody but myself so much as glances at the outside of them."

And so they parted, and Balmaine went on his way; but his second visit to Italy was no more successful than his first had been. He made first for Balafria, where Philip Hardy and Vera Leonino were married, and knowing from the former's letters to his father the date of the marriage, he had no difficulty in ascertaining who, at the time in question, was the parish priest. Everything depended on his finding this man, for if he had not himself solemnised the marriage, he would doubtless know who had. But Alfred failed to find him. After the war and the fire Father Ariosto—for so he was called—had gone to another part of the country—to Livorno, thought the syndic of Balafria. Alfred went to Livorno, and after a good deal of trouble found that the syndic was right. It appeared, however, that from Livorno Father Ariosto had gone somewhere else, and Balmaine followed on his traces from place to place until he reached Genoa, where he learnt that the reverend gentleman had embarked on board a vessel bound for the Southern Seas, with the intention of proceeding thither as a missionary; but as the ship ran ashore on a cannibal island, and there was reason to believe that all the ship's company—except an able-bodied seaman, who alone escaped to tell the tale—were either drowned or eaten—possibly both—it did not seem likely that the priest would be available as a witness in the suit of Hardy against Hardy, and to this effect Alfred advised Artful and Higginbottom. As for the other witnesses—and there were beyond

doubt two—he failed to find out their names, and could not, therefore, very well find out them, nor did he, albeit he advertised extensively in divers Italian papers.

Yet notwithstanding Alfred's failure in the main object of his expectation, it had two important consequences. Wherever he went he was struck by the abject poverty of the masses of the Italian people, and he wrote some letters on the subject, which pleased the editor of the *Day* and rather startled his readers. They gave so much satisfaction, indeed, that he was requested to continue them, and with that object visited the south, and in an interesting series of articles he was able to show the close connection which obtained between the indigence of the people and the twin curses of brigandage and the Mafia and the Camorra, and other secret societies of black-mailers, which the authorities, in spite of their utmost efforts, were unable to suppress.

When Mr. Manifold thought the British public had had enough of this sort of thing he instructed Balmaine (who for the previous six weeks had been acting exclusively for the *Day*) to return to London, informing him at the same time that the proprietors and the manager and himself were so pleased with his letters that they were prepared, on terms which he would learn on his arrival, to offer him a permanent place on the paper.

Nothing could well be more satisfactory, and the young fellow was naturally in high feather, as well by reason of the improvement in his prospects as on account of the handsome manner in which his employers had recognised his services. Altogether he profited greatly by his Italian journey, and no less in experience than in pocket and reputation. But there is a drawback to everything, and he feared that his new duties would be incompatible with his retention of the editorship of Mr. Wilkins's financial journal. If he had to sacrifice one, however, it would certainly not be the *Day*.

CHAPTER LXVII.—HAMMER AND TONGS.

DURING his absence in Italy Balmaine wrote to Vera regularly and often; owing to the uncertainty of his movements, however, she wrote less regularly to him; some of the letters she did write he never received, and when he reached London he had been without news from her for more than three weeks—in his love-heated imagination quite an age. Boiling over with impatience he rushed off to Bloomsbury Square—albeit the time was unconscionably early for a call, and he had

not yet reported himself at the office of the *Day*. He feared that his letters had miscarried or been suppressed. He would ask Cora to see Vera that very afternoon, and arrange for a tryst later on in the day.

"Is Miss Balmaine in?" he asked the not very intelligent maid who answered the bell, and, without waiting for a reply, went to the room in which his cousin was wont to do her literary work.

Cora was not there; but somebody else was.

"Vera!"

"Alfred!"

The next moment they were in each other's arms.

"You here?" he exclaimed. "What a delightful surprise!"

"What, did you not get the letter I sent to Naples? I am here altogether."

"Here altogether!"

"Yes; I have left the Leytons, and see" (pointing to some sketches that lay on the table), "I am earning my own living."

"But what has happened? Tell me all about it, for in an hour I should be at the office of the *Day*."

Vera told him all about it. As she said laughingly, he was the cause of all the trouble. Their secret had been discovered, by one of those accidents which so often mar the best-laid schemes. The greater part of her letters came by the first delivery, and were always lying on the table when she went down to breakfast. Those that came later were sent up to her room. But one morning several which came by the second delivery were placed by mistake in the breakfast-room, and when Sydney Leyton entered at his usually late hour he found them on the table, near his own. Lazily looking over the addresses, without any particular motive, he noticed that one of the letters bore the post-mark of Genoa.

"Who on earth can be writing to her from Genoa?" he soliloquised. "An English hand too. Some beggar, I suppose."

The next day he called at Artful and Higginbottom's office to ask about the progress of the suit, when the head of the firm showed him Balmaine's letter from Genoa announcing the failure of his quest.

"The same handwriting and the same place, by Jove!" he thought. "What can it mean? Are those two carrying on a correspondence, I wonder? I must find out."

By keeping a sharp look out on the letters delivered by the postman, and occasionally overhauling the contents of the letter-box in the hall, he was not long in arriving

at the conviction that Vera and Balmaine were carrying on a lively correspondence.

Now, albeit Vera's denial of his suit had not broken his heart, the thought that he had been rejected in favour of so obscure and impecunious a rival as Alfred Balmaine riled Sydney exceedingly. It seemed to him, moreover, that Vera was not acting sincerely, and he straightway informed his father of the discovery he had made and the suspicions it suggested.

Sir James was very angry, and when angry he was apt to be coarse and use rather strong language.

"Confound the fellow!" he exclaimed; "I will stop this, and pretty quickly. You did right to tell me, Sydney. I could not have believed that Vera was capable of such deceit—I might almost say of such base ingratitude."

He opened the attack when they met the next morning at breakfast.

"You are corresponding with that Alfred Balmaine, Vera," said the knight abruptly. "What are your relations with the fellow?"

"Sir James!" exclaimed the girl, for the moment quite confounded by the suddenness of the question.

"You do not seem to understand. I ask what are your relations with this Balmaine, to whom you write so often?"

"We are betrothed," said Vera quietly, recovering by an effort her self-possession.

"You are! Well, I call it a piece of base ingratitude to go and get engaged without my knowledge and consent. It must be put a stop to."

"Pardon me, Sir James, that cannot be. I am sorry to displease you, but this is a matter about which you must allow me to please myself."

"Am I to understand, then, that you refuse to give this absurd engagement up?"

"Decidedly. Not for all the world would I give it up."

"In that case you cannot stay here," returned the knight furiously.

"As you like, Sir James," said Vera, rising from her chair and turning pale.

"Besides, don't you see that the fellow wants only your money? A beggarly journalist without a brass farthing to bless himself with! He is just speculating on the chance of the suit going in your favour. I understand now the cause of those frequent visits to Bloomsbury Square. I little thought that Miss Balmaine was a mercenary match-maker."

With a single indignant glance at Sir

James, but without offering a word in reply, Vera left the room. Half an hour later she left the house.

"Did I do right?" she asked Alfred when she had told her story to the end.

"Quite right," he answered warmly. "You could not have done less, and it would have been a mistake to answer Sir James's insults. But are you as happy here as you were at Grosvenor Square, Vera?"

"Happier. I am free here; I can live my own life, and I could not there. And, do you know, I find it a real pleasure to earn money. Look here" (showing a cheque for £10 10s.), "I received this only yesterday for some sketches."

"I congratulate you," laughed Alfred. "Why, if you go on at this rate you will become a millionaire by your own efforts. But where is Gabrielle?"

Gabrielle, said Vera, was staying with Lady Layton, as her maid. Lady Leyton had called upon Vera the day after she left, and tried to persuade her to go back. But with this request—though Lady Leyton pressed it, and said her husband had been too hasty—she found it impossible to comply. After the scene with Sir James she could not bring herself to accept his hospitality, and greatly preferred to be with Cora.

"If for no other reason, because we can see each other oftener, *mon cher ami*," she said with an affectionate glance at her lover. "You can come here, but you could not go to Grosvenor Square."

There had been a question of asking the Lord Chancellor to order her to return thither; but seeing that Sir James Leyton had told her in effect to go, that she would soon be of age, and that the suit was not likely to last very long, he thought it better not to persevere with the project. From Bloomsbury Square, whither he promised to return in the evening, Alfred went into the City and waited on Mr. Nonpareil. The manager received him with great cordiality, and after complimenting him warmly on his letters, said that if Balmaine liked to take a permanent post on the paper he could offer him six pounds a week, to begin with; but the staff being very full just then they could not find him very much to do; what that was he would learn from the editor. He would probably be asked from time to time to write articles on special subjects, review books, and so forth, and he must hold himself in readiness to proceed to any part of the world at very short notice. He could not, of course, contribute to any other daily

paper; but for the rest he would be free to dispose of his own time in his own way.

Alfred accepted the offer and the conditions at once and left the office in great spirits, for, save in the event of his being dispatched on some distant expedition, he would be able both to fulfil his duties on the *Day* and conduct the *Financial Guide*—perhaps do other work as well. He was thus, as touching income, in quite as good a position as if he had remained at Geneva, and there were surely a wider field and better chances of advancement on the banks of the Thames than in the pleasant yet somewhat sleepy city of the lake.

From the *Day* office Balmaine went to Artful and Higginbottom and had a long talk with Mr. Artful and Warton. The Hardy estate, as he already knew, had been put into Chancery, that is to say, the executors were acting under the direction of the Court, and had, so to speak, become its agents. Miss Hardy's claim to the property was being hotly contested by the Fortune Company, interrogatories and answers put and given, affidavits filed, motions made by counsel, and altogether the suit was progressing very satisfactorily—for the lawyers.

"We are at it, hammer and tongs," said Warton.

"And what are the probabilities, Mr. Artful?" asked Balmaine.

The old lawyer lifted his eyebrows and took a pinch of snuff.

"Difficult to say; but in the absence of conclusive proofs of the marriage, I very much fear that Miss Vera will not get her fortune just yet; and I begin to believe her grandfather was the Calder man after all."

"Saintly Sam will get it then," exclaimed Balmaine. "They say he has bought up so many shares in the Fortune Company that he and it are pretty much the same thing."

"He stands a very fair chance, I think. All the same, we mean to prevent him—if we can. And one of their witnesses—a fellow of the name of Murgatroyd—has so palpably perjured himself that it will cause the court to look with suspicion on the other man's evidence. Mr. Murgatroyd has committed the fault of being too precise. He takes oath that he saw the late Mr. Hardy on a day which he cannot specify, but in a month and year about which he is quite sure, at his office in London. Now the late Mr. Hardy was a very exact man, and kept a business diary wherein all his movements are carefully recorded; and from this diary it appears that at the time in question he was on the

Continent. So Murgatroyd's evidence amounts to nothing at all. If it were worth while we would prosecute him for perjury. But the other witness, Clutterbuck, is dangerous. From all accounts he is a respectable old fellow, and according to his affidavit was a close friend of the Calder John Hardy, when they were both young. When the latter went to London he went to Manchester, but in after life he met John Hardy more than once, and swears that he is our John Hardy and no other. He even produces a letter from him, which appears to have contained a remittance; for Clutterbuck, being at the time in needy circumstances, had applied to his old companion for help. And that is not all. The gift is duly entered in the late Mr. Hardy's private cash book."

"Saintly Sam has a good case then?"

"It looks so, and unless we can persuade the Vice-Chancellor to accept as sufficient the indirect yet morally unimpeachable proofs of Philip Hardy's marriage which we are able to produce—have produced, in fact—we stand a very good chance of being beaten. But we are not beaten yet. The witnesses you could not find may possibly be forthcoming, and Warton is going down to Calder to look into the antecedents of the other John Hardy. Time is all in our favour, and if we can get the better of Saintly Sam and his crew I think Miss Veramay come into her fortune even yet."

Balmaine left the lawyer's office in much soberer mood than he had left the office of the *Day*, for though his love for Vera was pure and disinterested, and the loss of her fortune would cause him no distress, it was not pleasant to think that it might become the possession of "Saintly Sam and his crew," though probably little more than the jackal's share would be left for the crew. That was a lame and impotent conclusion indeed, and Vera and Cora, when he talked the matter over with them in the evening, were greatly excited by the news he had brought.

"And they call this English law!" exclaimed Vera indignantly. "For the slur cast on my father and mother's memory I care nothing. They regarded each other as husband and wife, and that is enough for me. But if this Mr. Samuel Hardy inherits the fortune destined by my grandfather for my father and by my father for me, it will be an infamy, a travesty of justice. I would rather give it to that crossing-sweeper in the street there, or scatter it broadcast to be scrambled for by beggars—anything rather than bestow it on this unprincipled scheming Calder cotton-spinner."

GOD GLORIFIED IN COMMON LIFE.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR NOVEMBER.

BY THE EDITOR.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Exodus xxiv., and Heb. viii.

WHATEVER else the Israelites believed, they had intense faith in the personal nearness of the living God. The life of the Patriarchs was marked by the fresh sense they entertained of One who knew them in all their wanderings, and with whom they walked as with a friend and father. The teaching of the Exodus impressed the same lesson; and however impossible it is now to separate the symbolical from the actual in the pictures given us of the Divine manifestations in the wilderness, especially during the mysterious grandeur of the Law-giving, we can have no difficulty in perceiving how direct and sincere was the belief of the people in the Personal Presence of Jehovah, in His speaking to Moses, and that the awful pageantry, now of darkness, now of splendour, which dwelt on Horeb was the visible token that God Himself had come down, whether immediately or through the Angel of the Covenant, and was speaking to them in the signs and wonders that filled them with terror.

Among the many incidents recorded of that time there is one which appears peculiarly strange. "Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heavens for clearness. . . . And they beheld God, and did eat and drink."

The incongruity is startling. We stumble on the words with a shock of surprise, when in the midst of an episode so full of awe, and when the actors knew they were gazing on the tokens of the Divine Presence, we read: "They beheld God, and did eat and drink."

The meal referred to was doubtless sacrificial. From the preceding verses we learn that Moses had sent beforehand young men to offer sacrifices, and as it was the custom of those who did so to partake of the sacrifices, we may believe that it was as a religious act—the act of those who wished to identify themselves with the spiritual reality of which the external rite was the expression—that they now "did eat and drink" before God.

But these sacrificial meals had surely a wider and more permanent teaching. We must not confine their meaning to the ritual of which they formed a part, but must try to discover what is of permanent value and true for us as well as the Israelites. Whatever other ends these institutions served, it may accordingly appear that the eating and drinking before the Lord, the sacred feasts connected with many sacrifices, and the very materialism which entered so much into the ancient worship, ought to be regarded as a striking witness to the sacredness of everyday life and to the importance of the body as well as the soul. The hallowed character of such feasts were, so to speak, sacraments of common life, telling how religion has to do with every interest appointed by God in human existence. If we are almost shocked by the incongruity of men eating and drinking when under the sublime influences of the scene described in Exodus, may it not be because we have ourselves fallen into an unreal way of looking at religion; drawing distinctions which God has not drawn between the sacred and the secular, "the world" and "the Church;" having one set of principles for Sunday and another for the weekday, and failing to consecrate with a sense of the Divine Presence the ordinary routine of our daily task? It is only when we translate the symbolism of Jewish ritual, with its recognition of the religious meaning of civil politics as well as ecclesiastical ordinances—of the Divine side of national and family life as well as of individual responsibility—of the holiness of even natural seasons, and the sanctity of agriculture and commerce when fulfilled in the spirit of brotherhood—that we can learn the lessons which were intended for all time.

The striking words, "They beheld God, and did eat and drink" suggest three possible modes of life: (1) men may eat and drink without beholding God, and in this we have A Description of Worldliness; (2) men may behold God and refuse to eat and drink, and in them we recognise False Puritanism and Asceticism; and (3) in those who see God and eat and drink, or eat and drink as men who see God, we have The Ideal Life.

We will make each of these the subject of meditation for the remaining Sundays of the month.

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Psalm lxxii. and St. Luke xii. 16—31.

Without attempting to discuss what worldliness is, we may take as practically a true description of its nature the words "eating and drinking without seeing God;" for all worldliness has its source in the tendency, so common to our humanity, of being absorbed by the temporary to the neglect of the eternal.

In proportion as we use our common gifts without reference to the will of God, or fall under the tyranny of mere circumstances, so that they possess us instead of our possessing them with a full consciousness of our higher destiny, we become worldly. The occasion of this worldly spirit is to be found, in many instances, in the exaction which hard work makes on body and soul. Long hours of monotonous toil; physical exhaustion at the close of each week's drudgery; the ceaseless round of fretting cares, unbroken by any bright or ennobling stimulus; the weight with which things material—the bare necessities of existence—press upon the attention, have, on one side, an undoubted tendency to banish religion from the interests of what are called the "Labouring Classes." That it is not so among a large proportion of these classes, we know full well; that it should not be so with those who more than others require to have the hardness of life alleviated by Christian hope and peace, we keenly feel; but nevertheless the fact remains that religion, which is intended for blessing, often appears an exaction to men with tired bodies, and who can enjoy home and their children only one day in seven. What we may regard as the higher things of the spirit appear vague and unsubstantial beside the stern realities of food and wages, and rent and clothing; and so life becomes an oppression, and is fulfilled too frequently without the vision of God, and the strong grasping of that hand which would lift it into rest and joy.

But the working man belongs to almost every class of society, and similar engrossments must produce similar tendencies among the wealthiest as among the poorest. Incessant toil—toil at high pressure—is the characteristic of our modern time, and worldliness is certain to follow close upon the exaggerated demand made on our interests by the cares of business or the fretting worries of the fireside. It goes without saying that enterprise and earnest labour have their noble side, and are the source of all our greatest

achievements. We heartily recognise the religious side of this stir and bustle of life. For a Christian man "Laborare est orare," because common duties rightly done are a true worship of Him who has appointed them. But we now speak only of the danger which anxiety pressing from week to week regarding business—in the widest sense of the term—is certain to bring. The absorbing pressure of competition and the desire to gain fortune or power create a snare whereby many fall into that one-sided type of character termed "worldly." They "eat and drink," and live their hard, struggling existence—whether rich or poor, successful or failing—but with such engrossments that they "see not God," and give scarcely a response to His call.

And there are others who sin equally and with less excuse, the idle, luxurious, and frivolous, who scarcely ever allow the thought of God to assert itself as a controlling motive. Self-indulgence reigns over them. It may be that the objects which interest them are in themselves innocent. Domestic happiness, a refined society, the pursuits of manly sport on sea or land, or the culture of the intellect and the gratification of the tastes through things beautiful and instructive, these occupy them, and that so completely without recognition of "Him in whom they live, and move, and have their being," that they become of all men the most worldly—the most completely under the dominion of the visible and transitory.

Such a life is blind. With the verities of existence presented for solemn thought, and with the love of the Father appealing in countless ways to the heart—having "eyes it sees not, having ears it hears not," its heart waxes so "heavy that it feels not." Such a life is sinful; for it acknowledges almost any claim rather than the claim of God, and seeks its "good things" without reference to His will. Such a life is valueless. Measured by the destiny of our being it is a delusion. When Dives was snatched from his purple and fine linen, the word of Abraham was at once a rebuke and a satire. "Son, remember thou hast received thy good things." He had got all he wanted. He had eaten and drunken, but "saw not God;" and when all that past was dwindled into insignificance under the light of the eternity on which he entered, how swiftly would he discover the true from the false, the precious from the worthless! Verily, "what is a man profited should he gain the whole world and lose his own life;"

that life in God for which he was made, and which ought to have been his ?

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Psalm cxlviii., and Romans xiv. 14 to end.

If, as we have seen, there are persons who accept the secular to the neglect of the sacred, or rather, who do not make all things sacred by seeing God in all; so there are others who equally separate the two, and by confining religion within the narrow sphere of things conventionally regarded as peculiarly "pious," and frowning on all else as "worldly," come short, in like manner, of the ideal of Christian life. "They see God" but refuse "to eat and drink." This is the essence of asceticism and false Puritanism. Both were natural reactions from a disordered condition of society. It was not extraordinary that during the latter days of the Roman Empire, when licentiousness was rampant—or that during the Middle Ages, when Europe was the battle-field of half-civilised clans, men should have sought retirement in the cloister or the cell, where, undisturbed by the violence that raged around, they might pursue the calm paths of piety or of sacred learning. Nor was it unnatural that in those days a form of opinion should have arisen which gave a stern sanction to monasticism. Theology then taught that the flesh, in the physical sense, was the source of all sin, and that heaven could be best purchased by a literal killing out of every desire or affection which could be traced to such a fountain. By fasting and scourging the faithful must, therefore, subdue all earthly love and human passion, and become literally dead to the world, a spiritual mummy, heedless of science and art or politics—except in so far as they bore upon the "Order"—lost in meditation, and so swathed in ecclesiasticism as to be no more a member of the great human family, but of this supra-mundane society called the Church.

Puritanism was also a reaction, for it arose in times of great moral laxity; and while we freely grant that the picture of the Puritans which serves the purpose of most novelists and essayists is often no more than a caricature, yet there is undoubtedly a way of regarding religion as separate from the fulness of interest which belongs to common life, that must be traced back to their influence. The jealous eye with which Puritanism frowned at all amusement as an ungodly thing, the conventional barriers it set up to stem the flow of natural taste and sympathy, proved a

danger rather than a safeguard to religion. Puritanism was strong and earnest—would that we had its strength and earnestness now! Yet the religious history of our country may teach us that while we are indebted to the Puritans for nearly all that is purest and healthiest in our national life, yet there has been inherited from them a certain cramping narrowness of sympathy which has more than once led to disastrous practical reactions. These men failed to embrace within religion all that has been mercifully appointed by God for the many-sided requirements of our nature. They indeed "beheld God." They grasped and loved religious truth, and served God with a courage which may well shame us; but so awed were they in those days of "the Wars of the Lord," when each man dwelt as if "under the shadow of the Almighty," that we cannot describe them as "seeing God, and eating and drinking." The "eating and drinking," ordinary social life, with its laughter and its song as well as its more serious hours, was condemned as secular, frivolous, almost profane; and with a sublime firmness the Puritan grasped his Bible and his sword, and sang his psalms, and checked as "vanity" the giving of time or thought to any less solemn interests.

The effect of this was widely felt. It made many hypocrites, and it soon produced in society the reaction which all such extremes inevitably entail. The licence and indifference of the eighteenth century followed swiftly on the narrowness and bigotry of the seventeenth. When religion was divorced from common life, common life soon became separated from religion, and thus Puritanism played straight into the hands of worldliness.

Similar pernicious influences are frequently still at work, sapping character far more than is usually believed. The unnatural rigidity and conventional prejudices of religious schools; the distinctions set up between the lawful and unlawful, founded on no real principle, being based on tradition and custom rather than on reason or Scripture; these produce either a rebound whereby those who have been once held too strictly fly into the other extreme; or, what is worse, making others take, with a bad conscience, what ought to be enjoyed with a healthy freedom. The strait-laced religionist would, forsooth, confine the power of God to the limited circle of things pious and ecclesiastical, forgetting how "every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights;" that we

are living in a redeemed world ; and that all lovely sights and sounds in nature, the joys of social intercourse, the manifold talents bestowed on man, whether shown in the victories of learning, science, and art, or in the lighter works of fancy, humour, and wit ; just because they have a side true to our humanity, as God has made it, so have they an aspect that is essentially Christian. Wherever a man can "behold God" and recognise a harmony between his interests or his very amusements, and the will of the Father, he ought to have no bad conscience, but a manly, religious liberty. Thus beholding God, let him "eat and drink."

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Ecclesiastes xi. 9—xii., and St. Luke vii. 31 to end.

The ideal life as expressed in the terms "beholding God, and eating and drinking," is that which our Lord sets before us by His teaching and example. He said of John the Baptist that he came "neither eating nor drinking." That earnest man whose eye had gazed on the glory of God till all earthly lights had paled under its splendour, came from the bareness of the Desert, an ascetic, a Puritan, scorning all social comfort and reproving with a voice of thunder the laxity and worldliness of the time. The Baptist was found at no feast or festival. He stood aloof not only from the sins, but from the ordinary interests of mankind.

Our Lord puts Himself in contrast to this. "The Son of man is come eating and drinking." For it was His glory to show that the true function of religion is to imbue all duties, and to purify and elevate every sphere of life with its own spirit. He therefore did not stand, like the Baptist, separate from mankind, but was identified with our every-day associations of home and family. He did not live in the desert, but spent His early manhood in a sweet valley among the hills, where the voices of children at play were heard mingling with the sounds of industrious handicraft. He had enjoyed a mother's care and a home life spent with friends and relatives. And thus when He entered on His ministry He consecrated things common by the spirit with which He acted in them all. He did not hold Himself aloof from the merriment of the marriage of Cana, nor refuse the feast prepared in His honour by those who loved Him and took that method of showing their love. On His bosom the sweet innocence of childhood nestled with confidence, and while all that was base,

hypocritical, cowardly, and cruel fell back from that Presence which shed the very radiance of God's own holiness, yet so humane was its manifestation that the friendless, the weak, the unhappy, the sinful, the pained in body as in soul were drawn to Him as to the most sympathetic and tender brother.

He was not as John the Baptist—thank God for it!—no mere stern reprover, standing apart from life, but one who walked with us on our every-day paths, entered our houses, sat at our tables, and was a sharer of every human joy and sorrow. Like God's own sunlight, which glorifies the greatest and most distant star, while it sparkles on the beaded gossamer, so did Jesus touch the lowliest as well as the highest interests with the same perfect light and beauty. He revealed God, and yet so sweetly tender was the manifestation that the very children in the Temple shouted with joy as He came among them. This is our highest example ; it is the ideal life, for it shows the sacredness of everything when God is seen and realised in all. Seeing God, let us eat and drink, but eat and drink as those who verily behold God.

If in this spirit we enter the world we will require no code of rules to guide us. The mere letter of law is at the best an external and dead restraint. The spirit of Christ is the law of Christian life, and where that spirit is there is liberty. To do all things as those who behold God is the Christian calling. Amid the manifold elements which constitute the interest of life let us endeavour to maintain a healthy and happy recognition of our Father's nearness and goodness, and all will come right. Such a consciousness will compel us of itself to withstand the approach of evil as by an instinct, and will elevate all thoughts, all duties, all delights into a pure and bright atmosphere. The life of a man so held by the love of God becomes a continual worship, an unceasing gospel of goodness preached to the world, not in spasmodic and exceptional lecturings, but in the winning language of days well spent, and of a spirit which is manifestly consecrated in all things to God through Jesus Christ. But that spirit can neither be gained nor maintained by merely seeing its beauty. It arises from the vision of God, and if we would enjoy that we must, like Moses and his companions, ever and anon ascend the Mount and be alone with God, and under those influences of which prayer and meditation are the assured channels.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

By W. E. NORRIS,

AUTHOR OF "NO NEW THING," "MY FRIEND JIM," "MADEMOISELLE MERSAC," ETC.

CHAPTER XLIV.—MONCKTON IS RATHER RUDE.

BRIAN spent a very long and very dreary evening all by himself at the Royal Hotel, his solitude only being invaded for a short time by Mr. Petherick, who was respectfully inquisitive, as before. Mr. Petherick hoped he had enjoyed his walk to Beckton, and had found Mr. Gilbert—"I should say the Squire; but there! I never can bring my tongue to it somehow"—pretty well. Might he make so bold as to ask whether Mr. Gilbert felt confident about the election? He did hear, but for his part he paid no heed to such talk, that some of the voters was uncommon bitter against the Squire, "through Miss Greenwood being so much the favourite, you see, sir, and well deserved, I'm sure." He trusted, however, that there would be no rioting or throwing of stones to bring discredit upon the place. "And what I always says is, there's two sides to every story, and we didn't ought to be in such a hurry to judge. And as for what has been spoke of in my hearing about the Manor House property, and Mr. Buswell being determined to get a hold of it, and the way as he thinks as it'll come into his hands—why, I should be ashamed to repeat such things to you, sir. No, sir, I really couldn't repeat 'em—not if you was to beg me to it."

Brian did not get rid of the exasperating man until all that Kingscliff was saying about his brother and Miss Huntley had been made known to him, with what Mr. Petherick doubtless imagined to be extreme delicacy. It was not much more than he already knew or suspected; he had not been able to credit Gilbert even with the poor excuse of having transferred his affections from one lady to another; but it was painful to him that the truth about this sorry business should be made the subject of clumsy ridicule. Where money is concerned rustics are apt to be more cynical than dwellers in cities. It was easy to gather from Mr. Petherick's remarks that Miss Huntley was regarded by the Kingscliffians as a dupe, and that their indignation against Gilbert for his perfidy was tempered by a certain respect for his supposed astuteness. Not much sleep did Brian get in the huge four-poster which was said to have given satisfaction to Sir John Polling-

ton, nor was it in at all a sanguine mood that he set forth to walk to Beckton on the following morning. If rumour was to be credited, he could hardly expect that Gilbert would look with favour upon his project of buying back the Manor House. However, the attempt had to be made; and in any case he must see his brother, if only to dissuade him from taking any measures of retaliation against the bellicose Mitchell.

He did not, as on the previous day, adopt a circuitous route, so that, after mounting the hill, he found himself close to St. Michael's Church and Vicarage, and, being there, it seemed worth while to ask whether Monckton was at home. He had no intention of leaving Kingscliff without having shaken hands with his old friend: perhaps too he thought it would be bracing to exchange a few words with an honest man.

Monckton was not only at home but alone. As Brian entered his study he looked up from the papers with which his table was littered and exclaimed—

"This is better than I expected! I was wondering when you meant to answer my letter; but I would rather see your face than your handwriting any day. Sit down, my dear fellow, and make yourself comfortable, and tell me all about your musical triumphs. I have only heard the most meagre details as yet."

"Oh, well," said Brian, seating himself sideways upon the table and swinging one of his long legs, "there isn't a great deal to tell. The opera succeeded, and it wasn't much of an opera, and—that's about all, I think. At least, that isn't quite all, because I believe that my success is likely to be in a sort of way permanent. I mean it's open to me to do the same thing over again; and people who ought to know tell me that I shall make money without any difficulty now. That's something to be thankful for—as far as it goes."

"It goes a long way, Brian. Haven't you found that out yet?"

"Oh, yes; I know it's useful. In fact I mean, if I can, to make use of it forthwith. Do you know why I came down here, Monckton? But you would never guess; and I expect you'll think me rather a fool when I tell you. I want to buy the Manor House back."

Monckton raised his eyebrows. "But surely Miss Huntley doesn't think of parting with it, does she?" he asked.

"I don't know; but I presume that she will after—well, after she is married. Monckton, old man, I am sure you know why Gilbert backed out of his engagement to poor little Kitty Greenwood; and you know too how I used to feel about Miss Huntley. I shall get over that by-and-by, I hope; I see now that she isn't what I thought she was, and I might have seen it before if I hadn't chosen to keep my eyes shut. In the meantime I don't want to talk about her. As for the Manor House, I don't see why they should wish to keep the place, and I have scarcely spent a shilling of the money that I received for it. You know, Monckton, I never did like parting with the old house."

"Well, but assuming that Miss Huntley will be willing to sell, don't you think she may expect some return for what she has laid out on her property since she came into possession of it?"

Brian's face fell a little. "I didn't think of that," he confessed. "However, I suppose I might raise something on a mortgage, mightn't I?"

Monckton smiled and shook his head. "Brian," said he, "however long you may live, and whatever experiences you may pass through, you will remain sublimely indifferent to expenditure to the end of your days. I don't admire you for it; you ought to know better by this time."

"I don't think I'm as extravagant as I used to be," answered Brian meekly. "I have learnt all sorts of economical dodges, and I can live upon very little nowadays. Of course it sounds insane to invest all one's capital in the purchase of a place that one can't afford to inhabit, but surely you wouldn't advise me to look on quietly while Buswell grabs the Manor House and tears it to pieces."

"I am not convinced that Mr. Buswell will be allowed to grab the Manor House: my impression is that Miss Huntley is as little anxious as you are to hand it over to him. Your brother might perhaps; but even if he marries Miss Huntley the Manor House won't belong to him. There is such a thing as a Married Woman's Property Act, you must remember."

"If she marries Gilbert she will dispose of her property in any way that may please him," Brian declared confidently. "After all the sacrifices that she has made for him it isn't likely that she will care to dispute with him about comparative trifles."

"I should not have imagined her so superior to all compromise; but if it be so, you won't do much good by applying to her now, will you?"

"Oh, I didn't mean to apply to her directly," answered Brian; "I thought I would just see Gilbert and sound him upon the subject."

"According to you, that will be rather a waste of breath. Your view is that he is about to marry a very rich woman, therefore it would hardly be for the sake of the purchase-money that he would urge her to sell a part of her property to Mr. Buswell. Would it make you very angry, Brian, if I were to say that I doubt very much whether your purpose in coming here was to open negotiations for the recovery of the Manor House?"

"As if anything that you could say would make me angry, Monckton! But if you doubt my having come here for that, what in the world do you suppose that I have come for? It isn't over and above pleasant for me to be here just now, I can assure you."

"Why, I think," answered Monckton, smiling, "that you are here because you don't in the least believe all the rumours that have reached you, and because you want to satisfy yourself that they are untrue. And, between you and me, I don't believe them either."

"No wonder you don't!" sighed Brian. "I only wish I could disbelieve them, but unfortunately I can't. I heard from her own lips in London that——" He broke off suddenly and, pointing to the window, exclaimed, "Mercy upon us, look there!"

Monckton, who had risen just in time to catch a glimpse of Miss Huntley herself, advancing composedly towards the door, began to laugh at Brian's dismayed countenance.

"Don't be so alarmed," said he; "she is not likely to come in, and if she does she won't eat you."

But Brian had already clutched his hat, and was preparing for flight. "I can't meet her, Monckton," he said hurriedly; "I'll slip out by the back way. Good-bye for the present; we shall meet again before I leave, I hope." And without more ado he took to his heels.

The smile had not quite faded from Monckton's face when Miss Huntley was announced. She looked a little embarrassed and also rather cross.

"Am I violating etiquette?" she asked. "I suppose I am; but it can't be helped."

I went to church, hoping to catch you as you came out ; but I found a tiresome little curate on duty, so, as I didn't want to have my walk for nothing, I proceeded here and demanded admission. Since you won't come and see me, I must come and see you."

"Please sit down," said Monckton. "I can't often find time for paying visits ; but I need not say that I am quite at your service whenever you want me."

"I quite understand ; that is a polite way of saying 'What is your business ?' I won't keep you long, I only wish to ask you one or two questions. First of all, I should like you to tell me—and I know you will answer honestly—what you think of the way in which I have been turning things topsy-turvy this autumn."

"I am not sure that I am quite in a position to judge," replied Monckton, "but as far as I can understand your intentions, they have been good. I must confess that your way of carrying them out seems to me to have been both wrong and foolish."

She drew a long breath. "Well," she said, "I am glad that you give me credit for good intentions, at any rate. You are the first person who has had the common intelligence to see that much, and I dare say you will be the last. Naturally you wouldn't approve of my method, but really, if you will think of it, no other method was open to me, and it has at least the merit of having been completely successful."

"Has it ?"

"Well, hasn't it ? I have saved Kitty Greenwood from binding herself for life to a man who is, upon the whole, the most despicable specimen of humanity that I have ever encountered."

"Yes, that is your opinion of him, only it wouldn't have been hers if she had married him. Nobody likes and respects Miss Greenwood more than I do ; but I don't think she possesses much insight into character, and I fancy that her husband's faults would have to be very conspicuous indeed before she could be made to recognise them. I will admit that I am glad she is not going to marry him ; nevertheless, I am not in the least sure that he would have made her unhappy. A nice nest of hornets the world would become if we all insisted upon choosing our friends' husbands and wives for them."

"There is no danger of such a catastrophe. Most people are a great deal too selfish to lay themselves open to abuse and slander for the sake of their friends. Besides, once

does not make a rule, and I shall always think that in this particular instance interference of any kind was justifiable. How you can say that Kitty would have had even a chance of being happy with that wretch passes my comprehension."

"I shouldn't say it if I didn't think it. You see, Miss Huntley, in my trade it is necessary to study human nature, and after a time one gets to understand the meaning of certain common symptoms. Now, I should never dream of classing this man Segrave among the hopeless cases—if indeed there be any hopeless cases. I believe that a good wife might have done much for him ; for he is still young, he is quite capable of shame, and, from what I have seen, I doubt whether his efforts at humbugging himself have been very successful."

"See what comes of looking at things from a professional point of view ! You speak quite cheerfully of sacrificing the good wife ; you are like those doctors who don't mind torturing hundreds of animals upon the off chance of prolonging one or two, probably worthless, human lives. I don't know, I'm sure, whether your interesting patient is capable of repentance or not ; but I do know—and so do you—that he is capable of defrauding his brother, breaking his promises to his father, pretending to hold political opinions which he doesn't really hold, and sneaking out of a marriage engagement in the hope of making a more profitable one. You may possibly understand how to deal with such cases better than I do ; but it does seem to me that a good wholesome dose of punishment is the most promising thing to begin with. Meanwhile, I decline to be a party to any experiments in vivisection for his benefit."

Monckton smiled, but made no reply. If his studies of human nature had taught him nothing else, they had most likely convinced him that argument with irate ladies is seldom profitable.

Presently Beatrice went on, in a much more conciliatory tone, and even with a touch of timidity : "Mr. Monckton, I want you to do something for me, if you will ; I want you to make peace between Kitty and me. I suppose she is very angry with me now—perhaps you know that she is ?"

"I don't think she is best pleased with you," answered Monckton ; "it would be rather strange if she were, wouldn't it ?"

"Yes ; but I always thought that as soon as she knew the truth she would understand, and now I am afraid—Well I had better

tell you that Mr. Segrave called upon me yesterday and did me the great honour to offer me his hand and heart. I made him the answer that you may imagine, and then, among other insolent and detestable things, he said that nobody would ever believe I had done all that I have done for Kitty's sake alone. I am afraid he is right; I am afraid it does sound a rather unlikely story."

"I am afraid it does," agreed Monckton.

"But you at least saw—for you said so—that my intentions were good, and if you were to explain that to Kitty, she would believe you."

"Perhaps she would. I suppose I may tell her with truth that you had no other object than her welfare?"

"You don't mean to imply that you doubt it, I hope?"

"Well, you know, Miss Huntley, you said something about punishment just now."

"Oh, I throw you in the punishment; far be it from me to deny that I thoroughly enjoyed punishing Mr. Segrave."

"But what for? Not for an offence which he had not yet committed and which you were trying to make him commit, I presume? I wouldn't for the world suggest such a thing to Miss Greenwood; but it may occur to her that you were more anxious to avenge Brian upon his brother than to rescue her. It is so easy to misinterpret motives! I can even imagine her turning your own surgical illustration against you, and I don't see what rejoinder you could make, except the one which I didn't make to you—namely, that it doesn't happen to apply. Such rejoinders are not very convincing."

"I am glad that you have said that, Mr. Monckton," cried Beatrice, rising and turning a face of calm fury upon her interlocutor; "I am very glad that you have said it, because it gives me an opportunity of telling you that I perfectly understand your insinuation (though I must own that you are the last person in the world from whom I should have expected to hear it), and that it is as devoid of any shadow of excuse as any insinuation can possibly be. Mr. Segrave was pleased to give utterance to it yesterday, and it would be just like him to repeat it to his brother, who, I am told, has suddenly made his appearance here. Not for any man living would I go through one-tenth of the annoyance and humiliation that I have submitted to since the summer, and most certainly not for Mr. Brian Segrave, whom I used rather to like at one time, but whom I have since found to be not at all the sort of person

whom one would care to make a friend of. I sincerely hope that I shall not see him while he is here."

"Perhaps you won't," observed Monckton quietly. "At all events, I can answer for it that he is not anxious to see you; for he was sitting with me just now, and the moment that he caught sight of you approaching he jumped up and fled through the back door. I don't know whether anything that he may hear from his brother will cause him to change his mind; but——"

"It is a matter of complete indifference to me whether he changes his mind or not," interrupted Beatrice; "but it might be a kindness on your part to warn him that anything which his brother says is pretty sure to be false. I must not take up your time any longer now."

"Have I offended you by what you call my insinuation?"

"Oh, no, not at all. I think it was rather rude; but never mind; I don't mean to quarrel with you, Mr. Monckton, whatever you may say to me. Perhaps you will look in upon me some evening—after you have seen the Greenwoods."

"I will not fail to do so," answered Monckton. And after he had seen her to the door, he sat down in his arm-chair and laughed softly.

"So I am to tell Brian that there is no sort of hope for him," thought he. "That was what she came here for, I suppose; because she does not really need my intervention to set matters straight between her and Miss Kitty. Well, I shall not deliver her message, though it would serve her right if I did. She really has behaved in a most inexcusable manner; and yet she was perfectly sincere, I am sure. There is a determined self-reliance about her, too, which is rather fine in its way and only wants directing. What a time she must have had of it during the last three months, with everybody against her and her conscience not quite at ease, and probably with a strong suspicion that her own happiness was at stake! Yes; all things considered, Brian is a fortunate fellow."

CHAPTER XLV.—THE LAST STRAW.

FROM the earliest times even until now a man who has received a blow without avenging it has been held to be a man deserving, perhaps, of pity, but certainly of contempt. Under the somewhat anomalous social code which prevails in our own country at the present day it may be safely asserted that there

is one course, and only one for those who have been assaulted to pursue, and that is to hit their assailant back again as hard and as expeditiously as may be. Having done that they can wait with some measure of calmness for the decision of outsiders as to what it may behoove them to do next. But should they fail to fulfil this essential condition, it is hardly possible for them to come out of the affair with credit. Apologies are all very well; but the general, and surely the correct view of mankind is that when a blow has been struck the time for apologies has gone by. Now Gilbert, through no fault of his own, had been prevented from wiping out the affront put upon him by Mitchell; therefore it was not surprising that, when he rose in the morning, examined his face in the looking-glass, and found it adorned just above the bridge of the nose by a conspicuous red swelling, he should have heartily execrated his too-officious brother. "Confound the fellow!" he exclaimed; "what brought him here at that moment of all others? And what did he want to take my part for? He ought to have been glad to see me thrashed; he ought to have enjoyed it. If he must needs interfere, why couldn't he wait at least another minute? But Brian always was a perfect fool!"

His reflections, as he proceeded with his toilet, were of a most unenviable character. With all the will in the world to chastise Mitchell, he did not see how the thing was to be accomplished. He dreaded scandal; he dreaded ridicule; he saw plainly enough that the utmost that he could hope for was to extort some expression of penitence for an act of unprovoked aggression. Mitchell, if brought to book, would probably have to admit that his attack was in no way justified by the circumstances; but would it be advisable to bring Mitchell to book? That was the question, and it was rather an awkward one. Gilbert had not been able to make an affirmative reply to it when he went down-stairs, uncomfortably conscious of his bruised forehead. If the servants did not exchange significant grins as he passed them, he thought they did. After breakfast he shut himself up in his study and was very miserable. During the past twenty-four hours Fate had treated him so cruelly that it seemed as if things could hardly be worse with him; and yet of course they might be worse. The meeting of electors which he had promised to address on the morrow might hoot him, for instance, and some of them would assuredly want to know how

he had come by that ugly mark upon his brow. Any man may tumble down-stairs or hit his head against a tree; these are accidents to which the best and soberest of us are liable; but unfortunately a censorious world is slow to believe in them.

"Shall I be taken ill, or shall I brazen it out?" thought Gilbert. "After all, it is best not to show the white feather, and I can't possibly remain in seclusion for the next ten days. Anyhow, I won't see a soul to-day, unless Brian comes."

He rose from his chair, intending to give instructions to that effect. But he was just a minute too late; for while his hand was still on the bell the door was opened and Mr. Buswell was announced.

Buswell entered the room slowly, mopping his forehead with his handkerchief as he advanced, although the day was not a warm one.

"Good morning, Mr. Segrave—how do you do, sir?" said he.

He was perhaps the very last man in Kingscliff whom Gilbert would have chosen to receive at that particular juncture. There, however, he was, and there was nothing for it but to make the best of him. Gilbert assumed as cordial a manner as he could, placed a chair for his unwelcome visitor, seated himself with his back to the light, and said cheerfully—

"Well, Mr. Buswell, what is the news?"

"The noos, sir," replied Mr. Buswell, "is not what I could wish it to be. Some of it's no noos to you and bad noos for me; some of it's t'other way on; none of it's just what you could call pleasant for either of us. To begin with, it's known all over the town that you've broke off your marriage, sir."

"It is quite true that the marriage which was to have taken place between me and Miss Greenwood will not now take place," answered Gilbert; "but that is a private matter and has nothing to do with the election. Of course, when I asked you what the news was, it was to the election prospects that I referred."

"Nothing to do with the election!" echoed Buswell. "Bless your 'eart, it has everything to do with it! Why, if you heard the things said that I heard yesterday—but you'll hear 'em soon enough. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Segrave, that you've played your cards uncommon badly. From the very beginning I told you, 'Get 'old of the Manor 'Ouse and you'll win 'and over 'and;' but you wouldn't listen to me, and what was the consequence? Why, that you lost a couple o' 'undred votes

straight off. I can't put it at no less. Now, with a man like Giles against you, it was no joke to lose that number of votes; but to quarrel on the very eve of the election with a young lady who has done more for you by canvassing in certain quarters of the town than ever I could have done—well, all I can say is it looks to me like the act of a loonatic! I make no observation of my own, but the pop'lar opinion is that your behaviour to that young lady has been atrocious, sir."

"Mr. Buswell," said Gilbert, with some dignity, "please to understand, once for all, that I cannot allow my private affairs to be made the subject of public discussion."

"Ah! but you can't help it, you see," returned Buswell. "A public man, Mr. Segrave, has no private affairs." And as if to illustrate his dictum, Mr. Buswell, who had been staring fixedly at his entertainer during the last few minutes, went on, "You've got a nasty bump right in the middle of your forehead, I see. What have you been doing to yourself? Not been running up against anybody's fist, I 'ope."

Gilbert ground his teeth, but did not lose his temper. "I met with a slight accident yesterday," he said, "and I am afraid I shall hardly be fit to show myself upon a platform for a day or two. In fact, I was thinking of asking you whether our meeting for to-morrow might not be postponed."

"I dare say we can manage to get you excused from attending the meeting," replied Mr. Buswell, with a short laugh. "So you met with an accident, did you? Well, well, accidents will 'appen in the best reg'lated families. Your brother arrived yesterday, I'm told. Now, if there's been anything in the natur' of a fracas between you and 'im—"

"There has been nothing of the kind," interrupted Gilbert, "and you must excuse my adding that that is a very impertinent suggestion."

"No offence, sir; we're all of us liable to have turbulent relatives, and a cousin of my own was in the county gaol not so many years ago. But I'm glad I was mistaken in my little conjectur', because any such episode at a time like this would perdooce a painful impression. Not, to be sure, that you could stand much lower in the public estimation than you do already. As I was saying just now, pop'lar opinion is very adverse to you, sir; and then it's openly asserted—mind, I don't make myself responsible for the truth of the assertion—that you've been making up to our friend Miss 'Untley ever since she

bought the Manor 'Ouse property from your brother. I suppose if that has been said to me once, it has been said a 'undred times; and what's the good of my answering that you're incapable of the action? Bless you! they only laugh at me, and say they know better."

"Perhaps I shall find out presently what you are driving at," remarked Gilbert. "In the meantime, allow me to tell you that this assumption of innocent probity on your part has a somewhat grotesque effect. I think you must be forgetting that there is nobody in the room but ourselves. Whether I have or have not been 'making up' to Miss Huntley, as you elegantly phrase it, there is something rather comical in your professing to think me incapable of the very action which you have been urging me to commit from the first day when you undertook to support my candidature."

"Not me, Mr. Segrave," returned Buswell emphatically. "I grant you that when you was a free man I advised you to marry Miss 'Untley, and very sound advice it was too; but you wouldn't be guided by me, and you went and engaged yourself to Miss Greenwood instead. Well and good; you were free to choose; and the only remark I made to you on the subject was, that if Kingscliff didn't get the Manor 'Ouse estate through you, a fairish number of Kingscliff voters might think you wasn't the right man to represent 'em. Just what they 'ave thought! Well, you might 'ave persuaded Miss 'Untley to sell, and if you had dropped a thousand or two over the transaction, that'd have been the price you'd have had to pay for your fancy; but—"

"Do you mean to tell me that that was what you advised?" interrupted Gilbert.

"Just so, sir; that and nothing else. Now look 'ere, Mr. Segrave; I'm a peaceable citizen, and as such I make it a rule to keep a civil tongue in my 'ead; but if any man accuses me of 'aving advised him to play a dirty trick, why, I don't see what I'm to do in justice to myself except give him the lie direct."

This only was wanting. After having been scornfully rejected by Beatrice, knocked down by Mitchell, and magnanimously preserved from a thrashing by Brian, to be called a liar by Mr. Buswell was no more than might have been expected. For one moment Gilbert thought of doing as he had been done by and reverting to the use of those simple weapons with which Nature has supplied us for our protection, but this was

only a fleeting impulse. If he yielded to it and laid that fat old man sprawling upon the floor, he would only have to pick him up again, and subsequently explain to all whom it might concern (in other words, to all Kingscliff) why he had been guilty of such a startling breach of hospitality. Besides, as a matter of fact, Buswell was in the right. He had never in so many words given the counsel attributed to him; possibly he had never even hinted at it. Gilbert could not feel quite sure upon the point, nor, in his present pass, could he feel it to be of any great importance.

"We won't quarrel over it, Mr. Buswell," he said mildly. "I may have misunderstood you; at any rate, since I am not going to marry Miss Huntley, there is no need to say anything about dirty tricks. It would be more to the purpose, perhaps, if you would tell me the object of your visit. Because I see that you have one."

Mr. Buswell's countenance exhibited some return of the embarrassment which had been visible upon it at the beginning of the interview. "Well, sir," he answered, "there was an informal meeting of the party last night, and in consequence of what took place there I have come, in an informal and personal capacity, to suggest to you that you should withdraw your candidature."

Gilbert had more than half suspected that this was coming. After remaining silent for a few seconds he asked, "And upon what grounds, Mr. Buswell, do you suggest that I should retire?"

"Upon any grounds that you may please to select, sir," answered Mr. Buswell, who perhaps had not anticipated so gentle a response. "I should put it upon 'ealth, if I was you; but I don't know as it matters much. Whatever excuse you may make will meet with no contradiction from me, you may depend."

"You don't quite understand me," said Gilbert. "I meant to ask why you have developed this sudden anxiety to get me off your hands?"

"Because we have ascertained that we can't return you sir—that's why. It's the fishermen and sailors that have cooked your goose. Miss Greenwood had got all their votes for you as safe as could be, and now they swear they'll vote for Giles to a man. If you doubt me, just go and ask 'em. On second thoughts, though, I shouldn't recommend you to do that. They're a rough lot, those fishermen, and you've put their backs up, Mr. Segrave, I can tell you. The bad

feeling ain't confined to them either, though it's stronger in their quarter than in any other. From what I gathered yesterday, there are many staunch Liberals in other parts of the town who wouldn't give their votes for a Tory, but who would rather not go to the poll at all than give 'em for you."

Gilbert turned a shade paler. For a man who loved popularity this was not very agreeable news. "You are supplying me," he remarked, "with very strong arguments in favour of fighting the election out. To withdraw in the face of such an opposition as you describe would be tantamount to admitting that I had done something to deserve it."

"Maybe so," answered Mr. Buswell bluntly, "but we can't help that. We have the interests of the party to consider, and if you won't take a friendly 'int and retire voluntarily, we shall 'ave to request you to go in a more or less public manner."

"And if I decline to comply with that request?"

"You couldn't very well decline; but if you did, I believe we should start our own candidate, and the seat would go to Giles. You wouldn't be well advised in adopting that course, Mr. Segrave, take my word for it. It would be remembered against you that you had split up the party, and that wouldn't 'elp your chance with another constituency at some future time. What's more, we should be obliged, in self-defence, to make known our reasons for chucking you overboard—which, I expect, you wouldn't like."

"You have found your candidate, I presume?" Gilbert observed, after a moment or two of troubled reflection.

"Well, yes; we 'ave. Believe me or not, as you like, Mr. Segrave, but I don't want to enter Parliament just at present. I can't well afford to give up the time to it, nor yet I don't see what I shall gain by it. But it has been put to me that, as nobody else could stand, with any chance of success, so late in the day, I didn't ought to 'old back."

Gilbert saw that he was beaten.

"I admire your public spirit, Mr. Buswell," said he, "and I feel that it ought not to be balked of its legitimate reward. But if I retire in your favour, it must be distinctly understood that I retire of my own accord, not in consequence of any charges that may have been brought against me."

"I haven't brought no charges," Mr. Buswell declared. "I told you what the pop'lar opinion was, that's all."

"Very well; but I think I may fairly ask

you to do something towards correcting that popular opinion."

Not a little to Gilbert's surprise, Mr. Buswell flatly declined to make this concession, alleging that he had not sufficient knowledge of the circumstances to justify him in accepting a brief on behalf of the accused, and adding that, according to his experience, facts were best left to speak for themselves. It seemed, indeed, that having gained the object of his visit, he was anxious to bring it to an end without delay; nor did his host care to detain him. He left the house five minutes later, being authorised to state that an address to the electors, announcing Mr. Segrave's withdrawal, should be in the hands of the printers before nightfall.

CHAP. XLVI.—VESTIGIA NULLA RETRORSUM

FOR more than half an hour after Mr. Buswell had left him, Gilbert sat motionless before his writing-table, his head supported by his hand, and his eyes fixed upon vacancy. Then he rose, heaved a long sigh, and passing through the hall, where he picked up a hat, sauntered aimlessly out into the open air. The day was still and misty; the sea was as smooth as a lake; the faint yellow sunshine had no warmth in it, though it softened the grimness of the old grey mansion and lent a melancholy beauty to the coast-line. To Gilbert's eyes there was a great deal more of melancholy than of beauty in the scene. He walked slowly down to the lower bowling-green and then, facing about, looked up at the great, empty home of his ancestors, which met his gaze with a stolid, uncompromising indifference. A sudden loathing for the place and everything connected with it took possession of him; he would have shaken his fist at it if he had been sure that none of the housemaids were looking out from the bedrooms, which had to be swept and dusted, though no one ever occupied them. That dismal abode, it seemed to him, had been the source and origin of all his woes; it was for the sake of Beckton and the lands appertaining thereto that he had run the risk and incurred the penalty of total shipwreck. If only he had been content to take his younger son's portion and make his way in the world like other younger sons, he would doubtless have married his own love in due season, he would have kept the friends of his youth, he would perhaps have got into Parliament without having to abase himself before Buswell, he would not have been tempted by Miss Huntley's gold, nor duped by her transparent guile.

Failure and detection are said to incite to remorse. That they promote a very speedy and sincere regret we may be sure; and Gilbert, when he thought of the events which had taken place since his father's death, wished from the bottom of his heart that he could make the world a year younger and begin all over again. It is, of course, never too late to mend; but amendment is not the same thing as a fresh start; what has been done cannot be undone, nor its consequences obliterated; so that, to practical men like Gilbert Segrave, sorrow over the unalterable past is apt to appear a fruitless and foolish emotion. Nevertheless, he sat down upon the grey granite balustrade and was very sorry—sorry for Kitty, sorry in some degree for Brian, but above all sorry for himself. Whether he had deserved ill-luck or not, there was no denying that he had been singularly unlucky; he had been deprived of everything that had hitherto made life sweet to him, and the future was so gloomy and so uncertain that it seemed hardly worth while to attempt any forecast of it.

After a time, some slight noise caused him to look up, and on doing so he became aware that his brother was standing close beside him.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" he said rather irritably. "You seem to have acquired a new habit of springing suddenly out of the bowels of the earth."

"I beg your pardon if I startled you," said Brian; "I caught sight of you as I was crossing the park, so that I thought it wasn't necessary to go through the formality of ringing the bell and asking whether you were at home."

"Not in the least necessary; and I don't know why you should apologise for announcing yourself, now that I am alone and disengaged, as you see. You didn't scruple to do so yesterday, when I was neither the one nor the other."

"I was obliged to stop it, Gilbert. You would have done the same if you had seen a man twice my size pitching into me."

"How do you know that? I think I should at least have allowed you a chance of standing up for yourself. You meant well, I have no doubt; but you never in your life served me a worse turn than when you prevented me from hitting that man—who, by the way, isn't quite twice my size. Thanks to you, he will be able to tell everybody now that he knocked me down and that I have never called him to account for it."

"I don't think he will do that," said Brian;

"he knows that you were ready enough to fight him, and that it is no fault of yours if he hasn't taken back a black eye to Berwick with him."

"Oh, he has gone back to Berwick, then?"

"Yes; I persuaded him to go. He told me to say that if you wanted him, you knew where he was to be found, or something to that effect. He was bound to say that much; but I hope you'll take no notice of his message, Gilbert."

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders, without replying.

"You see," Brian went on—for he could not help being aware that if he himself had been assaulted he would have allowed no man to talk him out of his right of retaliation, "you see, it isn't as if he doubted your pluck or as if he had attacked you in any public place. Nobody but ourselves knows, or ever will know, what occurred; and it is so much better to avoid a row which might get into the newspapers, and"—

"My dear fellow," interrupted Gilbert, "pray don't trouble yourself to provide me with excuses; I don't require your eloquent reasoning to convince me that I must pocket the insult. When one has been insulted all round one ceases to be particular as to a kick more or less. Perhaps I might have been feeling a shade less humiliated at the present moment if you had kindly allowed me to fight my own battle yesterday, that's all. It was bad luck for me that you should have turned up at that particular moment; but I am not in luck just now. Talking of that, why did you turn up, and where did you come from?"

"I'm staying at the Royal for a day or two," answered Brian, glad to change the subject. "I rather wanted to see you about something."

"You might have done me the honour to accept my humble hospitality; but never mind. What is it that you want to see me about?"

Brian fidgeted for a minute and then sat down on the balustrade beside his brother. "Gilbert," he began, "may I speak plainly to you?"

"Please avail yourself of that privilege. Others have done so pretty freely of late, and I am accustomed to it."

"Well, it's about the Manor House. I sold the place because I was so hard up at the time that I was driven into selling by sheer necessity; but since then I have made a little money, and am likely to make more;

and— In short, I should like to get it back again if I could."

"Yes?" said Gilbert. "Well, I have some reason to think that your ambition may be gratified before very long. You have my best wishes at all events."

"You don't want to keep the property yourself then?" asked Brian, eagerly.

"Keep it? I haven't got it. If I had I should probably dispose of it to the highest bidder. Buswell, or yourself, as the case might be."

"Exactly; and I don't want it to go to Buswell. I know you don't feel as I do about these things; and I quite understand that it may be to your interest to conciliate Buswell; but after all, there is another side to the question. It wouldn't be quite pleasant to you to have a row of cheap villas run up so close to your gates, would it? And even if Buswell were disappointed, surely he wouldn't use his influence to prevent your being returned. He has had his own way in a good many matters, and I should think you might fairly represent to him that he couldn't expect to have it in everything."

"Buswell always gets what he wants. Whether the Manor House will prove an exception or not I really don't know; but let me remind you once more that the Manor House doesn't belong to me, but to Miss Huntley."

"Isn't that much the same thing?" asked Brian. "You said I might speak plainly."

"I see," answered Gilbert, with a slight smile, "that you require to be posted up in the latest intelligence. You behold in me, my dear Brian, the victim of one of the simplest plots that ever was devised. You may have noticed, perhaps, that the simplest plots are usually the most successful. Clever people, like myself, are not on their guard against them. We flatter ourselves that when our neighbours want to make fools of us they will pay us the compliment of displaying a little ingenuity in their designs. If we wish to arrive at their motives we set to work to burrow scientifically beneath the surface; we are too sharp to waste our time in examining what stares us in the face. That is why I was ridiculously taken aback when Miss Huntley was so kind as to tell me that, upon the whole, she would rather marry a convict than me."

"Did she say that?" exclaimed Brian.

"She did indeed; and I must own that the expression seemed to me to be unwar-
rantably strong. However, it had the advan-

tage of leaving me in no doubt as to her sentiments."

"But then, why did she —?"

"Quite so. I appreciate the delicacy which restrains you from filling up the blank; but you would not have hurt my feelings very much if you had. I put the question to her at full length. I asked her why she had led me into behaving like a scoundrel, and in reply she politely gave me to understand that I had behaved like what I am. Consequently that, having a regard for Miss Greenwood, she considered any measures permissible which might result in saving Miss Greenwood from becoming my wife."

"That might be the truth, you know," observed Brian, musingly; for at the moment he was thinking more of Beatrice than of his brother's reputation.

"It might; but as I am relieved from any obligation of extreme courtesy towards Miss Huntley, I will permit myself to say that I don't think it was."

"I can't imagine what other object she can have had," Brian declared.

"I suppose you can't. You will be able to imagine soon, though, if I am not very much mistaken. Do you know, Brian, I am fully persuaded in my own mind that before you are many months older you will have regained possession of the Manor House without having paid a penny for it. You don't understand? Perhaps that is because you are like me, and neglect to notice what lies before your nose. How was I to guess that she bought the Manor House with a secret intention of restoring it to its former owner some fine day? I thought she was ambitious; I thought she was anything rather than sentimental; I overlooked the fact that she is a woman."

"And do you really suppose," cried Brian, indignantly, "that I would accept such a gift if it were offered to me?"

Gilbert laughed. "Not by itself, perhaps," he answered; "but sometimes the whole is less than the half. Would you refuse the Manor House and all that it contains, including its mistress? If you would, your feelings must have undergone a change during the last twelvemonth; and it is only just to you to say that you are not changeable."

Brian wrinkled up his forehead and looked in a puzzled way at his brother, who looked back at him with a mixture of mockery and amusement which he was unable to interpret. "I suppose I am very dull and matter-of-fact," he said at length, "but I don't see the joke. Of course you don't seriously mean that that offer will ever be made to me?"

"Well, hardly; it isn't usual, you know, for offers of that particular kind to be made by the lady; and free as Miss Huntley is from conventional prejudices, she will probably expect you to speak the first word. But I presume that you are equal to that effort."

Brian rose, paced up and down the grass for a few moments and then resumed his seat on the balustrade. He was not sure whether his brother was laughing at him or not; and he said so.

"I am not laughing at you," answered Gilbert; "I am not in a particular hilarious mood. If you insist upon unequivocal language, here it is for you. With or without reason, Miss Huntley is of opinion that I defrauded you of your rights by taking what my father's will gave me, and that I afterwards turned you out into the world to sink or swim, as the case may be. If she virulently detests me on that account, I suppose it is because she doesn't precisely detest you. She was determined to ruin me; and though she didn't adopt the most honourable method in the world of achieving that aim, she has been very fairly successful. Let us put it that I deserved to be ruined; that will help to remove any possible misgivings that you may feel as to her strict integrity. In sober earnest, Brian, all that she has done has been done for your sake."

"I think you are mistaken," said Brian, after a short pause.

"And I am sure that I am not. She betrayed herself yesterday in a way that there was no mistaking; though she protested—probably with more or less sincerity—that her only wish had been to do Kitty Greenwood a true service. But you had better go and see her. As I said before, you have my best wishes. I am perfectly disinterested in the matter. I don't care who marries Miss Huntley, I don't care who gets the Manor House; and I don't care who represents this delightful district in the next Parliament. I am going to get out of it. To-morrow morning the electors will hear without regret that I have retired in favour of a more popular candidate. Fancy Buswell being a more popular candidate! But he is; he assures me of it, and he ought to know. Yes; I am retiring in favour of Buswell, and in two or three days' time I hope to be in Paris. I shall make a lengthened tour abroad, and when I return to England I don't think it will be to Kingscliff that I shall return. Have you still any fancy for being Squire of Beckton, Brian? If you

have, I dare say we might come to an arrangement. Money will soon be no object with you."

Brian made no reply to this suggestion, which indeed he had scarcely heard. His heart was grieved for Gilbert, whose mortification was but thinly veiled by an assumption of ironical indifference, and whose various shortcomings had, as it seemed to him, been punished to the full extent demanded by poetical justice. Standing there, in front of the old house where Gilbert and he had played together as children, and upon the very spot from which they had been wont to bowl lobs to one another at a somewhat more advanced age, a host of memories crowded upon him, sweeping away the doubts and resentments of recent days. He had an obstinate, invincible faith in those whom he loved; he had not the power which some people have of bestowing his affections upon the worthy and withdrawing them from the unworthy. He could be indignant enough with baseness and treachery; but no traitor would be likely to ask his pardon in vain. His habit of mind was not logical; he could not see that a man who is capable of certain ignoble actions must by that very fact be incapable of any real nobility. He asked no more of any offender than to say "I am sorry," nor wanted stronger support for the assertion than the offender's word. So he laid his hand upon his brother's shoulder and said:

"Gilbert, old fellow, this has been a bad job; but I don't think you meant to—to—I don't think you have been quite yourself, you know, of late. Can't we let bygones be bygones and start afresh?"

Gilbert glanced up at him with raised brows. "In what sense?" he inquired.

"I mean, wouldn't it be possible for you and Kitty to come together again?"

"Oh, dear, no! *vestigia nulla retrorsum*. I couldn't if I would, and I wouldn't if I could. If Miss Huntley was right in nothing else, she was right in saying that that marriage would have turned out unhappily. No, my dear Brian; there can be no fresh start of that kind for me; I'm not sure that there can be a fresh start of any kind. I shall go abroad, and then, after a time, I shall come back again; and then—well, I don't know what I shall do then; but I shan't inhabit Beckton any more. You and Miss Huntley had better buy the place; you shall have it at a reasonable figure."

This proposal to sell him a property which he still believed to be morally and equitably

his own would once have struck Brian as the extremity of impudence; but he had got past that phase of feeling. "Miss Huntley and I are not likely to make any joint purchases," he said hurriedly; "and Beckton mustn't be allowed to stand empty for years. Look here, Gilbert; I want to be friends with you again. We haven't been friends for a long time, and I know that has been principally my fault. There's no use in discussing what is over and done with; but we might agree to pass the sponge over it, might we not?"

Gilbert was a little touched. "What a stupid fellow you are, Brian!" said he, smiling. "You are always doing the wrong thing at the wrong time. Who ever heard of offering peace to an enemy just after he had had a crushing fall!"

"But you are not my enemy," said Brian.

"Am I not? Miss Huntley would tell you a different story. Well, never mind; Miss Huntley can't prevent our being friends for the next hour, anyhow. Come in and have some lunch, Brian. Who knows whether we shall ever sit down at the same table again, you and I?"

CHAPTER XLVII.—MOONLIGHT.

THE daylight was already fading when Brian started to walk back to Kingscliff. It was for Kingscliff that he was bound; but in order to reach that place he must of necessity pass the Manor House, and the question was whether he should or should not turn aside there. His ideas were a little confused after a long talk with Gilbert; he had clean forgotten, for the time being, the business which had brought him down from London; he was conscious, too, of a certain light-heartedness which self-examination showed to be not wholly due to joy at being reconciled with his brother. "Surely," he thought, "I can't be such a fool as to believe that she planned poor Gilbert's fiasco because she thought that he had behaved badly to me! Surely I can't be deluding myself into imagining that she cares for me because she has refused him!"

He was able to acquit himself of that culpable fatuity. As the result of further self-examination, he became convinced that what made him see a new and strange beauty in the familiar landscape, and caused him to draw the keen air into his lungs with a sense of refreshment and exhilaration which he certainly had not derived from it earlier in the day, was by no means a wild hope for the unattainable, but the recovery of his lost

ideal. True it was that Beatrice had fallen into some deplorable errors in judgment; but to err is human, and it is obvious that there is all the difference in the world between errors committed for the sake of others, and those which are the offspring of selfishness or indifference. If Miss Huntley had undertaken a task which must have been exceedingly distasteful to her and for which she must have known that she would never be thanked, did it not follow that, although her mode of operation might be condemned, she herself was entitled to the admiration which is the due of all disinterested blunderers, from Don Quixote downwards? One deprecates murder, but one applauds Charlotte Corday; and the splendid mendacity of the daughter of Danaüs has, as we know, conferred upon her a title of nobility for all time. Brian, reasoning thus, remembered to have said that he would be ashamed of himself if he continued to love a woman who had acted as Miss Huntley had done; and now he felt ashamed of himself for having said so. What is the first duty of a man who is ashamed of having wronged his neighbour? Evidently to go and express contrition to the neighbour whom he has wronged.

So it came to pass that the sinking sun saw our hero walking with a brisk step up the avenue which leads to the Manor House. His heart was beating fast, but not with apprehension; he was eager to ask pardon, eager also to accord it. It did not occur to him that both request and boon might be disdained by a lady whom circumstances had bitterly incensed against him.

He was within a couple of hundred yards of the house when all of a sudden he was brought face to face with her. Beatrice, who had remained indoors all the afternoon, had taken it into her head that a turn in the garden might relieve the nervous restlessness from which she was suffering; but she had not bargained for an encounter which had the effect of depriving her momentarily of her presence of mind; inasmuch that Brian shook hands with her before she could stop him. However, this familiarity on his part reminded her of what was due to herself, and she said freezingly:

"You are on your way to call upon me, I suppose? I am sorry that I am just going out; but I think you will find Miss Joy at home."

"Are you in a great hurry?" asked Brian, less discouraged by this unfriendly reception than she had intended him to be. "Perhaps you would let me walk a little

way with you. I particularly want to say something to you, and I shall be going back to London to-morrow morning."

She assumed an air of resignation. "I am not exactly in a hurry," she answered; "but, to tell you the truth, I am rather tired, and I did not mean to see any visitors to-day."

"I won't keep you long. I would go away at once; only it may be months before we meet again; and after what I heard from Gilbert this afternoon——"

"Excuse my interrupting you; but I think you ought to be cautioned that your brother's statements are not to be depended upon. If you have come here to repeat anything that he has told you about me you have come upon a very foolish errand, and I hope you will think better of it. One doesn't care to listen to falsehoods which are too malicious and too palpable to be worth contradicting."

Brian's heart sank a little. He could not mistake her meaning, nor had he permitted himself to hope that there could be any foundation for his brother's startling surmise; still it was not quite agreeable to him to hear it disposed of in that very contemptuous fashion. "Gilbert said nothing malicious about you," he answered humbly; "he told me that you had refused to marry him; and—and all that he said made me feel that I had no right to speak to you as I did the last time that I saw you in Park Lane. I wanted to ask you to forgive me, and let me take back my words."

"You are very kind; and naturally I can have no objection to your withdrawing any expressions which you may feel bound to withdraw. At the same time, I don't quite see why you should do so. You knew me so little as to suppose that I should marry your brother, which was a poor compliment to my taste, but hardly a reason for regarding me with righteous horror. What I understood you to condemn was my having taken advantage of his predatory instincts to persuade him into breaking with Kitty Greenwood; and I am just as guilty of that misdemeanour now as I was then."

"But it was out of kindness to her that you did it," broke in Brian eagerly. "I ought to have seen that at the time, and I am very sorry that I didn't see it. That is what I came here to say."

"Well," answered Beatrice somewhat mollified, "I suppose I ought to thank you for taking so much trouble. But I must own that I should have felt more grateful if you

had believed in my being disinterested from the first, instead of waiting to be convinced by facts."

"I was wrong; I acknowledge it. But—why didn't you tell me that I was wrong when I asked you?"

"I told you nothing but the truth; I wasn't bound to tell you the whole truth. Perhaps you wouldn't have believed it if I had. No one else believes it—not even Mr. Monckton—and I suppose no one ever will. Are you sure that you yourself believe it even now?"

"I firmly believe," answered Brian, "that your one wish from first to last has been to put a stop to what you thought would be an unhappy marriage; and I believe that you would never have taken this way of putting a stop to it if it hadn't seemed to you to be the only practicable one."

"Ah! you consider it very objectionable, then? So do I, for the matter of that. But it has succeeded."

"Yes," agreed Brian doubtfully, "it has succeeded."

During this colloquy they had been pacing slowly along, side by side, neither of them paying much attention to the direction in which they were walking. They now perforce came to a standstill, for they had reached the end of one of the paths which, winding through the shrubberies that surround the Manor House, leads to the brink of the cliff, and is terminated by a low wall and a semi-circular stone bench. The twilight was fast deepening into darkness; the full moon had risen above the headland beyond Beckton, and was shining, large and ruddy, through the mist; the sea was so calm that only a faint whisper of breaking water arose from the beach beneath.

"Do you think," asked Beatrice, turning suddenly towards her companion, "that I was right or wrong in this matter?"

"Don't ask me to say anything that may offend you," he replied. "I am going away in a few minutes, and if we ever meet after this it will probably be in London, where you won't have time to do more than speak a word or two to me. I don't want to offend you again at the last moment. And what, after all, can my opinion signify to you?"

"Not much, perhaps; still I wish to have it. You are less likely to offend me by speaking out than by keeping silence."

"Well, then, I can only say that I think you were wrong. You may have done Miss Greenwood a service, and I dare say you

have; but in order to do her that service you have pretty nearly ruined Gilbert. You don't seem to have considered him at all."

"Oh, yes, I did; I considered his case in all its bearings, and I am very sure that he has got no more than his deserts."

"He is in worse trouble than you think perhaps. The simple truth is, that you have made the place too hot to hold him. He has had to give up his candidature, and he means to go abroad at once. Indeed, he says he shall never live here again."

"I am delighted to hear it," answered Beatrice remorselessly. "If you have nothing worse than that to reproach me with, I can accept your rebuke without losing my temper. Is that all?"

"Yes, that is all; except that I should like just to tell you how miserable it has made me to doubt you, and that I shall never doubt you again, and—that I shall always love you as long as I live. You don't mind my saying that as my last word, do you?"

He held out his hand to her and, after a moment of hesitation, she took it silently.

It is quite possible that, if there had been no moon that night, the interview would have closed then and there; but the moon, as has been said, was at the full; and so it came to pass that Brian made an amazing discovery. What was it that he saw in Miss Huntley's face? He has never been able to answer satisfactorily, although he has since been subjected to a searching cross-examination on the point. It cannot have been only that there was an unmistakable glitter of tears on her eyelashes, for that of itself could hardly have been enough to warrant the conviction which he appears to have instantly formed.

"Beatrice!" he ejaculated.

She drew back, exclaiming, "No!—no!" and trying to regain possession of the hand which he continued to hold.

But it is in vain that the tongue denies what the features have revealed; nor is a diffident suitor one whit less masterful than a bold one from the moment he sees victory within his grasp. Not five minutes had elapsed before Miss Huntley had been reduced from a position of commanding superiority to one of the humblest submission.

"Let me go, Brian!" she entreated; "it is most unfair to take advantage of what you were never meant to know. I can't do as you wish—how can I? Don't you see what horrid things people will say about me?"

"No, indeed I don't. Besides, who cares what they say?"

"Not you; that is very plain. But I do. I don't want it to be said that I was scheming and plotting for this all along—and after what I told Mr. Monckton only this morning too! Oh, no; I cannot possibly do it! And don't you know that you will certainly be accused of having married an heiress for the sake of her money? Have you no shame?"

"Not an atom. The only person in the world whose opinion I value in the least at this moment is yourself. Tell me truly, Beatrice, when did you first begin to care for me?"

"I don't know; I can't get at my watch. I suppose about ten minutes ago. Well, if it was before that I was quite unconscious of it—almost unconscious, anyhow. Now, Brian, you know perfectly well that I fully intended to marry Stapleford, and if he had only had the patience to wait until I had carried out my schemes down here, I would have married him."

"I don't believe it," answered Brian coolly.

"You are getting on, I must say! It isn't half an hour yet since you were ready to believe anything and everything that I told you. One thing you must and shall believe, or I will never speak to you again—it is a gross calumny to pretend that I tried to ruin your brother because he had tried to ruin you."

"I am quite sure it is," Brian declared.

"Not that that would have been anything more than strict justice. And now I suppose you will make me forgive him; it will be only one among the many bitter pills that I shall have to swallow. Oh, Brian, if you knew how glad I am to have found my master! Women ought never to be independent; I told you so long ago, and I am afraid I have done a good deal to prove it. You won't expect too much of me, will you?—or be disappointed when you find out, as, of course, you must soon, what I am?"

"I know already what you are," answered Brian confidently.

And he proceeded to make statements in support of his assertion, which may as well be omitted, since, to tell the truth, they were absurd in substance and hyperbolic in language. They did not, however, seem to displease Beatrice, for she protested against them, and laughed at them with every appearance of contentment, until Miss Joy, who had been prowling about the garden for some time past in search of her charge, sud-

denly and most indiscreetly emerged from behind a bush.

Miss Joy had one little foible; she liked to think that she could see farther through a brick wall than her neighbours. Therefore, although there probably was not at that moment a more astonished woman than she within the four seas, she displayed much presence of mind by observing calmly, "I expected this!"

"Oh, Matilda!" exclaimed Beatrice, starting up and enfolding her friend in a close embrace (possibly with a view to concealing her own cheeks), "where do you think that you will go when you die? Nothing of this kind *could* have been foreseen by anybody!"

"It was foreseen by me," persisted Miss Joy in a muffled voice, "and you need not try to choke me, my dear, because you will not prevent my saying that it is what I have hoped and prayed for from the very first."

"Even when Stapleford stood so high in your favour, Miss Joy?" Brian could not help asking.

"Yes, Mr. Segrave, even then. And I challenge you to deny that at that very time I told you that in my opinion you were better suited to Beatrice than anybody else."

"I believe you said I might be, under certain non-existent conditions."

"Both the conditions! Besides, they have come into existence. A great composer, who is a gentleman by birth, can't be classed below a penniless viscount. Well, young people, I hope you will be as happy as you deserve to be, which is saying a good deal. You will let an old woman come and stay with you sometimes, won't you?"

"You will live with us always, Matilda," returned Beatrice decisively. "Brian, do you hear? Matilda is to live with us always, or the engagement is off."

Brian made the only reply that could be made; but Miss Joy nodded reassuringly at him over Beatrice's shoulder. She was neither young enough nor foolish enough to attempt what has never yet been attempted with success since the world began.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—CONCLUSION.

A CHANGE of candidates at the eleventh hour is apt to be disastrous to the political party whose interests are at stake; and this may perhaps account for the result of the Kingscliff election, which placed Mr. Giles at the head of the poll by a narrow majority. Buswell thinks otherwise. He says that he approached victory much more nearly than Gilbert Segrave would have done, and attri-

butes his defeat simply and solely to the fact that he was unable to hold out any immediate prospect of improvement to the borough by the addition to it of the Manor House property. He still asserts that he means to have that property, sooner or later, and has no doubt but that he will get it; which shows a sanguine spirit on his part, seeing that Mr. and Mrs. Brian Segrave have taken up their permanent residence there. His contention, however, is that the force of circumstances will drive them some day to Beckton, which has remained untenanted since Gilbert's departure, and that they will not then continue blind to the necessities and deaf to the entreaties of an entire town. Meanwhile, he is doing the best that he can for the said town and at the same time is not doing badly for himself. Quite recently he has received the honour of knighthood; nobody exactly knows why. But it has ceased to be necessary to assign reasons for the bestowal of these distinctions, and probably it is only due to Buswell's native modesty that he has not been made a baronet.

Brian and Beatrice were married at St. Michael's, one winter morning, quite quietly; that is to say, that not more than three hundred persons witnessed the ceremony. Indeed, it is not easy to be married quietly anywhere out of London. The bridegroom's brother was not present, being abroad at the time; but Mr. Phipps was good enough to undertake the duties of best man, and Sir Joseph Huntley gave away the bride.

Lady Clementina, though not enchanted with her sister-in-law's choice, was fain to submit to it and to acknowledge that of the two Segrave brothers, Brian was at least the more desirable. "I can't understand why you are marrying him, Beatrice," she said, with engaging frankness; "but I have given

up trying to understand why you do anything. He tells me he is not a Radical, which is some comfort, and to do him justice, I don't think he is a fortune-hunter. Indeed, it is rather an unfortunate thing for him to have come into a fortune; for, of course, he will give up composing music now and will sink into obscurity."

Whether the latter part of this prediction will be fulfilled or not time alone can show: the first has not been and will not be. Brian will always compose for the pleasure of composing, and if he is not very ambitious, his wife has ambition enough for two.

Gilbert has not yet returned to England. He is visiting India and the Colonies, and will doubtless have a store of valuable information relating to some of our more troublesome dependencies to lay before the next House of Commons. Beatrice trusts that he will not hurry back. She will find it easier to give him a sisterly welcome, she thinks, if before he reaches home she has been able to bring her scheme to a successful termination by marrying Kitty to Mitchell. It is not at all unlikely that her hopes will be realised. At any rate, Kitty is once more her bosom friend, and she has induced Captain Mitchell to pay a long visit to the Manor House.

Brian doubted the wisdom of this course, urging that a little longer time should be allowed to the poor girl to forget her old love; but he was promptly and even scornfully overruled by Mrs. Segrave.

"Why, you goose!" she exclaimed, "she has been in love with Captain Mitchell all along; only she didn't know it. Now, my dear Brian, you really must not set up to be a judge of such matters—you, of all people! You, who couldn't so much as see that I was in love with you, without knowing it, for a year before you proposed to me!"

THE END.

EMERSON.

By FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

CLASSIFICATION is a vital instinct with certain people. They would have strict divisions in farm and garden—no vagrant pumpkin in the corn-field, no climbing vine in the orchard. Authors must be enlisted for some definite branch of the service; historians, poets, novelists, and philosophers are to be told off like different forces of an army. The human mind (in their opinion) is a

domain as well known and mapped as England; or, if it is likened to mechanism, its powers and proclivities are as open to their observation as an electrical machine or rotary press. These people have settled the facts of history, the problems of the soul, and the verdicts of science. Napoleon, Cæsar, Cromwell, Judas, Descartes, Spinoza, Darwin, Comte, and Marie Stuart, are so many names

for *procès verbaux*, docketed and pigeon-holed, about which no doubt exists. Such people have their preacher and physician, their special tailor and bootmaker, their great actor and singer, their stock of old stories, their summer retreat, their great statesman, and his counterpart, the great demagogue. They are furnished for all needs, and have no more to learn. The most enterprising literary cheap-jack will cry them his wares in vain. They have taken their opinions and habitudes, like their wives, for better or worse. But method and classification are apt to be upset. The struggle for existence brings continual disorder into husbandry; grass is invaded by daisies and buttercups, corn is elbowed by poppies and wild mustard. Shoemakers sometimes insist on being poets, and blacksmiths pound pulpit-cushions instead of anvils. The human faculties play at bo-peep with the introspective philosopher; they elude analysis and confound tabulation. New discoveries make wrecks of established theories. The *procès verbaux* of history are perpetually re-opened and re-argued. Men and things refuse to stay classified, yet the makers of systems persevere. They do not see that if finality were possible science would stagnate, and the world come to the dead fixity of China. They do not see that every new creative soul possesses a wholly new combination of powers, and may defy all precedent in working out its own course.

It required a long time—the lifetime of a generation—to make an adequate judgment of the genius of Emerson. Few men, singly, were capable of estimating him, so many unusual elements being united in his complex mind. The best opinion seems to be that he is the chief among thinkers and philosophic writers yet born in the New World, and that the British race has produced few such original minds since Lord Bacon.

It is not wonderful that his ideas and works met with a discouraging reception when we consider the intellectual condition of the people among whom he was born, and the various prejudices that inhere in the British Islands. He appeared first as a maker of strange verses and a philosophic essayist of no school. As his verse was of simple measure, formed of words without pomp and glitter; as he mused upon nature, duty, and God, instead of romance or passion; as his thoughts were grave and laconic, or startling by their unexpected lifts and colossal images; the public, which shrinks from a grapple with a robust mind, which is as blind to imagination as Balaam was to the angel

in his way, and which likes to hear all the changes in our clang of rhymes rung over, found him an indifferent poet, and was prepared to believe critics who said he was no poet at all. That he wrote verse of any sort was enough to condemn him with philosophic pedants; and as they could not make out whether he was Cartesian, Kantist, or Hegelian, they drew back, like the farm-yard fowls in Andersen's story, and dismissed the unfledged swan as an ugly duck. The professors say he has had no appreciable influence on mental or moral science, meaning that the instruction trains continue to run on the old rails. Then Matthew Arnold asserts that he is not a great writer; and in the end we are left to fear he has not a leg to stand upon.

Emerson has not attempted to construct a system of philosophy; and until perpetual motion is discovered, the circle squared, poverty cured, and a professional critic satisfied with a book he reviews, I trust the world will not see another. It is joyfully true that his essays cannot be depoeitised for the service of pedagogues, nor made to serve as whetstones to put an edge on dull wits. And if his style does not answer the conditions laid down by Mr. Arnold, we may be comforted by remembering that many of the world's most precious intellectual treasures failed to satisfy the Arnolds of their day. Great works abide, and rhetorical canons give way, as "nice customs curtsy to great kings."

Biographers have studied the character of Emerson's ancestors in order to arrive at the secret of the combination of qualities in him. The laws governing the transmission by descent of mental faculties are always deduced *ex post facto*, and the advent of genius is still a surprise. There were able men among Emerson's progenitors, but no one of them had his imagination, power, or delicacy of perception; and no relative except his two brothers and a sister of his father showed any remarkable talent as a writer.

Emerson was born in Boston, May 25, 1803, in a district now covered by solid warehouses, but which was then almost rural, with its large gardens and its few modest dwellings. As a boy he was high-minded, serious, and gentle; his classmates have spoken of him as "angelic and remarkable," but their reminiscences are scanty and disappointing. In school and college he had a good but not an eminent rank; he tells us that he got more ideas from the "idle books under the desk" than from his appointed studies. His favourite authors were Plato,

St. Augustine, and Jeremy Taylor. At the age of eleven he translated parts of Virgil into English heroics, and at eighteen he completed his course in Harvard College. Like most students of his time he taught school a few years, meanwhile pursuing the study of theology. He was licensed to preach in 1826, being the seventh in descent in a line of clergymen, and was settled in 1829 in Boston as the colleague of Dr. Henry Ware. In the same year he was married; but the pastoral and the marriage relations were of short continuance; his wife died in 1832, and in the same year he resigned his charge, having come to have differences of opinion with his church and with the Unitarian body. In 1833 he visited Italy, France, and England, saw Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, De Quincey, and Carlyle, and preached at Edinburgh. In 1834 he took up his residence in Concord, which had been the home of his ancestors; and he lived there in an old, gambrel-roofed house, built by his grandfather, the house in which he wrote "Nature," and in which Hawthorne afterwards wrote "Mosses from an Old Manse."

Concord, twenty miles north-west of Boston, is a small town with few striking features in its scenery, and few attractions for the tourist, excepting the historic battleground, and the homes and haunts of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau. The village stands in a flat and prosaic region, but within a few miles are wooded hills and numerous lakes, among them the picturesque Walden Pond, on the shore of which Thoreau once lived as a hermit. Wild flowers are abundant in the swamps and meadows along the lazily flowing rivers, the Musketaquid and the Assabet; and the poet, the romancer, and the half-savage recluse were akin in their love of nature, their joy in the "plantations of God," in the song of birds and the pulsing flow of waters.

Emerson was never robust, least of all an athletic woodsman, but he was reasonably active and much abroad, and his minute knowledge of natural objects was marvellous. Though prone to mental abstraction, he was the keenest and most sensitive of observers; in his mind were present every form of plant life, every aspect of cloud and hill, every motion of bird and insect, and every trait of the wild creatures that are usually shut out from human sympathy. Nor was this the result of learned curiosity; it was a passion which led him to ecstasies that appear senseless extravagance to less finely organized minds. His prose and poetry alike are per-

vaded by this abounding joy which finds expression in hyperbole, and which can be appreciated only by those who share his sensibility and feel the glow which inspires his exuberant imagery. Dr. Dryasdust finds it very absurd, and is quite right from his point of view. Every one knows that the passion for natural scenery is modern, hardly more remote than the time of Wordsworth; but great as was the ascendancy of that poet, the battle with the eighteenth century was by no means won when Emerson appeared, certainly not in the United States; and to Emerson, perhaps more than any American writer, is due the revolution in taste and in the judgment of poetry. It was Shakespeare against Boileau and Racine; the Gothic cathedral against the Roman temple; and unadorned nature against a Dutch garden. How complete that revolution was it is difficult to realise without referring to old ideas. It was not merely a change in literary fashions; it went to the foundations. Take this specimen as to scenery.

A British officer stationed in Inverness in 1754, after describing the mountains in the Highlands, "a disagreeable subject which he is tired of," concludes—

"To cast one's Eye from an Eminence toward a Group of them, they appear still one above another, fainter and fainter, according to the arial Perspective, and the whole of a dismal gloomy Brown, drawing upon a dirty Purple; and most of all disagreeable when the Heath is in Bloom. . . . But of all Views I think, the most horrid is to look at the Hills from East to West, or *vice versa*; for then the Eye penetrates far among 'em, and sees more particularly their stupendous Bulk, frightful Irregularity, and horrid Gloom, made yet more *sombrous* by the Shades and faint Reflections they communicate one to another. . . . Now what do you think of a poetical mountain, smooth and easy of Ascent, cloath'd with a verdant flowery Turf, where Shepherds tend the Flocks, sitting under the shade of tall Poplars, &c. ? In short, what do you think of *Richmond Hill*, where we have pass'd so many hours together, delighted with the beautiful Prospect?"

It is only in considering such sentiments that we can appreciate the victory won by Wordsworth, aided so powerfully in America by Emerson. And now when we have an eighteenth-century man, like the author of "Obiter Dicta," estimating Emerson, we should have the means of estimating *him*. The feeling of the British officer in presence of Highland scenery was the feeling of Johnson and Goldsmith; and it was undoubtedly shared by the cultivated men of their time. I cannot imagine anything more comic than the notion of Johnson pummeling a Wordsworth or an Emerson, if such a poet could

have existed a century ago. His voice and his laughter would have been heard from Temple Bar to Ludgate Hill.

But to return to the narrative. Emerson began to deliver lectures in 1834, and this became his main source of income. The fact that his essays were first written to serve as lectures of an hour in length, had a perceptible influence upon their character, and not always to their advantage. In the same year he began his long correspondence with Carlyle. In 1835 he was married to Miss Lydia Jackson of Plymouth, and went to live in the house which was his home for the rest of his life. In the year following he published his first essay, "Nature." It took twelve years to sell the edition of 500 copies. In the same year he wrote the preface to "Sartor Resartus," and his hymn for the dedication of the battle monument. Readers of the Carlyle-Emerson correspondence know that "Sartor Resartus" was first recognised in Boston, and that, by the efforts of Emerson and his friend Dr. Russell, Carlyle received substantial aid at a time when he much needed it. The hymn just mentioned is an almost perfect specimen of art, and one stanza is surely immortal:—

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world."

The first distinct impression made by Emerson upon the cultivated men of his time was by the delivery of an oration in 1837 at Cambridge, upon "The American Scholar." Mr. Lowell mentions this as "an event without any former parallel in our literary annals, a scene to be always treasured in the memory for its picturesqueness and its inspiration." Elsewhere the same author calls it "the first declaration of independence in American letters." Previously the thin volume of "Nature"—less than 100 pages—had appeared harmless enough, but in this bold and stirring discourse conservative hearers might have recognised the force of one of Emerson's sayings: "Beware when God lets loose a thinker on this planet!" Dr. Holmes says of the address, "the young men went out from it as if a prophet had been proclaiming to them 'Thus saith the Lord!' No listener ever forgot that address, and, among all the noble utterances of the speaker, it may be questioned if one contained more truth in language more like that of immediate inspiration."

There was an intellectual ferment in Eastern Massachusetts about this time, with im-

portant, unexpected and sometimes ludicrous results. Doctrines, laws, institutions, and customs were boldly discussed, and societies were organized for the reform of all abuses, and for the cure of all human ills. There is no space in an article like this even to mention them. Certain persons who had been inspired by the preaching of Channing, and by the ideas of Emerson, and who had become students of German poetry and philosophy, when scholars like Everett and Hedge returned from Europe with Jean Paul, Faust and Lessing in their satchels, met occasionally for conversation, and from an adjective then used pretty freely, got the name of the "Transcendental" coterie. One of the leading spirits (after Emerson) was Mr. Alcott, then a school teacher, and another was Margaret Fuller, who was his assistant. Alcott was a brilliant talker, but had written nothing then, nor has he given the world much since. His daughter, Louisa M. Alcott, is well known in many lands as the author of children's stories, among the best of our time. Margaret Fuller, who was reputed to be a prodigy, was also more famous for conversational powers than ability as a writer, and the result of her years of activity, in her six neglected volumes, is now quite disappointing. But in her time, as Yankees say, she "cut a wide swarth." The outcome of the coterie called Transcendental was the establishment in 1840 of a quarterly periodical called *The Dial*, edited at first by Miss Fuller, with the assistance of Emerson, and afterward by Emerson alone. *The Dial* contained articles by George Ripley, Theodore Parker, and Professor Hedge, as well as some thirty poems and essays by Emerson. It struggled four years and then died for want of support. The scarce copies of the bound volumes are now in libraries, and are valued mainly by the lovers of Emerson's poetry. There may be seen as they first appeared, "Each and All," "The Problem," "Woodnotes," and other poems, which many persons maintain to be the most strikingly original and imaginative of the century.

Perhaps the reader will be pleased to see what Emerson has to say of the transcendental philosophy:

"What is popularly called transcendentalism among us is idealism; idealism as it appears in 1842. As thinkers, mankind have ever divided into two sects—Materialists and Idealists; the first class founding on experience, the second on consciousness; the first class beginning to think from the data of the senses; the second class perceiving that the senses are not final, and say, The senses give us representations of things, but what are the things themselves,

they cannot tell. The materialist insists on facts, on history, on the force of circumstances, and the animal wants of man; the idealist on the power of thought and of will, on inspiration, on miracle, on individual culture. These modes of thinking are both natural, but the idealist contends that his way of thinking is in the higher nature."

And at the outset he says that "what are called new views are not new, but the very oldest of thoughts cast into the mould of these new times."

It is not to be supposed that any great portion of Emerson's essays is devoted to the discussion of abstract ideas like the foregoing—the passage has been quoted to explain a much misunderstood term. The most of his writing is of an eminently practical character, not difficult of comprehension by any serious reader, and calculated to inspire noble views of man's life, character, and destiny.

It should here be said that the general order of the composition of the works is the best for the reader to follow; taking "Nature" first, then the first and second series of essays, "Representative Men," "English Traits," "The Conduct of Life," "Society and Solitude," "Letters and Social Aims," lastly the volume of "Biographical Sketches." The poems, of course, *ad libitum*.

Emerson visited England again in 1847, and delivered the lectures which were afterwards printed under the title of "Representative Men," probably the most popular of his works. Most readers prefer the discussion of persons rather than the elucidations of principles, but the real greatness of Emerson is not shown in this book. His observations upon men are interesting, but his judgments are not always to be accepted; and it is incomprehensible to many of his sincere admirers that he should have given so much eulogy, or even space, to dreamers like Swedenborg and Jacob Behmen.

"English Traits" appeared in 1856, the outcome of his visit in 1847. It is quite unlike the ordinary books of travel. It is England boiled down and distilled into original elements. There is some exceedingly plain speech, especially upon the Norman ancestors of the English nobility, but on the whole it is evident that he heartily liked the country, the solidity of character, and feeling of permanence in institutions. The book, considering its brevity, is perhaps the most weighty and best-considered estimate of the country in existence. It is extremely entertaining merely as a piece of pungently

epigrammatic composition. It will be noticed that he let several years pass before printing the results of his observations, and this is only an instance of the care he bestowed on all his works. A very small proportion of the many lectures he wrote were ever printed; but he kept them, re-wrote and condensed them, retaining only the important ideas. The eleven volumes of his works represent the crystallized results of nearly fifty years of labour. Had he considered every scrap of his writing sacred, as Wordsworth did, one dreads to think of the huge collection there would have been left.

"Representative Men" and "English Traits" were published by Phillips, Sampson & Co., who, a few years later, started the *Atlantic Monthly*. Emerson was gratified, and not a little surprised, to receive from them a handsome cheque; he really thought there had been some mistake and made particular inquiry, for this was the first money he had ever received for copyright. His former publishers had printed his books *on his account*, which made a difference! The expenses had always absorbed the whole receipts.

At this period, being the literary adviser of his publishers, I frequently saw him, and have the most vivid recollection of his deep, rich voice, his pleasant smile, and his placid and serene demeanour. He often used homely illustrations, such as one sees in Plato and in the parables of our Lord, but one never had unpleasant associations with anything he uttered.

I asked him one day if "English Traits" was made up from the lectures he had delivered a few winters before.

"Partly so," he answered in his deliberate way, with odd little pauses before emphasized words, "but I have added first a—blade, and then a—handle, until it is no longer the same—jack-knife."

He took a deep interest in the project for establishing the *Atlantic Monthly*, recognising the importance of such an organ of opinion sustained by the leading writers of the North, and he often attended the dinners at which, for some time before its appearance, the periodical was discussed. Writing to me, August 26th, 1856, he said, "I did not receive your note until the Boston train had already gone on Saturday. I am well contented that the club should be solidly organized and grow. I am so irregularly in town that I dare not promise myself a constant member, yet I live so much alone that I set a high value on my social privileges,

and I wish by all means to retain the right of an occasional seat. So, with thanks and best wishes, yours."

The name "club" meant simply a monthly meeting at an hotel of some dozen or fifteen men interested in literature, which occurred once a month on Saturdays, and at an early hour, generally at two or three o'clock. The dishes and service were of the best, but the eating and drinking were of small consequence. The conversation that followed may be imagined by those who know the resources of the guests. There were never any toasts, or speeches, or other formality; the current of talk was as it pleased fortune. Any one who had tried to dominate or to shine, especially if his sentences suggested previous preparation, would have had an uncomfortable time. The chair was generally taken by Longfellow, Holmes, or Lowell. Agassiz and Felton were almost always present; Edmund Quincy, also, who had "the manners of a duke." Whittier sometimes came, but he was usually shy and silent. Judge Hoar, of Concord, a man of incomparable wit, and John S. Dwight, the Nestor of musical journalists, were often at the table. No man enjoyed the dinners more heartily than Emerson. His whole person radiated delight, especially when Holmes and Lowell (as was frequently the case) had a friendly bout. When he was unable to come he scrupulously sent a letter to me, as I had charge of the arrangements. Here are two more, not very important, but everything from him has an interest for those who knew and loved him.

"Concord, 21st November [1857].

"DEAR SIR,—I am sorry I cannot come to town to-day and join your strong party at dinner. I shall be in town on Tuesday probably, and I will not fail to come to your comping-room, and I will think in the meantime what I can do. For what you say of the club dinners, I have no dream of any such self-denying ordinance as you intimate.* There is always a good deal of luck goes to a dinner, and if ours was a heavy one, as you say it was, there is the more reason to believe the luck will turn and be with us next time. But I was in the dark about it, and only regretted that I could not stay longer to hear the stories out. I can send you nothing for the *Atlantic* sooner than the end of the month, but of this I will speak when I see you. Respectfully."

* There had been some talk of dispensing with wine.

"Concord, Friday evening,

"18 Dec. [1857].

"DEAR SIR,—I have been out of town for a few days, and find your messages only now on my return to-night.

"I am sorry you should have deferred the good meeting on my account, for though I cannot help a feast, I hate to hinder one. But if Mr. Lowell and you have chosen that I shall come, I will not stay away, on Monday at 5. You say at *Porter's*, which I suppose to be Porter's at Cambridge. If not, send me word. You are very kind to offer me a bed, but I shall have to go to my old haunts. So with thanks, yours."

I may say in passing that the unique and brilliant dinner at Porter's will never be forgotten by any who were present.

For the first number of the *Atlantic* he sent four short poems, and he continued his contributions for many years.

As time went by something was steadily added to the stock of thought and experience. He wrote a portion of the life of Margaret Fuller (1852). He delivered an address in 1859 on the centenary of Burns that charmed all hearers "as if it had dropped from the clouds." The series of essays on "The Conduct of Life" appeared in 1860. When Lincoln's proclamation of freedom to the slaves went into effect, January 1, 1863, Emerson read in the Music Hall his "Boston Hymn," rugged and grand, as befitted its majestic burden. Three years later he wrote "Terminus" ("It is time to be old"). Melancholy words they were, but uttered with unchanging serenity. In the same year he received the degree of LL.D. from Harvard College. In 1870 was published "Society and Solitude." In July, 1872, his house was nearly destroyed by fire; and being in delicate health, he sailed to Europe in the October following, accompanied by his daughter. He returned in May, 1873, and was received in Concord by a great procession of the townspeople, which, strangely enough, was headed by a military band! Anything more incongruous than the reception of the gentle Emerson, the ideal philosopher, with the clang of martial music, it is difficult to imagine. But it was well meant, and a right hearty welcome they made it, taking their venerated friend and fellow-citizen home under triumphal arches.

There an affecting surprise awaited him. The house had been rebuilt, as he expected; but the expense of building and furnishing

had been defrayed by a committee, partly of his townsmen and partly of admirers in Boston; and in addition a substantial sum—£2,000, I believe—had been placed to his credit in the bank. In the last volume of his works are printed the letters on this subject, showing a praiseworthy delicacy on one side, and a frank and manly gratitude on the other. Everyone was touched by the incident, the right and generous thing done at the right time being, so rare in this world. There was a quick tear, then a glow of pride and a hurrah, as the story sped.

"Parnassus," a collection of English poetry, was published in 1874. It is interesting as a reflection of Emerson's mind and taste, but it is far short of an adequate representation of recognised classic verse. It is pleasant to see what were Emerson's favourites, but few lovers of poetry would be content with the limited number or with the plan of selection. "Letters and Social Aims" is a collection of early essays, partly from *The Dial*, gathered in 1874 by the author's friend, Mr. Cabot, subsequently his literary executor. Emerson was not then capable of continuous labour.

Were it necessary or desirable to give an idea of the scope of the essays from the beginning, the topics treated, the general principles on which they rest, and their mutual relation, the lightest sketch would fill a volume. It is impossible even to touch the subject in the limits allowed me.

His essays and poems grew up together under the same influences. The slips of paper which contained his jottings show that impressions from nature and spiritual thoughts were often transfused—an image of material beauty changing to its spiritual counterpart, and an ethical or philosophical conception taking on a visible form like a parable. The oneness of the poet and philosopher is insisted upon. A passage from the essay on "Idealism" has often been quoted, but it is too significant to be omitted:—"Whilst thus the poet animates nature with his own thoughts, he differs from the philosopher only herein, that the one proposes Beauty as his main end, the other Truth. . . . The true philosopher and the true poet are one, and a beauty, which is truth, and a truth, which is beauty, is the aim of both."

His poem "May Day," is a New England spring, with all its life and motion, colour and music; but there is a similar feeling in many passages of the essays. On the other hand, some poems are pure philosophy, owing their charms less to versification than to their subtle and suggestive thought, and

to the prismatic tints which enhalo them. Turn from them to certain essays, and you find similar depths (*aperçus*) illuminated like the rifts in a cloud, appealing to and rejoicing the highest faculty as fully as if the language were in measure and rhyme. It has been said that his poetry is but a little above the level of his prose; but what a high table-land is that prose! How slight the occasional elevation to the summits of poetry!

Emerson wisely neglected metaphysics. No man can read him without seeing that he *knew* the various systems, but he left them as fruitless. The study of metaphysics disciplines the mind, but it has no outlet in active life. A man may harden his muscles by swinging clubs, but if he is a settler in a virgin forest, he will do better to swing his axe, and then use his plough, spade, and hoe. Metaphysics, a pseudo science at best, is in the realm of Nowhere. Its terms, time, space, being, &c., though conveying notions more or less conceivable, can no more be built into a logical structure than cloud strata into a solid wall; its postulates rest on unknown or unknowable assumptions; its grand aim, the fusion or co-ordination of all knowledge, including final causes, is possible only with God.

Emerson spends little time upon the analysis of the faculties. He takes man as he is, shows his relation to external nature, his capabilities, his duties to himself and his fellows, and sets before him the motives and the means for development into the highest and purest character attainable in our mortal state. No thoughtful man reads him without feeling his horizon broaden, his pulses quicken, his aspirations kindling. This testimony is borne by people of all shades of religious conviction. He does not propose a substitute, but an aid to the religious life.

He is not simply a writer, a philosopher, a poet, but a positive FORCE; his influence has come into the moral world as a momentum which has moved and elevated all thinking men. It is not for such a man to be over careful about the cut of his sentences or the fit of his rhetoric: such lesser matters may be left to critics whom they so much concern. There is not a living writer in sympathy with "the spirit of the age" who has not gained strength and illumination from him; for he more than any man represents that spirit.

Emerson's usual writing is chaste, lucid, and direct; his choice of words inevitable, predestined. If his sentences are not "sequacious," it is because his thoughts are pro-

verbal in quality as well as form. In some instances his style is a robe of beauty. It would be difficult to name a more finished piece of composition than his essay on Plutarch, or a more perfect expression of feeling and appreciation than his memorial of Thoreau. If critics can point to more exquisite specimens of mere writing they will give us a new pleasure. In his essay on "Quotation and Originality," he shows his mental habits, but he was no mere scrap-book collector. What he wrote had passed through the alembic of his original and poetic mind, and was cast in a form that no one could claim or imitate. The writing of few men in any age is so stamped with individuality. Every sentence bears his hall-mark. If "style is the man," then this man and his style are never to be confounded with any other. I can understand, and partly appreciate, the delight of a scholar in following the equable and well-linguaged style, the symmetrical and musical periods, of a great writer like Cardinal Newman; and it is clear that in the Essays, at least, the form which Emerson's thought takes is entirely different. His utterances are separate and distinct; his thoughts touch but do not blend. There is, however, a connection, though tenuous, or rather a natural succession in those sentences, each of which falls like a hailstone. The mind is touched as by electric thrills, and it only requires some imagination to connect the thoughts, as in a chain of strength and beauty. This was the way of writing fore-ordained for Emerson, just as the sentences of Jeremy Taylor, luxuriant and wide-spreading as banyan-trees, were foreordained for him.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the poetry of Emerson can never be popular; and it must be admitted that it is wanting in many qualities. But those who have become accustomed to his thought in his richly poetic prose turn to his poems with a pleasure difficult to express. "The Problem" has been said to show the "high-water mark" of poetry in this century. The sense of the sublime comes from the contemplation of great thoughts crystallised in great and unexpected imagery; and the oft-quoted stanzas in this poem are nothing if not sublime.

"The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Earth proudly wears the Parthenon
As the best gem upon her zone,

And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbey bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose to upper air;
And nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat."

To italicise lines for admiration is to impugn the reader's perspicacity, but I have marked a line above for italics in order to call attention to an "emendation." The passage just quoted is very appropriately printed on a placard that is hung upon a column in Westminster Abbey; only, in place of Emerson's noble and natural image, is printed this cheap hymn-book line:

"Among the glories of her race,"

which abolishes the original thought and substitutes twaddle. How is the integrity of literary work to be assured among wicked printers if such falsification can be exhibited in the House of God and the Valhalla of English poets?

Emerson's poems cover many zones of his experience. Some of them were written while he was still an obscure country school-master, notably, "Good-bye, proud world," which has a wholesome bitter flavour in parts; a poem much quoted and admired, but which Emerson, in mature and mellow years, tried to suppress, because it expressed a cynical feeling which had become foreign to his nature.

Emerson's debt to Wordsworth was a matter of sentiment only. As to form or manner, if he imitated any poet, it was "holy George Herbert." But there were very few stops in Emerson's organ, and very few changes of key used by the player. When Luther's trio, *wein, weib, und gesang*, are subtracted from poetry, the residue cannot have much variety. The keenly pathetic "Threnody," on the death of Emerson's five-year-old son, indicates his paternal and poetic feeling, and shows that he really did love something beside a mountain and a wild flower. But to descant upon these poems is perhaps idle. They should be read. Some will be fortunate enough to appreciate and love them, if they will give to them the time they have given to other classics. The knowledge and appreciation of any poems of permanent worth have come slowly. The next generation will say whether "The Fore-runners," "Monadnoc," "Woodnotes," and all that shining company, were created in vain.

"I hung my verses in the wind,
Time and tide their faults may find.
All were winnowed through and through,
Five lines lasted sound and true;
Five were smelted in a pot
Than the south more fierce and hot;
These the siroc could not melt,
Fire their fiercer flaming felt,
And the meaning was more white
Than July's meridian light.
Sunshine cannot bleach the snow,
Nor time unmake what poets know.
Have you eyes to find the five,
Which five hundred did survive?"

Here is a characteristic sentence from Dr. Holmes:—

"His poetry is elemental; it has the rock beneath it in the eternal laws on which it rests; the roll of deep waters is in its grander harmonies; its air is full of Aeolian strains that waken and die away as the breeze wanders over them; and through it shines the white starlight, and from time to time flashes a meteor that startles us with its sudden brilliancy."

When one who knew Emerson as a man comes to write his impressions, the difficulty is with all the high lights to find sufficient shadows to make the likeness human and credible. Who can paint a man who never in his life said an unworthy word, never showed ill-temper, jealousy, envy, or repining; who never did and never was accused of an unseemly action; who made it a duty to be cheerful and to conceal ailment, trouble, and scandal; whose truth and honour were always like sunlight; whose purity was snow; whose kindness was a well-spring; whose modesty clothed his soul as with celestial raiment? His playfellows, as we have seen, thought him "angelic," and Father Taylor, the great Methodist preacher, said he was "the most Christ-like man he had ever known." In his physical organization there was something to be desired. With a more robust frame and more blood he would have had more power, but possibly more frailty. As it was, he seemed wholly free from the mental and moral infirmities that weigh upon even the best of mankind.

A man so purely intellectual and reflective is necessarily less frankly, joyously sympathetic with his fellows, even with his intimates. Emerson's essay on "Friendship" does not warm or fascinate an impulsive and self-forgetful reader. That reader thinks that he would have felt and written differently. But Emerson did not live in an emotional sphere. One cannot fancy Plato or Spinoza becoming enthusiastic except for some grand abstract idea. Still Emerson did not hold himself aloof even from the uneducated; he was heartily loved by every person in Concord. He enjoyed the talk of the frontiers-

men who were his guides in the Adirondacks, and of the sailors of Cape Cod, when he went there with Wyman and Agassiz on their scientific excursions. He was interested in all that touches man. And he had for all men, of every station, the same simple, high-bred ways, the pure phrase and the unaffected manners which pass current with princes, scholars, and peasants. His moderation and deliberateness gave weight to all he said. Intellectual and moral force, combined with the charm of a spotless character, made him a power in any assembly. He was an illustration of one of his own sayings: "It makes a vast difference with a sentence if there is a man behind it."

His justice never faltered. He rebuked the intolerance of radical reformers as sharply as the indifference of conservatives. Though an abolitionist, he shunned intimacy with violent orators. Though holding opinions at variance with most of the clergy, he never had a dispute. He said affirmatively what he had to say, but never replied to an attack. In every relation, whether in his family, in the town, the State, in literary or social circles, he lived a life of absolute spotlessness; and from all who knew him he received a degree of homage wholly without parallel in our day, and perhaps unsurpassed in the case of any man in any age.

His fame as a writer and thinker is of more recent date. Forty years ago the wits (as they considered themselves) of the American press thought it amusing to travesty his prose and to parody his verse. That was a time when literature was at a low ebb, and when writers, now forgotten, enjoyed their brief day. With the progress of enlightenment the fame of Emerson steadily rose. And whatever may be the fate of his philosophy—whether his views are to stand the test of purer light, or are to be superseded by truer ones,—it is certain that his works will always be held in honour, and that his noble life will be accounted one of the glories of the New World.

Emerson died in April, 1882, only a few months after the death of Longfellow. He had shown for several years before a distressing failure of memory, being unable to recall the names of friends or of familiar objects. At the breakfast given to Dr. Holmes on his seventieth birthday, I sat near Mr. Emerson, and as his face showed that he did not remember me, I handed him my card. He looked at it and then said slowly, "I *used* to know a Mr. Underwood." We had some conversation, but he was still *abroad*.

He had handed to the table Mrs. Rose Terry Cooke, whose capital Yankee stories in the *Atlantic*, as I well remember, he had praised; but I do not think he had the least notion who she was. Later, he pointed to Howells, the novelist, sitting at the same table, with whom, as editor of the *Atlantic*,

he had had intimate relations for some years, and asked, "Who is that young gentleman?" I told him, but before the breakfast was over he asked me the same question again.

He lies in Sleepy Hollow cemetery, not far from Hawthorne and Thoreau.

LOVE AND THOUGHT.

LOVE and Thought, in genial strife,
Offered gifts one day to Life;
Life that murmured low the while,
"Prithee, which has fairer smile?"

Love stood forth and spake outright:
"Oh, my roses, passing bright!
Sun-perfumed and tropic-dyed,
Wear them; they are woman's pride."

Trembling Life would fain delay—
"Gifts like these may fade away.
Sun-perfumes and tropic-dyes,
Are they not a summer prize?"

Quiet Thought looked up and said,
"Take my laurel-leaves instead;
They will bear, with equal shine,
Summer's glow and year's decline."

Doubtfully, from each to each,
Wavered Life with trembling speech;
Thine, O Thought, the mystic face!
Thine, O Love, the richer grace!

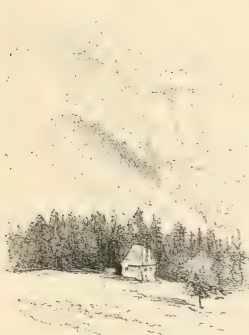
Then the Lord of Life came down,
On her forehead laid a crown:
"I have woven it," said He;
"Lord of Love and Thought and thee."

Life went up a quiet way,
Scenting roses ev'ry day;
Every evening too she caught
Odours of the laurel, Thought.

Till at length—ah, wond'ring eyes!—
Life knows all her happy prize;
Love and Thought together blent,
Crown of holy sacrament.

ELIZABETH SOPHIA WATSON.

LA GRANDE CHARTREUSE.



The Grand Som.

YOU cannot imagine Mr. Matthew Arnold writing "stanzas" from a place much haunted by Philistines. A spot that inspires him to pour out his heart with graceful languor, and to give

musical utterance to his speculative woes, cannot be a favourite resort of the British tourist. His muse could hardly indulge in her lyrical topography and chastened melancholy in a district vulgarised by coupons and personally-conducted tours. It might be hard indeed for him to discover in *this* world such a secret nook as Emerson dreamt of,

"Where vulgar feet have never trod,
A spot that is sacred to thought and God;"

but it is evident that at La Grande Chartreuse, high up amongst the mountains of Dauphiné, he did find some approach to such a heavenly ideal. It must have been for him a peculiarly soothing recollection, too, that the fastidious Gray had become enthusiastic over a double visit to the same "Carthu-

sians' world-famed home," and had inscribed in the album of the white-cowled fathers a dainty Latin ode, the phrasing of which

"solemn seats of holy pain" were of no specially superfine kind, whose thoughts when there were not specially introspective, and whose medium of description is only plain prose.

Starting from Lyons, a three hours' ride on the Grenoble railway takes you to the prettily situated Voiron, about which you cannot help noting that the churches seem altogether out of proportion to the size and importance of the little town; a sign, not a painful one as it would be at home, that you

could not be surpassed by the apostle of culture himself. In the "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," there is no doubt as

are in a specially ecclesiastical neighbourhood. From here by a less prosaic mode of conveyance, by a slow coach whose slow-



"Severa Silentia."

much of Arnold as there is of the Carthusians; and yet, considering the vehicle, verse, the details of his visit to that famous monastery are wonderfully minute, and this elegant poem, apart altogether from its high value as a spiritual guide-book to the poet's inner monastery, is almost as useful as Murray or Baedeker in giving an exact description and inventory of the various lions of the place itself. Still he has left something for one to say whose motives in journeying to these



The Monastery.

ness in the circumstances is its charm, you gradually ascend to the village of St. Laurent du Pont, passing a good part of the

way along a grand rock-walled road, getting occasional glimpses of the great mountains in front, and from the higher points fine peeps into the glorious valley of Grasvaudan. At St. Laurent, where you are already 1,800 feet up, the ascent proper to the monastery begins. No train steaming impatient, nor lazy diligence with loud cracking whip, awaits you here. If you are luxurious you can hire, but baggage sent on to Grenoble, it is best, knapsack on back, to go on foot up the long and magnificent pass which leads to St. Bruno's ancient retreat. Soon after leaving St. Laurent you enter with somewhat of a thrill into a dark and narrow gorge, almost closed above by lofty meeting rocks. You are just abandoning yourself to the delicious solitude, when, at a turning in the rock-hewn path, you shudder to see—can it really be?—chimney stalks and actual factory smoke. Fancy what effect any vaguest suggestion of a public work in the Trossachs, say, would produce on the Ruskinite traveller; and here, where the scenery is so much more savage and lonesome, you cannot help uttering a mild Wordsworthian growl at the desecrations of modern civilisation. It is nothing more, however, than an innocent saw-mill, and some buildings where the monks prepare their liqueurs and elixirs which are distilled from the various aromatic plants which grow profusely on the "Mountain" and in the convent gardens. As you advance up the Pass into the "Desert" the scenery becomes ever wilder: pine-covered mountains on either side, mighty jutting rocks overshadowing your path, and far sheer down below a green angry looking torrent. At one point the road as you look before you seems to be quite barred by a tall, thin, sharp-pointed rock called the "Needle," crowned by a cross which at once starts the inquiry, how did it get there? so hopeless seems any ascent of these jagged precipitous sides. No ladies were allowed to get past this point in the olden time, one of the chief aims of the Carthusian rules being to keep them at a safe distance, they being, rather than money, the root of all evil. Not even a French Menadic procession could have forced its way through the old gateway here when nothing but the high narrow mule-track led to the monastery. But that procession which burst the gates of the Palace of Versailles made itself felt even in these fastnesses, and had its effect in compelling the timorous monks to throw open their domain to even a worse invasion than that of the advancing sex. The mule-

track which went up past this singular barrier has been superseded by a triumph of modern engineering, which adds somewhat to the comfort of the pedestrian but little to the poetry of the path. Here the new road has been cut sheer through the rock in a series of tunnels, which however striking, have nothing of the charm of the "stony forest way" which made the old approach.

It is with mingled feelings of regret and relief that you at last reach the end of this wondrous gorge, which spite of all its length at no point sinks to the commonplace, and is too variously awful and beautiful to be monotonous. It is interesting to read how this most enchanting Pass affected the poet Gray, because it tempted the man whose heaven was to lie on a sofa and read novels, to think that had he lived in the stern believing twelfth century instead of in the enervating critical eighteenth, he would have gained his highest happiness in secluding himself, far from novels and sofas, in this solitary retreat with the devoted disciples of St. Bruno, for the scenery's sake evidently, rather than for St. Bruno's. In a letter to his mother, dated Lyons, October 13, N.S., 1739, he vividly describes the impression which the journey hither made on his mind. . . . "It is six miles to the top; the road runs winding up it, commonly not six feet broad; on one hand is the rock, with woods of pine-trees hanging overhead; on the other a monstrous precipice almost perpendicular, at the bottom of which rolls a torrent, that sometimes tumbling among the fragments of stone that have fallen from on high and sometimes precipitating itself down vast descents with a noise like thunder, which is still made greater by the echo from the mountains on each side, concurs to form one of the most solemn, the most romantic, and the most astonishing scenes I ever beheld. Add to this the strange views made by the crags and cliffs on the other hand, the cascades that in many places throw themselves from the very summit down into the vale and the river below, and many other particulars impossible to describe; you will conclude we had no occasion to regret our pains." And again in another letter to Mr. West, dated Turin, November 16, N.S., 1739, he says:—"In our little journey to the Grande Chartreuse, I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation that there was no restraining. Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe an atheist

into belief without the help of other arguments. One need not have a very fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noonday. You have death perpetually before your eyes, only so far removed as to compose the mind without frightening it. I am well persuaded St. Bruno was a man of no common genius to choose such a place for his retirement, and perhaps should have been a disciple of his had I been born in his time." After making some little allowance for a traveller's adjectives, and for the colouring necessarily given by a poet's imagination, there is nothing in this fine last century picture but what a tourist of average vision may still see for himself. As you come out of the Pass, you begin to see the towers and high-pointed roofs of the monastery, and in a short time find yourself in a sort of dell surrounded on all sides by lonely looking mountains, covered with dark forests close up to their scarred and snow-streaked tops. It is a beautiful desolation,—only such a contradictory expression can describe it,—and makes you feel as far from the world as you could well wish. Peaceful you cannot call the scene. The shadows are too deep, the pines too naked, the mountains too stern, to suggest peace. You are silent, but not as in some great cathedral where your silence is restful, where you are lifted up and forget yourself. Here your silence has in it somewhat of painful repression, the feeling of being crushed by the weight of solemn gloom which hangs around.

Admitted to the monastery through a wicket by a porter who scarcely speaks, and speaks in whispers, you cross a large court—one of those silent courts

"—where night and day
Into their stone-carved basins cold
The splashing icy fountains play,"

and are received into a long low-roofed barely furnished hall by one of the Pères (a pleasant, cheerful-looking old man our host was) who, in the interests of hospitality, is absolved from the rigid vow of silence which binds all his brethren, and has liberty not only to speak but even to crack a joke with you over the glass of Chartreuse he offers by way of welcome. You have your choice of three kinds—green, yellow, and white. After a climb of six miles the green, being the strongest, is the most acceptable; and it is, moreover, best to take the one solitary chance you may ever have of tasting the liqueur in its unadulterated state, "direct from the monastery," as the "genuine" advertisements have it. A half-past four dinner, consisting

of soup—beefless, boneless even—trout, vegetables, omelettes, fruit, and wine, which you may find unsatisfying after a long Parisian table d'hôte, or "maigre," if you retain any strong insular prejudice in favour of roast beef, gives you time before bedtime for a ramble amongst the silent woods and shadowy paths, where you can dream, with Mr. Arnold, of modern thought, or watch the splendid monastery cattle—a famous breed—as they wander with their tinkling bells in the early twilight. You must be back not later than half-past nine, when the gates are shut for the night, and visitors are conducted to their cells. These cells all open off corridors of very great length, and—though it is not polite to remark on a host's house—they are more remarkable for godliness than for comfort, the religious helps and furnishings being more numerous and obvious than the secular. Your prie-dieu, crucifix, Virgin, and saints, are clearly intended to occupy more of your attention than your basin or your bed. This latter, however, compels attention! Any belated unfortunate, with the sensitiveness of a Mrs. Carlyle, and foolish enough to rough it far from his own "red" or "green" bedroom, could scarcely help denouncing the whole arrangements, not excluding these fountains in the silent court under your window which, as you now truly realise with the poet, cease not their playing *night nor day*.

It is best to vary your hours of penance by going to morning prayers at midnight. By that time fatigue may have possibly delivered you from all dread of what the Scotch boy understood by "the pestilence that walketh at midnight." Your enthusiasm for sunrises amongst the mountains, and weird Carthusian offices, has perhaps cooled down, and so even though you are sight-seeing it is irritating to become dimly conscious of a knock at your cell-door, and to hear the dying echo of a muttered Latin blessing as the clattering shoes of the waker go resounding along the cold empty corridors. Still, though not in a too devotional mood, it is wise to get up and obediently make your way to the chapel. Woe to you if you have taken no lights, and go fumbling and stumbling along these pitch-dark passages, in terror of unseen stairs, in despair at missing matins, and hopeless of a safe return to your cell. Stop and listen! Through the midnight silence comes the sound of a low, half-wailing, monotonous chant, like the crooning of a southern wind on a lonely shore. Guided by the sound you at last reach the chapel, too late now to see

how the monks enter lamp in hand, while each, as he passes in, gives a toll at the bell, as a more punctual worshipper informs you. The sight you do see is strange enough. Entering through a door in the corridor wall you find yourself in a small, ice-cold marble gallery. Down below, in the dimmest of dim religious lights, are rows of kneeling figures, ghostly, in white frock and cowl. Each bends low in his oaken stall, as if in an agony of penitence. Before him lies an old worn service-book, upon which a little hand lamp, hung a short distance above, is faintly shining. No music, no motion; only the long eerie chanting as of men belonging to another world. It makes one shiver, and long to return to life and reality.

If, after such a "stern and naked service," you wish to worship with somewhat greater expansion of soul, it is well to start early in the morning and climb with one of the monosyllabic monastery guides to the top of the Grand Som. There, in the

centre of numberless peaks glistening in the sunlight, looking down on the monastery covered still with gloomy shadows, or away to the rich valleys and plains of the west still veiled by mists, breathing the delicious air tempered by the snows and scented by the rich perfume of the Alpine flowers which grow everywhere around, you can feel that nature elevates for you her Host, and chants with you a silent prayer. After a farewell glimpse of Monte Viso gleaming afar, and a con-

tented look behind at the snowy ridge above the chasm, you can descend rapidly amongst the rocks and through the woods.

If you have started early enough you may easily be back at the monastery in time for breakfast, which in composition differs little from dinner. There is this to be said for the meals, that if they are entirely vegetarian, the quality and quantity leave nothing to be desired. The good fathers evidently act on the same charitable principles as old Abbot

Thomas of St. Albans, who used to heap up visitors' plates, though he had almost nothing on his own. However, your associations—begotten of bal-lads and Scott—of smoking venison and the fat of the land with convent refectories and abbots' parlours, will here receive a rude shock. You may get the "clouted cream," but certainly not the "fat poulets," nor anything, indeed, specially loved by the great fleshly school. All the same, you will come away with an increased respect for that persistent minority who get



In the Cloisters.

enthusiastic over haricots, and pose as the modern Luthers of the meat that perisheth.

After breakfast guests are conducted round the monastery, and even ladies—who are not allowed to stay overnight within the walls, but get shelter at the old hospital near, which is superintended by the Sisters of Mercy—may if armed with a Papal license, come across and have a peep at the arrangements of this misogynist household. The Chartreuse has no architectural

glories, and would never make a picturesque ruin. Indeed, the churches which the Carthusians have generously built in the neighbouring villages are far richer in decoration and more elaborate in style than their own chapels. There is, however, plenty to interest if you care to take a look round. Each Père has two little rooms, with a workshop and garden attached, all in one piece, of two stories, so that, unlike the usual monastic arrangement, the Carthusian's abode is self-contained. Every Carthusian is, in fact, practically a hermit, with just a little more accommodation than the traditional hermit usually had. That may help to account for the remarkable fact that this Order was about the only one which never degenerated so far from the primitive type as to need reformation. Dormitory gossip, drawing-room scandal-mongering, hanging about the pantry doors, quarrelling, swearing, and stealing pastry, were not possible under such unsocial conditions. The furniture is of the barest description. It consists of a wooden bed—

“That wooden bed,
Which shall their coffin be when dead;”

a chair, a writing and dining-table, a joiner's bench, a plain book-case, the usual helps to devotion, “the suffering Son of Man upon the wall,” and a few religious pictures. A monk's food consists of one meal a day. This is pushed in by a sliding grating in the cloister wall, so that he never sees the person who brings it. It is made up of soup, fish, and vegetables on ordinary days, and on Fridays and during Lent of simple bread and water, though this prison fare was in stricter times the rule for *three* days in each week. The silent fathers are now allowed the great luxury of a fire in cold weather, though that is a worldly concession to modern ideas of comfort. The severity of the old fireless rule may be imagined when it is remembered that the monastery is over four thousand feet up, and is buried in snow a great part of the year. There is a pathetic story of a Father belonging to the other great Carthusian house in sunnier Calabria, who, when elected to the highest Carthusian dignity of Prior of the Parent Monastery, willingly came, but came knowing for certain that the severity of the climate would speedily kill him. It was a call from the Lord, *not* to a better living. He obeyed it, and in a few months lay down to die. The great vow of silence, so characteristic of the Carthusians, was easily kept by the self-contained arrangement just mentioned. Even on festival days when they

ate in common, this rule was strictly observed. It has been so far relaxed in modern times that the Fathers are allowed to walk out together once a week and converse with one another, or even speak to others when spoken to. The time they have to spare from the offices, which are particularly lengthy, is taken up with reading, meditation, joinery, gardening, and cleaning. These Fathers are mostly aristocrats of various nationalities. They are at present about forty in number. The “entrance fee” is large, the novitiate long and severe, the great life vows of fearful rigidity. The horsehair shirt and linenless rule admits of no exception, and though it is taking a rather shallow and supercilious view of belief to call these Carthusians “last of the people who believe,” still it seems certain that nothing short of an overmastering belief could make life possible here. There is certainly nothing in the appearance of the monks themselves, nothing in their habits and surroundings, to allow one to indulge in the Erasmus vein. The glimpses one gets are, with one or two exceptions, of pale, worn, death-like faces, with the shadow as of a great sorrow upon them. They are not faces of the hue and expression suitable for popular cartoons, for those traditional scenes where monastic life is represented as an after-dinner nap on a flowery verandah, or the hugging of a claret cask in an underground cellar. As you leave the cells your feeling is that of charitable pity, pity for the narrowness which leads men, Carthusians and others not so logical, to think that this world and this life are the devil's and not God's. But it is pity qualified by the reflection that men of rank may stay in the world and spend their money in worse ways than in building beautiful churches for poor villages, or in endowing hospitals, and schools, and deaf and dumb institutions for poor districts; spend their time in worse ways than in the manufacture of medicinal liqueurs, the culture of aromatic flowers, in fasting and prayer; and employ their intellectual gifts, poetical and political, in worse ways than in silence. The monastery library is well stocked with books, chiefly of a devotional character. Its treasures are worth examining, but they are in the Grenoble Museum, which owes its wealth of illuminated manuscripts to glorious Revolution plundering. Of the tourist who looks in on the churchyard with its simple wooden crosses, the Fathers might well say, with the homely priest of Ennerdale on a like occasion:—

"But, for that moping son of Idleness,
Why can he tarry yonder? In our churchyard
Is neither epitaph nor monument,
Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread
And a few natural graves."

The household is managed by twenty Frères, who are easily distinguished from the Pères by their brown frocks. They are not bound by any of the special Carthusian rules, unless by that against eating flesh. They have under them about sixty servants, all males, who do the bulk of the heavier and coarser work in connection with the monastery. Interesting as the place undoubtedly is, one cannot help feeling that there is more of the hotel than of the hospice about it. You cannot now certainly feel yourself a *guest*, as Gray was able to do a hundred and fifty years ago. In his day visitors were rare and mostly sympathetic. Their treatment, therefore, was of a more personally hospitable kind. "When we came there the two Fathers who are commissioned to entertain strangers (for the rest must neither speak one to another, nor to any one else) received us very kindly, and set before us a repast of dried fish, eggs, butter, and fruits, all excellent in their kind and extremely neat. *They pressed us to spend the night there, and to stay some days with them, but this we could not do, so they led us about their house, which is, you must think, like a little city; for there are a hundred Fathers, besides three hundred servants, that make their clothes, grind their corn, press their wine, and do everything among themselves. The whole is quite orderly and simple, nothing of finery, but the wonderful decency and the strange situation more than supply the place of it.*" Much has changed since the delighted poet so wrote home. The place is less like Heine's Avalun, even since Mr. Arnold was there. The large numbers of tourists, French people mainly, who now visit it, have rendered necessary a system of bills, the paying of which reminds you, where it seems unnatural to be so reminded, of the smart lady at the window of the Bureau. It would be so much more pleasant and congruous to return the kindness of the Pères by a gift to their poor-box, though you have to do this also if you don't wish to go away in their debt. The voluntarism of sightseers evidently requires to be thoroughly systematised in order to succeed. All the same, we must keep in thankful remembrance the fact that when the monastery was put up for sale in 1793, after the monks had been plundered and driven out of it, no hotel proprietor was enterprising enough to buy it. We must be grateful too to the Restoration Government,

which in 1816 allowed the banished inmates to repossess, though on sadly altered conditions, their old home. For, "Down with them!" is not what one is inclined to cry, even in prospect of the polite manager and obsequious waiters who might succeed them. The want of lifts, lawn tennis, and luxury will always be a certain protection against the ruinous effects of a popular invasion. Still, it is somewhat painful to think that such an ancient establishment—the mother establishment of the whole order—should, after well-nigh eight centuries of dignified and honourable existence, have to be for some months every year more or less of a show-place; that the once independent landlords should have become mere tenants at will of an unsympathetic Republic. The glory of La Grande Chartreuse has departed, and departed for ever. The first monastery, built eight hundred years ago, was destroyed by an avalanche, we are told. The more terrible avalanche of 1789 swept over this ancient mountain-home of the Carthusians, and left it a ruin of its former self. The men were not sinners above all that dwelt in Jerusalem, but the innocent had to perish with their more guilty brethren. Wordsworth, in a splendid passage in the Prelude describing his visit to the Chartreuse, tells how as he approached the sacred mansion he saw—

"Arms flashing and a military glare
Of riotous men commissioned to expel
The blameless inmates,"

and heard the voice of nature "uttered from her Alpine throne," crying

"Stay, stay your sacrilegious hands!
Your impious work forbear; perish what may
Let this one temple last, be this one spot
Of earth devoted to eternity."

Had all landlords been like the Carthusians; had all corporations, secular and sacred, had as fair and pure a history to look back upon, a history, as the touching tale of our own Charterhouse martyrs helps to prove, full of quiet heroism and silent, unselfish work, the destroying avalanche would never have descended. The glory has departed. But the glory of the pine woods and of the savage mountain solitudes, of the gentian and the snows, of the wild torrents and the towering crags, of the moss-greened rocks and the rushing waterfalls, cannot depart. For nature's pilgrim the Chartreuse will ever be a holy shrine, where, far from the loud noises of the lower world, he can be a hermit in his heart, and pay to the Eternal Spirit a vow of silence.

Ebenezer Brown Speirs.

THE STARS: ARE THEY SUNS?

By PROFESSOR R. GRANT, LL.D., F.R.S.

CONCLUDING PAPER.

THERE are many stars in the heavens which to the naked eye appear to be single, but when examined with the telescope are found to consist in reality of two stars so close together that to the naked eye they appear as one star. Stars of this class are called double stars. A few of such stars were discovered soon after the invention of the telescope, but their number appeared to be inconsiderable until Sir William Herschel instituted a search for them with his powerful telescopes. His observations resulted in the discovery of several hundreds of double stars, and since the time of that great astronomer the number has been receiving continual accessions, insomuch that in the present day the number of double stars already known to exist amounts to several thousands. In general one of the two constituent members of a double star is brighter than the other, whence the fainter of the two is usually called the companion star. Herschel discovered that in many cases of double stars the companion star is gradually revolving round the principal star, and he even ascertained, in several instances, the time of revolution of the revolving body. This great discovery has been confirmed and extended by the researches of subsequent astronomers. It is now one of the recognised facts of astronomy that in the heavens there are a great number of double stars, the constituent bodies of which are revolving round each other, or more strictly speaking, are both revolving round their common centre of gravity, the two bodies attracting each other, and having their movements regulated in accordance with the Newtonian law of gravitation.

The elliptic elements of the orbit of a double star have been determined in many instances, and this circumstance connects itself with our present subject, inasmuch as it furnishes the means of enabling us to compare the mass of the sun with the aggregate masses of the two bodies constituting a double star. To effect such a comparison we require to know the time of revolution of the companion star, and its mean distance from the central body in terms of the sun's distance from the earth. It results therefore that in this inquiry we are confined to those double stars the orbits of which have been ascertained, and also their distances from the earth. In the present state of stellar astronomy there are not many

double stars which fulfil this condition. Still, the results derived from one or two such stars may not be without interest in relation to our present subject. Let us first take the case of the double star Alpha Centauri. The periodic time of the revolving body is 88.5 years, and the mean distance is 27 units, each unit representing the mean distance of the sun from the earth, whence the aggregate mass of the two constituent bodies is found to amount to $\frac{1}{10}$ ths of the sun's mass. Again, there is a double star in the constellation Ophiuchus called ρ Ophiuchi, the distance of which from the earth has been found to be 120 billions of miles. Now the time of revolution of the constituent bodies round each other is about ninety-five years, and the mean distance of their relative ellipse is twenty-nine semi-diameters of the earth's orbit, whence the aggregate mass of the two bodies is found to be $3\frac{1}{10}$, the sun's mass being represented by unity.

The brilliant star Sirius will furnish another example. This star, like many others, is not immovable in the celestial sphere, but, on the contrary, is subject to a very minute proper motion, in virtue of which its position is slowly changing from year to year. Now the celebrated German astronomer Bessel had remarked, in 1844, certain irregularities in the proper motion of the star which led him to suspect that they were due to the disturbing attraction of some invisible body in the neighbourhood of the star. Peters, another German astronomer, shortly afterwards took up Bessel's idea and calculated the orbit of the revolving body, and in the year 1862 a small star occupying the position indicated by Peters's calculations was discovered by the late Alvan Clark.* A more recent determination of the elements of the orbit of the revolving body supplies the means of calculating the masses of the two bodies in terms of the sun's mass. The time of revolution in this case is forty-nine years, the mean distance of the ellipse in which the companion star revolves round Sirius is 37 semi-diameters of the earth's orbit, whence the mass of Sirius comes out equal to 13.8 and the mass of the companion star equal to 6.7, the sun's mass being represented by unity. These examples suffice to show, by a process

* An American optician, of deservedly world-wide fame as a constructor of great telescopes.

of reasoning which is perfectly unimpeachable, that in respect to the mass of matter of which it is constituted the sun is comparable to the stars.

We shall now refer to another circumstance which has thrown much interesting light on the affinity existing between the sun and the stars. It has been already stated that the ancient astronomers applied to the stars the appellation of *fixed* stars, because they seemed always to retain the same relative position in the celestial sphere. The researches of modern astronomers have, however, conclusively shown that this idea is illusive. Many stars have been found to be slowly changing their positions in the heavens. The number of stars which have an annual proper motion greater than $1''$, so far as yet ascertained, amounts to about seventy. Sirius, the brightest star in the heavens, is one of such. This star has a proper motion amounting to $1''.3$ in the year. Travelling at this rate the star will require 1,500 years to traverse an arc of the celestial sphere equal to the apparent diameter of the sun. The star Alpha Lyrae has a proper motion amounting to only about one-fourth of the proper motion of Sirius. It would not consequently traverse a space equal to the apparent diameter of the sun in less than six thousand years.

These instances of proper motion may serve to illustrate the extreme refinement of calculation which must be observed in astronomical researches. If it were required to ascertain the exact position of Sirius in the present day from a determination of its position made twenty years ago, it would be necessary to take careful account of the displacement of the star arising from the accumulated effects of proper motion during the intermediate interval.

Seeing then that the stars have a proper motion and that there exist incontrovertible reasons for believing that they are suns, the question arises, Has the sun, like the stars, a proper motion? This idea had occurred to Bradley and various other astronomers, but to Sir William Herschel is due the first solution of the problem of the motion of the solar system in space. By a simple but sagacious treatment of the proper motions of a limited number of the brighter stars, he arrived at the conclusion that the sun with its attendant train of planets and satellites is advancing in space to a point in the celestial sphere which he fixed in the constellation Hercules. Several subsequent astronomers have investigated the same question upon a broader basis of observation, and have obtained re-

sults confirmatory of the result originally announced by Herschel. The amount of the annual translation in space of the solar system has been found to be in round numbers 160 millions of miles, which is somewhat more than one-fourth of the orbital motion of the earth. If the sun were viewed at the average distance of a star of the first magnitude, and if its motion of translation took place in a direction at right angles to the visual ray, its apparent proper motion would be a third of a second of angular magnitude. This is equal to the proper motion of the bright star Alpha Lyrae, which may be stated to have a parallax equal to the average parallax of stars of the first magnitude, and which consequently is distant from the earth about 100 billions of miles. It follows therefore that Alpha Lyrae is transported through space in a direction at right angles to the visual ray at the rate of 160 millions of miles in a year. The annual proper motion of Sirius at right angles to the visual ray is $1''.3$, or about four times the proper motion of Alpha Lyrae, and the researches of astronomers agree in assigning to it a parallax equal to two-tenths of a second, as in the case of that star; whence it follows that its distance from the earth may be estimated in round numbers to be 100 billions of miles, while its annual translation in space amounts to 600 millions of miles.

It appears then that while the stars have a motion of translation in space the sun has such a motion also, and that if we consider individual stars, this movement of translation is comparable in magnitude with the corresponding movement of the sun. We have, therefore, in this important fact another interesting relation of affinity existing between the sun and the stars.

We shall now briefly refer to a comparison between the sun and the stars in respect to their physical constitution. Spectroscopic astronomy discloses to us the chemical substances which enter into the composition of the sun and the stars. This is indisputably one of the most marvellous feats of astronomical science. Let us advert for a moment to the principle which forms the basis of researches of this kind. If a solid or liquid body be heated to a state of incandescence so as to become a source of light, and if the light thus emanating from the body be made to pass through a prism and then be received upon a screen, there will be exhibited to the observer the beautiful variety of colours, blending insensibly into each other, which we admire so much in the rainbow. This is

called the spectrum of the incandescent body. Let us now suppose the source of light to be no longer an incandescent solid, or liquid body, but a gaseous or vapourous substance heated so as to become incandescent. In this case the spectrum will not be continuous as in the former case, but will consist of one or more bands of light perfectly detached from each other. The same result will be produced if instead of a gaseous substance like hydrogen we used the incandescent vapour of a metal. The spectrum of an incandescent solid or liquid body will invariably exhibit the same continuous succession of colours. The spectrum of a gas or the vapour of a metal will also be the same for the same substance, but will be different for different substances. Thus the spectrum of sodium consists invariably of a double yellow band.

When we employ the sun as the source of light the result differs from either of the results just mentioned. The spectrum is, indeed, so far continuous that at first sight it seems to resemble the spectrum of an incandescent solid or liquid body, but when examined closely the continuity is seen to be interrupted by the presence of a number of dark lines disposed irregularly in directions parallel to each other and at right angles to the length of the spectrum. Certain of these dark lines in the solar spectrum were originally remarked by Wollaston as early as the beginning of this century, and a great addition to their number was subsequently made by Fraunhofer, a German physicist, who also carefully measured their respective positions in the spectrum. Furthermore it was discovered that certain of the dark lines in the solar spectrum coincided in position with the bright lines characteristic of the spectra of gases or metals. Thus it was found that in the solar spectrum there were two dark lines corresponding exactly in position to the two bright yellow lines, or bands, which constitute the spectrum of sodium. An explanation of the dark lines in the solar spectrum based upon experiment was first publicly announced by Kirchhoff in 1859, but the principle which underlies this great discovery had been previously known to several inquirers. It may be briefly stated thus: If an incandescent solid or liquid body be surrounded by an atmosphere in which are contained the vapours of any substance, those vapours will absorb the rays of light emanating from the incandescent body which have the same refrangibility as the rays which the vapours would emit when they are in a state of incandescence, but they

will allow the other rays of light of the incandescent body to proceed onward in their course. Thus, if the vapour of sodium be contained in the atmosphere, then, since we know that the vapour of sodium when in a state of incandescence produces a spectrum consisting of a double yellow line, it follows that the continuous spectrum of the incandescent body will exhibit in exactly the same position two dark lines indicative of the absorption of the double yellow line. It may now be seen how the marvellous discovery was made of the existence of substances in the sun of the same nature as many substances which are to be found in the earth. Take the case of iron. The spectrum of vapourised iron in an incandescent state consists of a great number of bright lines, and in exact coincidence with these there are exhibited in the solar spectrum a corresponding number of dark lines. The conclusion therefore is, that iron exists in the solar atmosphere. Similarly it has been found that the sun's atmosphere contains sodium, magnesium, hydrogen, and a number of other substances already known as terrestrial substances. The spectra of many stars have been similarly ascertained to contain a series of dark lines as in the case of the solar spectrum, and similar conclusions have been drawn therefrom. Thus it has been found that in Aldebaran there exist hydrogen, sodium, magnesium, calcium, iron, &c.; while in Sirius the spectrum reveals the existence of sodium, magnesium, iron, hydrogen, &c., and so also in regard to many other stars.

A beautiful application of spectroscopic research consists in the determination of the proper motions of the celestial bodies in the direction of the visual ray. When we have ascertained by telescopic observation that a star has a proper motion, it is only the resolved part of the motion of the star which is at right angles to the visual ray which is thus revealed to us. In all probability, however, the motion of the star really takes place in a direction which is oblique to the visual ray, in which case the motion is effected partly in the direction of the visual ray, and partly at right angles to the visual ray. The telescope reveals solely the latter movement. Mere telescopic observations of a star give us no information whence we may infer whether it is approaching to or receding from the earth in the direction of the line of vision. It is to the revelations of the spectroscope that we owe the solution of this interesting problem. According to the generally received theory, the light emanating

from an incandescent gas is the result of a series of vibrations of the molecules of the gas which communicate a corresponding series of vibrations to the ether pervading space. This latter may be said to constitute the vehicle for the transmission of light. Molecules which vibrate with different velocities produce rays of different refrangibilities, and the rate of vibration assigns to each ray a determinate position in the spectrum. Thus the red rays, which are the result of the slowest vibrations and are the least refrangible, occupy one extremity of the spectrum, while the violet rays, which vibrate most rapidly and are the most refrangible, occupy the other extremity of the spectrum. Now if we suppose the luminous body to be receding from the earth, the waves of the ether will be lengthened, fewer vibrations will be performed in a given time—say, one second—and there will be a tendency of any ray occupying a definite position in the spectrum to be displaced slightly towards the red end of the spectrum. On the other hand, if the luminous body be approaching the earth the wave lengths of the ether will be diminished, and a greater number of vibrations will be performed in a given time, and the tendency of a ray will be towards the violet end of the spectrum. If we had considered a dark line, the same reason will apply as in the case of a bright line. The question, then, stands thus. If the luminous body be stationary, any of the dark lines will always occupy a definite position in the spectrum; but if the body is receding from the earth, the vibrations will be slower, and the line will be slightly displaced towards the red end of the spectrum. On the other hand, if the body be approaching the earth the vibrations will be more rapid, and there will be a displacement of the line towards the violet end of the spectrum. The amount of displacement affords a measure of the increase or diminution of the rate of vibration of the ethereal medium, which again leads to a knowledge of the velocity of approach or recess of the luminous body relatively to the earth. In this manner it has been ascertained that many stars, besides having a proper motion at right angles to the visual ray as had been already revealed by telescopic observation, have also a proper motion in the direction of the line of vision, in virtue of which some stars are approaching the earth while others are receding from it, the velocity of approach or recess being determined by spectroscopic measurement. Among the stars

approaching the earth are Arcturus, Alpha Lyrae, and Pollux. On the other hand, Sirius, Rigel, and Castor may be mentioned as stars which are continually receding from the earth. Thus while Alpha Lyrae is approaching the earth with a velocity of about forty miles in a second, the bright star Castor is receding from the earth at the rate of twenty-five miles in a second. These velocities are comparable with the corresponding velocities obtained in a direction at right angles to the visual ray, and also with the velocity of the sun's motion of translation in space as ascertained by the researches of astronomers. It results, therefore, that in respect to proper motion we have presented to us a very close relation of affinity connecting the sun with the stars.

It appears, then, in considering the relation of the sun to the stars, that our inquiries, in whatever direction they may be prosecuted, lead us invariably to believe that the stars are suns and that the sun is a star. This is, indeed, a sublime conclusion. The researches of astronomy, based upon irrefragable evidence, teach us that the innumerable luminaries which adorn the stellar vault are vast bodies resembling the sun in their physical constitution and rivaling the sun in magnitude and splendour. In connection with this grand idea, another thought naturally occurs to the mind of the inquirer. It is this. Our own sun is accompanied by a retinue of primary and secondary bodies revolving round it; does this fact also hold good in respect to the countless bodies in the stellar regions which we are taught henceforth to regard as so many suns? To this we would reply, in the first instance, that in so far as observation is concerned, we have no evidence whatever (unless in the exceptional case of Sirius) that any star is accompanied by opaque bodies revolving round it similarly to the planets of the solar system. But a little inquiry will soon show that this objection to the doctrine of the stars being accompanied by a system of planets is without valid foundation. If we suppose the earth to be viewed from either of the planets Venus or Mars, it would doubtless present the aspect of a brilliant star, perhaps exceeding in lustre the average brightness of a star of the first magnitude. If we suppose the observer to be upon the planet Saturn the earth would no longer be visible to the naked eye, but might be perceived in a telescope of moderate power. Finally, if the observer took his station upon the planet Neptune, which is the most remote body of the planetary sys-

tem (and which, be it remembered, a railway train travelling at the rate of fifty miles an hour would not reach in less than six thousand years), the earth would be visible only in the most powerful telescopes which the skill of man has hitherto constructed, and even then would be perceptible only as an excessively small point of light. Now the planet Neptune is distant from the earth *only one seven-thousandth part of the distance of the nearest of the fixed stars*. Obviously this fact, viewed in connection with the remarks we have just made, settles the question of the visibility of planets revolving around the stars. At such a distance any system of opaque bodies shining solely by reflected light, and resembling in other respects the bodies of the planetary system, would be utterly imperceptible even in the most powerful telescopes which have heretofore been constructed for astronomical purposes. We repeat, therefore, it is no valid objection to the doctrine of the stars being accompanied by planets that we have no ocular proof of the existence of such bodies, seeing that in consequence of the immense distance of the stars the visibility of a system of planets revolving around a star is utterly impossible, notwithstanding the most powerful telescopic aid which we may employ in our observations. On the other hand, it seems a perfectly reasonable conjecture to suppose that the innumerable suns which adorn the stellar vault, and which have been found, so far as the researches of the astronomer have heretofore conducted him, to be vast bodies comparable in magnitude and splendour to our own sun, should like our sun also be accompanied in each instance by a retinue of revolving worlds. The researches of astronomers on the movements of double stars inform us, that the great law of attraction which governs the movements of the various bodies of the solar system extends also to the vast bodies of the universe which roll in space at an inconceivable distance beyond the limits of the solar system. It is probable, therefore, that each star is accompanied by a system of revolving bodies, the movements of which are controlled by the preponderating attraction of the central body, as we see in the case of the solar system.

Another interesting question offers itself in connection with these remarks: Does life exist not merely on the earth, but on all the planets of the solar system, and also on the planets which may be presumed to revolve round the innumerable suns of

the stellar regions? Here, again, we have only conjecture to guide us. With respect to the bodies constituting the solar system, which from their comparative proximity to the earth might be supposed to furnish a solution of this problem, careful observations have heretofore offered no indication whatever of the existence of life upon their surfaces. But life in some form or another may notwithstanding exist on those bodies. We must bear in mind that the planets are in all probability in various stages of development. It may be reasonably presumed that the planets Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, in consequence of their enormous bulk, have cooled down more slowly than the earth and the other smaller planets of the solar system, and are therefore less advanced as abodes of animated existence than the latter are. But even in the case of the earth, it must be admitted to have revolved millions of years round the sun merely as a fiery orb before life appeared on its surface, and even after it had cooled down and become the abode of animated existence, it produced, during countless millions of years more, life only in its lowest forms. The existence of man is but of yesterday. This is an instructive lesson. It teaches us that although man exists on the earth's surface, it does not follow that beings of the same order of intelligence as man exist upon all the other planets or even upon any of them. Upon some of the planets life may not have yet come into existence; upon others life may exist, but in a less advanced stage than upon the earth; and the same remark is obviously applicable to the numberless bodies of the starry firmament. The state of the question then is this. We cannot pronounce positively upon the existence of life anywhere beyond the planet upon which we dwell. But reasoning from analogy, we may suppose that certain, if not all, of the other bodies of the planetary system, which in so many respects bear a strong affinity to our own planet, are in like manner the abodes of life in some form or another, and that similarly there are countless bodies in the stellar regions which may also be the abodes of life. This is a question, however, upon which the noble science of astronomy, so distinguished for the exactitude of its conclusions, does not venture to pronounce a positive opinion, seeing that there exists no sure basis of facts available for its consideration. In these circumstances it is left for each individual inquirer to form his own opinion independently of any support derived from scientific authority.

GERTIE'S WEE GARDEN.

GERTIE'S garden is, like herself, small !
But its flowers are coloured with heaven's own dyes;
And the dew-drops that over it fall
Are tenderly shed from a mother's dim eyes.
There kingcup and daisy grow starry in spring ;
Crocuses creamy
And violets dreamy ;
When heart's-ease I need and my bosom will bleed,
I fly to that garden, my faeriest Ardenne—
I always succeed
If I pluck but a weed,
For I gather Nepenthe from Gertie's wee garden.

Gertie's garden is, like herself, fair !
In summer a blossoming paradise ;
And the delicate air that goes murmuring there
Is soft as the saddest of mother's sad sighs.
There a drooping red rose in the eventide glows,
Vale-lilies vagrant
And gillyflowers fragrant ;
And ere I that way forget fondly to stray
Somehow my soft heart must dreadfully harden ;
For each leisure day
With her playmates I pay
Floricultural visits to Gertie's wee garden.

Gertie's garden is, like herself, sweet !
In autumn ambrosial as Araby's isles ;
All green leaf and flower from head to the feet,
Gilded with sunshine—a mother's wan smiles !
The garden's her cradle with coverlet over,
A smooth cradle-bed
For the dear little head,
And should you disturb it I never could pardon.
Tread softly around, for my heart's underground,
More tenderly tread
There, than Robin the red,
Whenever you venture near Gertie's wee garden.

Gertie's garden is, like herself, hid !
With down that has fallen from snowy-white wings ;
But a mother still comes leafless Winter amid,
When Robin his triplets all lonelily sings.
There a deathless seed lies that in flower shall rise ;
Though marked by no label,
The Sower is able
To set his invisible nurselings abloom,
So carefully watched where an angel is warden.
Through my tears that would come,
It looked much like a tomb,
Till my little boy christened it "Gertie's wee Garden."

GEORGE HILL.

THE EMPIRE CITY.

NEW YORK, taken with Brooklyn on the one side and Jersey City on the other, has now a larger population than any European cities save London and Paris, and runs the latter hard.

The rapidity of New York's growth, both in size and wealth, has been altogether phenomenal. When Washington was inaugurated as President the population was 30,000; to-day, that of New York proper is a million, and including the adjacent cities of Brooklyn, Jersey City, and Hoboken, over two millions.

The approach to New York harbour is by a strait known as "the Narrows," commanded by two forts, the one on Long Island and the other on Staten Island. The scene, coming down the bay, is, in fine weather, highly picturesque and exhilarating, not only from the natural charms presented to the eye, but from the unparalleled activity of the harbour. Manhattan Island, on which the city stands, is about thirteen and a half miles in length on one side, and eight on the other, and at its widest about four miles broad. The bay is at its base, Long Island Sound separating it from Long Island on its eastern side, and the Hudson River on its western side. Approaching the city from the sea the most conspicuous object, towering above everything, is that stupendous achievement, the bridge, which was erected at a cost of £3,000,000, to connect New York with Brooklyn. It is so substantially built that trams and carriages are allowed to cross it at the same speed as on an ordinary road.

Passengers from Europe disembark at what is known as the Battery, at the extreme base of the island. The Battery has long been guileless of guns, and

New York from the Bay.



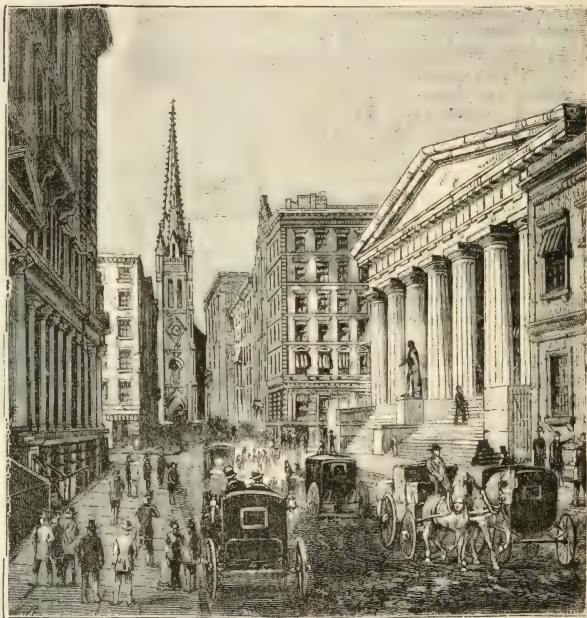
is a well-kept and planted public park commanding a delightful view of the harbour. A portion is occupied by the celebrated establishment known as Castle Garden. The main building, a vast circular structure, was formerly a theatre, and here it was that New Yorkers went wild over Jenny Lind's singing, when Mr. Barnum brought her to their city, twenty years ago, and made his first great stroke.

A very different, but not less interesting class has since crowded within its walls, for here it is that emigrants from all parts

of the world are lodged, sedulously protected, and cared for on landing. This establishment, which is under the control of Commissioners of Emigration, is carried on by the State of New York and with it the United States government has no concern; it has been a boon to millions. A large proportion of the immigrants are forwarded West within a few hours of their arrival. Mr. Herkomer, the well-known artist, who, as a child, landed himself at Castle Garden, has for some time been engaged on a striking picture of the scene.

That portion of New York which corresponds to the City in London, is all within twenty minutes' walk of the Battery. The house there, occupied by the last British Governor, was pulled down only five years ago. Within five minutes thence, up Broadway—through Bowling Green, where stood the statue of George III. melted into bullets at the revolution—lies, to the left, Trinity, the mother Episcopal church of the city, which still has the original endowments granted by the English crown; and immediately facing it, on the left, is the financial centre of the country, Wall Street, which takes its name from the old city wall,

with its amazing agglomeration of telegraph wires overhead, and throng of money-makers and losers; where stands the Sub-Treasury of the United States, a substantial granite structure bristling with well-concealed means of defence, including the deadly Gatling guns which would soon make frightful havoc in an attacking mob, and would unquestionably be put into force without delay if need be, for the Americans deal most peremptorily with anything in the shape of riot.



Wall Street.

Proceeding up Broadway the City Hall Park is soon reached, and attention is attracted to the Post Office, a vast and handsome structure, and other notable buildings. The Astor House, forty years ago the hotel of New York, and still much frequented, a vast establishment with shops beneath, paying altogether a rental of £15,000 a year, is on the left. The Astor House was the first really superior hotel that New York, since so famous for superb hostels, had.

In his interesting travels in the United States, Mr. Stuart, who arrived at New York



West side of Madison Square.

on the 23rd of August, 1828, wrote: "It might be supposed that the inns and other public establishments in this great city which, next to London, has the most extensive trade of any place in the world, and which is constantly frequented by multitudes of foreigners, would approach pretty nearly to the best European models. But the fact is not so; and it is singular that New York does not seem to be more advanced than any considerable town in the States, in those accommodations in which America is most deficient, and which have been the subject of some well-founded and some ill-founded and unjust animadversions. Here, as in every part of the Union, the sleeping and dressing conveniences are very indifferent. Water is not supplied to the bed-chambers in sufficient quantities. The practice, initiated by our dandies, of smoking cigars is universal; and the detestable custom which, however, obtains in Paris, of spitting on floors or in boxes, is far from being abandoned, though it is on the wane. These, with waiters who believe that they, too, are gentlemen, seem to form the great drawbacks in the estimation of the superior class of British visitors on American society."

How changed all this is every traveller can testify.

There are two city halls close together; the old and the new. Neither has much to boast of. The latter is memorable for the enormous frauds connected with its erection

under "Boss" (Dutch for master) Tweed, causing a building, which ought to have cost perhaps £50,000, to cost the taxpayers about £1,000,000. Tweed expiated his offences by dying in prison. From either side of the City Hall Park two main thoroughfares, Broadway and the Bowery, lead up to Union Square, which stands to New York in much the same relation that Trafalgar Square does to London.

The Bowery is an eminently representative street, full of "museums," of "the pink-eyed lady, Prooshan dwarf, and livin' skeleton" type, and takes its name from the old Bouerie farm of Governor Stuyvesant, a famous Dutch Governor of New York, whose descendants now derive some £50,000 a year from this property. Between the Bowery, up which the elevated railroad runs, and the water of Long Island Sound, is the German quarter, where reside the majority of New York's 300,000 German inhabitants. Proceeding, then, up Broadway we reach Union Square; conspicuous on the west side of it stands the celebrated shop known as Tiffany's—the head centre in the United States for jewels, china, and works of art. Funny incidents sometimes occur at this establishment through the eccentric behaviour of *nouveaux riches* of both sexes. The wife of an Oregon lumber dealer cut short the tedious packing up of trinkets worth hundreds of pounds by opening a huge cotton handkerchief, placing her purchases in it,

and tying it up at the corners and marching out of the shop. A short bit of Broadway connects Union and Madison Squares. The latter is the show square of the city. On the east stands the Fifth Avenue Hotel, which, until the Windsor, about a mile above it, also in Fifth Avenue, was built, was regarded as the *ne plus ultra* of big American hotels.

A misapprehension still current in England is that Americans of the wealthier class live chiefly in hotels. A very small proportion of them reside in such establishments; but in the larger cities, and more especially in New York, apartment houses, on the Parisian plan, at rents suitable for

all sorts of persons, have of late years come very much into vogue. Rents for private houses are extremely high, ranging for unfurnished houses in the best situations from £600 to £1,200 a year; for furnished houses as much as £1,500 is often given. New York houses, while built with a great aim at economizing space, are admirably arranged for domestic convenience. Kitchen, dining-room, and pantry are in close connection. The last adjoins the dining-room, and the pantry communicates by a lift with the kitchen, so that there is no carrying to be done. At least one bath-room, with hot and cold water laid on, is to be found in almost every house. Whilst almost all New



The Vanderbilt Mansions, Fifth Avenue.

York houses have open fireplaces in every room, a furnace in the basement carries warm air throughout the entire house. In fact, indoor cold is unknown; but servants have to be carefully looked after to induce them to keep up a healthy and even temperature. Some people will not have a furnace, preferring a large stove in the hall. One drawback to ordinary New York houses is (as in London) their monotonous uniformity; another is their narrowness. A house built to let, in a first-rate side street, at a rental of £700 a year (the landlord does all repairs), will only have a narrow passage hall about eight feet wide, and two moderate-sized long and narrow reception rooms, communicating by folding doors. Houses are rarely leased

for over three years, and rents fluctuate with the times. After the panic of 1873 they fell for three years about one-third.

The chief owners of fashionable residential property in New York are the brothers Astor. Their grandfather, son of a Jewish butcher at Waldorf, Germany, came to New York as a musical instrument agent for his brother, who had settled in London and sold pianos (I have seen the plate of a piano bearing his name) in Cornhill, London. J. J. Astor subsequently went into the fur trade, and made much money, which he invested in real estate, in various parts of New York, foreseeing the future growth of the city. He lived to see his expectations realised and left property worth some £2,000,000.



The West Side Elevated Railroad.

I remember an eminent New York physician, Dr. Wilkes (a great-nephew of the celebrated John Wilkes), telling me how his father had made a voyage to New York in one of the great sailing packets, which in those days were famous for their admirable accommodation. The captain was a pronounced British "tar" of the bull-dog breed, and a bit of a martinet. He used to be dreadfully wrath at "that d——d dirty German, sir! a second-class passenger, who will persist in coming on the quarter-deck!"—sacred to the tread of the saloon-passengers. Mr. Wilkes used to plead for the German and say, "Oh, we don't mind," &c. The German came to die America's wealthiest son, in the person of J. J. Astor, and in later days often laughingly reminded Dr. Wilkes of the incident. Mr. J. J. Astor left most of his wealth to his son, W. B. Astor, who was carefully educated, in part by Baron Bunsen, and died only a few years ago, leaving property valued—at a time, too, of severe depreciation—at £8,000,000, and producing an income of not less than £400,000 at the lowest. About two-thirds of this he divided between his sons, John and William, who live in spacious but otherwise quite unostentatious abodes in Fifth Avenue. Their property continues to grow in value. It embraces land in all parts of the city.

There are many other families who have grown rich simply by the "unearned increment" arising from their New York properties. The Rhinelanders (the descendants of a successful German sugar-baker, who emigrated towards the close of the last century), who have amongst them about £120,000 a year, present a notable instance in point. It has been much noticed in the history of the United States that the descendants of the men who came to America for political reasons have distinguished themselves "in arms, in arts, in song," and statesmanship; whilst those who, like the Astors and Rhinelanders, came simply "on the make," have become conspicuous for their money, but for nothing else. The men, in fact, who really made and yet make the fame of their country are the descendants of the original English settlers.

At the corner of Thirty-fourth Street and Fifth Avenue stands a large white marble mansion, utterly devoid of architectural merit, built by a leading local celebrity, who died some ten years ago, A. T. Stewart. Mr. Stewart was an Ulster man, "hard as nails," who put his patrimony of about £1,000 into "dry goods," and started a shop in New York. He was honest and able, but grasping,

insympathetic, and oppressive to those in his employ, out of whom, with the aid of a lieutenant even harder and harsher than himself, he squeezed a maximum of labour with a minimum of remuneration. He died unregretted and childless, leaving vast wealth, and his remains were stolen by body-snatchers in hopes of a ransom. Whether the body was recovered or not remains a mystery to this hour, but it is generally believed that it now rests beneath a sarcophagus in a church erected by his widow a few miles from New York. Stewart during the war cleared as much as from £600,000 to £800,000 a year. Towards the close of his life he built a "Home for Working Women." It proved an utter failure, as the women refused to live under the stringent conditions he imposed, and was speedily turned into a hotel. Mr. Stewart already had two hotels.

One of these establishments came into extraordinary prominence in 1879, in consequence of the administrator of his estate ordering that no Jews should be admitted, inasmuch as they were not desirable guests, and were generally obnoxious to those of other persuasions. It so happened that the Jew first presenting himself was Mr. Seligmann, head of a great banking firm, who naturally was highly indignant. Public opinion, curiously enough, sustained in a considerable degree the exclusion of Jews. The explanation is found in the fact of emigrant Jews of a very low class, who had acquired money but not manners, having invaded first-class hotels and made themselves highly obnoxious to the guests. In fact, a large number of hotel-keepers had practically, by extra high charges or pretending that they had no rooms, been already excluding objectionable Hebrews.

Farther up the Avenue, on the same side, we come to the celebrated abodes of the Vanderbilt family. The "cradle of the race" on American soil was Staten Island, in New York harbour, where the late Commodore Vanderbilt's father grew vegetables, which his son sold to vessels in harbour; and when the Commodore was worth millions he lived, and subsequently died, in a very unpretentious house near the centre of the city; but these grand mansions were nevertheless a scheme of his with a view to secure for his descendants a social position. This they have undoubtedly done. Prior to their erection the Vanderbilts, their enormous wealth notwithstanding, were not "in society." The late Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt's house—now his widow's—cost, with the furniture, about

£600,000. Its most attractive feature is the picture-gallery, containing an unrivalled collection of the modern French school, but (which has been, of course, much remarked) no pictures by American artists. In the dining-room is a magnificent window in stained glass, depicting the Field of the Cloth of Gold, by Oudinot, of Paris. Connected with the chief Vanderbilt mansion are two splendid houses, built by Mr. Vanderbilt for his daughters, who thus have their own separate homes, but practically under one roof with their mother.

The Roman Catholic cathedral is the most striking object in this part of Fifth Avenue. It stands out with the exceptional prominence Catholic churches so often have, when the city is viewed from a distance. Its style is Gothic, and the edifice bears a resemblance to the cathedral of Venice. It is completed, with the exception of the spires, which will, with the lantern upon them, rise to a total height of 330 feet. Archbishop McClosky, a native of Brooklyn and the first American cardinal, died two years ago, having lived to see the cathedral opened for worship.

Being so long and narrow, transit was a crucial difficulty on Manhattan Island until the elevated railroad, long established along the border of the western side of the island, was, about ten years ago, erected on two of the main arteries near the centre, and has gradually been extended beyond the northern boundary of the island into Westchester county. Rapid transit had become so all-important a consideration as to override all other. The railroad is, of course, a great disfigurement to the streets it traverses, and in some cases an insufferable nuisance to those whose houses it passes, whose comfort and pecuniary interest was, without compensation, ruthlessly sacrificed to the public convenience, or, rather, to the interests of the main promoters of the concern, amongst whom Mr. Cyrus Field was the most conspicuous. The fare is uniform, irrespective of distance. At one point the railroad is 63 feet in height.

In the last fifteen years clubs have increased and multiplied exceedingly in New York. The leading club, socially considered, is the Union; the entrance fee is £80 and the annual subscription £20. Nearly all the clubs of New York have very heavy entrance and subscription fees. The Union Club has a fine mansion on Fifth Avenue, with spacious rooms, handsomely appointed, and a very good *cuisine*. Kitchen and dining-rooms are at the top of the house, to avoid

odours. Ascent is by a sumptuous lift, or elevator, as the Americans call it. The Union League Club, which occupies a most sumptuous edifice, though not in the best of taste, was established during the war. It is political, and by no means socially select. The Century, which is not a dining club, is a sort of mixture of the London Garrick, Savage, and Athenæum. With many merits, it does not commend itself to those who do not love to sit in clouds of tobacco smoke. None of these clubs have the fine libraries which Englishmen look for in similar resorts, and they are too much framed for the enjoyment of the long-pursed. This, however, does not apply to the Century.

There are two public libraries, both the gift of individuals, in the city: the Astor, founded and endowed by John Jacob Astor, has received considerable additional benefactions from his family, and is an admirable collection and on a very extensive scale; the Lennox, founded by another citizen, also wealthy through the enormously increased value of real estate, occupies a fine building opposite Central Park. It is, however, so much under the control of a superintendent, whose endeavour appears to be to keep people out of it, that its interior is a *terra incognita* to the general public.

The great library for hiring books is the Mercantile. It was originally instituted for clerks, but the general public has its advantages on a very moderate payment. It is a very large collection.

New York is a city of restaurants; no place offers a greater variety of food or liquor. The name of Delmonico, whose "up-town" house is in Madison Square, is now world-famous. The founder of this famous family of caterers was a young sea-captain from the Swiss-Italian canton of Ticino, who came to New York in 1825 in command of a Cuban vessel, and recognised the great future of the city. In 1827 he returned with his brother Peter (Ticino is a canton of cooks), and they presently started the establishment which was destined to become the greatest of its kind in the world. For many years the Delmonicos have had four restaurants in the city. One of them, "down town," at the junction of Beaver Street and William Street, was started so far back as 1837, and has had a considerable proportion of the celebrities of the world during the last fifty years beneath its roof. Here Louis Napoleon was wont to dine, and here, too, used to dine the Prince de Joinville, when in command of a frigate lying in New York harbour in 1840. In 1861 the

Delmonicos established an up-town (equivalent to West-end in London) house, which

became the head centre for public banquets, balls, and entertainments of all kinds. But in 1876 the growth of New York had become so rapid that Delmonico moved nearly a mile farther up town, to Madison Square. "Delmonico's" is a leading institution of the

Empire City; there is no establishment of its kind so prominent elsewhere. The prices are exceedingly high, but the accommodation is, on the whole, correspondingly superior. The profits of this firm during the war were fabulous; they had an immense stock of wines laid in prior to the heavy duties being imposed, and they subsequently sold at prices to correspond with the duties. It was in this way that Mr. Paran Stevens too, who "ran" the Fifth Avenue and many other hotels, made a colossal income. To give an idea of Delmonico's prices in 1866, just after the war, a breakfast cup of coffee and milk cost 1s. 8d., the contents of a pint bottle of Bass 2s. The Delmonicos made immense wealth out of their business; they have been a highly reputable and respected family. I do not think one now remains, but the business is still carried on. Within five minutes' walk of Union Square you may get a dinner cooked in the American, English, German, Italian, or Spanish style, with the wines and beers of all countries. In the great "beer gardens" which

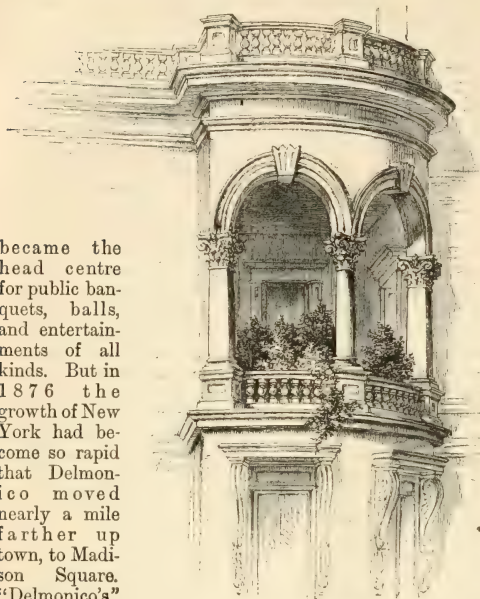
abound, are to be found some fifteen different kinds of beer, foreign and domestic, always on draught, and kept cool by ice. Several of these establishments (open summer and winter) have bands every evening. There is no charge for admission, and a visitor need merely call for a glass of beer. These places came into being about twelve years ago; they owe their existence to Germans, but Americans soon took very kindly to them, and it is much to be wished that Englishmen and Scotchmen had places on the same lines. There is no disorder or drunkenness (spirits are very rarely sold), simply pleasant sociability. Supper is to be had at these resorts; at some of them hot suppers are served up to midnight.

"The glory of the town" is Central Park, which, by the extraordinarily rapid growth of the city, really deserves its name. Thirty years ago it was a wilderness of swamp and rock, to-day it is a magnificent pleasure-ground, though somewhat too artificially ornate for English tastes. Its area is 843 acres,

and it has been admirably laid out with a view to varied effects. The greatest drawback to its enjoyment is that, except on certain days, and then only in certain places, it is forbidden to walk on the grass. An exemption is made on occasion in favour of lawn tennis and cricket clubs. The total cost of Central Park to the city up to January, 1870, was over £2,000,000, and the valuation of the three wards surrounding the park rose from £7,200,000 in 1859 to over £30,000,000 in 1869. On the west side of Central Park, at a short distance, is Riverside Park, beautifully situated on a high bluff above the Hudson River. Here lie the remains of General Grant, under a most costly monument.

In the foregoing I have been prevented by the exigencies of space from doing more than sketch an outline of the greatest American city, yet I have, I hope, said enough to convey to the mind of a reader a sufficiently clear picture of a place which each year becomes of greater importance.

REGINALD WYNFORD.



A New York Window.

HER TWO MILLIONS.

By WILLIAM WESTALL,

AUTHOR OF "RED RYVINGTON," "THE PHANTOM CITY," "TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF," ETC.

CHAPTER LXVIII.—THE JUDGMENT.

IF Alfred and Vera had ever cherished any illusions as to the issue of the suit, they cherished them no longer. They looked upon the fortune as absolutely gone, and felt that, as touching their future, they must trust to themselves alone. And they had no cause for discouragement. As yet Balmaine's part in the *Day* was almost a sinecure. The editor now and again asked him to write an article or review a book, and he once acted for a fortnight as the foreign sub-editor's substitute, but the salary he received was rather a retainer than a remuneration for services actually rendered. He had ample time, as well for editing the *Guide* as for other work, and was gradually forming an outside connection which produced an acceptable addition to his income. One way and another he was earning from six to seven hundred a year; Vera half as much, and she was at work on a painting by which she expected to make something very nice indeed.

In these circumstances there was no reason why they should not marry as soon as they had saved enough to furnish, and as they spent little they could look forward to an early consummation of their hopes.

Cora, practical as usual, counselled prudence, and advised the lovers not to be in too great a hurry. They could not tell what might happen; their incomes were precarious, and it would be well for them, before beginning housekeeping, to have a few hundred pounds to the good, in addition to the amount required for furnishing.

But prudence and young love do not often go together. Alfred called his cousin a Job's comforter, and inquired whether, if George and she were equally well off, they would not make haste to marry; a question which Cora thought it expedient to evade by saying something about the foolishness and impetuosity of men. As for Vera, judging by the Vaudois and not by the Grosvenor Square standard of comfort, she thought they would be rich beyond the dreams of avarice. For the rest, she left everything to *mon cher ami*, as she generally called Alfred, and he being thus constituted the arbiter of their destinies, decided that they should be married as soon as they could find and furnish a house.

The house was found in the neighbourhood of Regent's Park, and was tastefully and artistically, though not luxuriously furnished, for Balmaine was determined that his wife should have a pleasant and cheerful home.

They had hardly returned from their short wedding trip to the English lakes, when Alfred received a letter from Artful and Higginbottom, headed "*Hardy versus Hardy*," asking him to be good enough to make an early call at the office in Lincoln's Inn Fields; a request with which he promptly complied, for although Cora, Vera, and himself had wisely resolved to discuss the question as little as might be, and were rather weary of it, they could not help taking a warm interest in the case, and wondering often, both mentally and audibly, how it would end.

Mr. Artful thought that judgment would be given in the course of a month.

"In what sense?" asked Alfred.

"That I cannot say, though I have my opinion. But one point is settled—Saintly Sam won't get the fortune. We have knocked the wind out of his sails at any rate."

"I am very glad to hear it. How?"

"It was your friend Warton's doing. A sharp fellow, Warton. I sent him down to Calder to look up the antecedents of the John Hardy of that place, and pick a hole if he could in the evidence of that man Clutterbuck. He went several times, and in the end hit on a notable discovery. The morality of your native town, some seventy or eighty years ago, does not seem to have been absolutely irreproachable, Mr. Balmaine."

"Is that the notable discovery?" said Alfred, amused as much by the remark as by the gravity and pomposity with which it was made.

"So much so that if the Hardys had always been strictly moral our esteemed friend Samuel would in all probability have come into the Hardy fortune."

"I am thankful they were not, then. But do you really mean that the judgment of the court will be influenced by the condition of Calder morality more than half a century since? You are joking, Mr. Artful."

"I never joke, Mr. Balmaine," returned the old gentleman with some asperity. And he never did intentionally. "What I mean is that

two or three generations ago it was no uncommon practice at Calder for even respectable people not to marry until they began to have a family, and Warton has discovered that John Hardy was christened on the day his father and mother were married."

And the lawyer, after taking a pinch of snuff and wringing his parchment-like face into a self-complacent smile, blew into his pocket-handkerchief a blast of triumph.

"An interesting fact in the history of the Hardy family, I daresay," said Alfred, who was both puzzled and amused by these demonstrations; "but I really don't see what bearing it has on the case of Hardy *versus* Hardy."

"You really don't?"

"I really don't," repeated Alfred, trying his very hardest to think what the old fellow was driving at.

"I am surprised. I thought everybody was aware—don't you perceive, my dear sir, that the testator being illegitimate—*nulli filius sua filia*—no Hardy except his own lawful issue could inherit a shilling of his money unless he had willed it to them, and of that there is no question. So let Saintry Samuel prove ever so conclusively that his John Hardy and our John Hardy are one and the same man he cannot touch a farthing of the fortune. He and the other members of the Company are claiming as next-of-kin, and in the eye of the law a person of illegitimate birth has no kin but his own parents and his own children."

"So the Fortune Company are quite out of the running?"

"Quite, and serve them quite right."

A few weeks later Balmaine went to the Vice-Chancellor's Court to hear the delivery of his judgment. It was a long rigmorale, as judgments generally are. There were many things set forth in it with which the reader is already acquainted, and some which it would not interest him to repeat. The general conclusion of the whole matter was that, in the opinion of the court, neither party to the suit was entitled to the fortune. Whether the testator and John Hardy of Calder were one and the same person was not germane to the issue, inasmuch as the John Hardy in question, being illegitimate, it was not in the nature of things that the Calder Hardys could be his next-of-kin or legal representatives. On the other hand, as the marriage of Philip Hardy and Vera Leonino had not been established to the satisfaction of the court, and as Philip Hardy not

only left no will, but pre-deceased his father, the elder Hardy died practically intestate and without any issue who could inherit his fortune. For these reasons the estate would escheat to the Crown. The Vice-Chancellor came to this conclusion with regret. He regarded it as morally certain that Philip Hardy and Vera Leonino were legally married, a fact which he trusted that Mrs. Balmaine, with whom he expressed great sympathy, would, sooner or later, be able to establish to the satisfaction of that or some other court. He had no fault to find with the conduct of the testator's trustees; they had behaved admirably throughout, and their costs would be costs in the suit. As for the Calder Hardys, who, he understood, had formed a company for the prosecution of the claim, and with whom he had no sympathy whatever, he should decline to make an analogous order. As they had contested the proceedings, and failed to prove their case, they must themselves pay their costs.

"Is this what you expected?" asked Alfred of Artful as they left the court together.

"It was not possible to expect anything better. And you heard what the Vice-Chancellor said, that he hoped your wife would be able to prove her father and mother's marriage."

"And in that case?"

"The Crown would have to disgorge."

"A disappointment for us," put in Warton, "but a terribly dry wipe for Saintry Sam. He holds nearly all the shares, which are now of course utterly worthless, and they say it will cost him ten thousand pounds in addition."

"Serve him right, serve the rascal right!" said Artful vindictively. "I wish it had cost him twenty thousand! But I don't despair, Mr. Balmaine; we may find those witnesses even yet."

CHAPTER LXIX.—TROUBLES.

DESPITE the Vice-Chancellor's sympathy, and the faint hope held out by the old lawyer, Alfred and Vera regarded the fortune as irrevocably gone. They were agreed that though they would far rather it should revert to the Crown than go to Saintry Sam, they could put it to better use than either one or the other. But they were too happy and too much wrapped up in each other to let the loss trouble them. Vera laughingly declared that though she had lost her fortune she had found a perfect treasure of a husband, and so gained by the exchange; a com-

pliment which Alfred answered by saying that he would infinitely rather have Vera without the millions than the millions without Vera. And so both were content. They had enough for their wants, and enough is as good as a feast.

For a time all went well with the young couple. His study was her studio, and while he wrought with his pen she plied pencil and brush. As a rule they worked silently, but now and again Vera would ask her husband's opinion either on a sketch she had finished, or as to the meaning of an author whose work she was illustrating, and he, after putting the last touches to an article or an essay would read it aloud, and invite her criticism, which he often found both acute and suggestive. Then of an evening Cora or some other friend would drop in, or they would go out to a concert or the play, entertainments for which Alfred had occasionally an order from the paper, and at least once a week they paid a visit to some picture-gallery.

Thus the Balmains were as happy in their lives as they were prosperous in their circumstances; for prosperity, like poverty, depends less on the amount of a man's income than on the ratio between his wants and the means of gratifying them. To some people—the Leytons, for instance—the Balmains' eight hundred a year or thereabouts would have seemed little better than nothing at all; for Alfred and Vera, though they had all they needed and lived refined lives, it was more than enough. Not that they were so imprudent as to spend the whole of it; he knew too well the value of money to be extravagant, and she had been bred to look on waste as a sin. In theory they limited their expenditure to four hundred a year, but in practice it came to somewhat more, for their rent was rather high, and they seemed never to have done paying rates and taxes. Moreover, Alfred had insured his life rather heavily, and Vera would not have been happy if they had not spared something for the disinherited, to whom she herself now belonged. One way and another their outgoings were not much less than forty pounds a month; yet this being little more than half their estimated income, it never occurred to them that they were exceeding the bounds of prudence; and when Vera once dropped a hint to that effect, Alfred received it so ill that she did not venture to repeat the experiment.

All went on well for a few months, and then the tide of prosperity began to ebb.

The first check was Vera's illness. It was not a very serious illness, nor could the cause be considered as either abnormal or alarming, nevertheless it quite incapacitated her for work. The sketching and painting had to be given up, and they were poorer by the five or six guineas a week she had been earning. Yet even with this lessening of their resources—which they regarded, perhaps too hopefully, as only temporary—they were by no means badly off, as Alfred, whose reputation as a journalist was steadily growing, could now reckon his gains at nearly fifty pounds a month. But misfortune, says the proverb, never comes singly; and one day, when Balmaine went to the office of the *Financial Guide*, which adjoined that of Mr. Wilkins, he was called in by the great financier and informed that the magazine was about to be given up. For his own part he was quite willing to go on, believing that sooner or later it would become a paying concern; but the outgoings were heavy, the receipts almost *nil*, and his associates in the enterprise had resolved to drop it at the end of the current month. Mr. Wilkins was very sorry, and if he could throw anything in Balmaine's way he should only be too glad to do so.

Alfred said very little. He could not press the proprietors to go on losing their money for his benefit, but he went home with a heavy heart. At a stroke his income was diminished by two hundred a year; and as the furnishing and *et ceteras* had, as they pretty nearly always do, cost a good deal more than was expected, the young couple had very little beforehand. Well, he must work harder, and try to make up the deficit that way. When he told Cora what had happened, she insisted on dismissing one of their two servants and effecting other economies; for they now realised for the first time the extreme precariousness of their income, and Alfred asked himself in alarm what would become of them if he should fall ill, or lose his place on the *Day*. Cora was right after all; they should have waited a little longer; and when he saw his wife, notwithstanding her suffering, going about her household duties or bravely trying to resume her drawing, he reproached himself bitterly for the want of prudence and forethought which had landed them in such a strait.

After a while the *Day* began to make more demands on him, and this, though gratifying as showing that the editor's confidence in him was unimpaired, left him little leisure for outside work, for he had to be absent

from home the greater part of the day, sometimes nearly all night. One of the tasks assigned to him at this time was visiting the slums of London, and writing realistic descriptions of the lives and habits of the lower classes of the population. He was next dispatched, as special correspondent, to the Black Country, to report about a big strike, and remained there several weeks. He saved something on his allowance for expenses, but his income from all sources was reduced to little more than the salary he received from the paper, to which his time was now almost exclusively given. But though considerations connected with pounds, shillings, and pence weighed heavily on his mind, Alfred's greatest anxiety was the necessity of leaving Vera so much by herself. It was, in truth, a weary time for the poor girl, and as she lay on her sofa in the little studio, listening to the patter of the rain against the windows, watching the stunted trees as they bent to the autumnal blast, or gazing blankly at a pea-soup fog, her thoughts would go back to *Canton Vaud si beau*, and the happy days she had spent on the shores of the lake and in the enchanted region of the Waadtland Alps. Would she ever see them again, those scenes endeared by so many associations, and where nature, whatever might be her moods, was always either beautiful or grand? Alfred and she had talked of going to Switzerland the following summer and visiting together some of the places they knew so well and loved so much. But there was no chance of that now, for even if there were no other reason they could not afford the expense of the journey. And then she turned to reckoning, as she often did, how much it was costing them to live. Rent and rates ran away with two pounds a week—a great deal too much for their circumstances, but as they had unfortunately taken the house on a three years' agreement, there was no remedy readily apparent. That left four pounds for everything else, little enough, yet still sufficient with care to make both ends meet, especially while Alfred was away, for she had a very poor appetite, and her maid-of-all-work was fortunately not a big eater. Poor Alfred! how hard he had to work, and how worn he was beginning to look. If she could only help him more! But she could do nothing—nothing, except lie wearily on the sofa, and drag herself sometimes to the kitchen to see what Mary was doing. For the first time Vera regretted the loss of her fortune, and appreciated the advantages of wealth. A hundredth part of the income which she once

thought her own but which was now wrongly withheld from her, would not merely free them from anxiety, it would set them at ease—make them rich. Yet three hundred a year was by no means a bad income. How many were there whom it would make happy, who would regard it as positive affluence. And Vera had a vision of a little chalet in some mountain valley, watered by a snow-born stream, and commanding a view over a blue lake and white-browed Alps, herself dividing her time between her dairy and her easel, and Alfred writing articles for the *Day*, or still better, a book which should bring him honour and reward. With three hundred a year on which they could depend this might be done, and she would not ask for more. Even as matters stood, if they could depend on their present income there would be no reason for despondency, but both Alfred and herself were continually haunted by the fear that this, too, might take to itself wings and fly away. And then—no, she would not anticipate anything so dreadful; she would try as her husband, in the letter she had that morning received from him, advised, to be patient, and hope for the best. Anxiety, weakness, and indisposition had for the moment dulled, if they had not quenched, her enthusiasm in the cause of humanity. Her mind ran chiefly on matters connected with Alfred and herself, and the impending event which it was possible she might not survive; and she understood, as she had never understood before, how hard it is for people who have troubles of their own to give much heed to the troubles of others. The world's seeming selfishness is, in great part, due to the engrossing nature of the struggle for existence in which the majority are engaged.

After a while, the big strike being over, Alfred, to Vera's great joy, came home. She was never unhappy when he was near. But she saw with concern that he was far from well, and on the day after his return he became so much worse that she insisted on sending for a doctor, who pronounced the illness to be typhoid fever, the seeds of which Alfred had brought with him from the Black Country. This was a terrible blow, and more than confirmed Vera's worst forebodings. She sent for Cora; and informed the manager of the *Day* of her husband's illness. Cora came at once and rendered all the help in her power; and the *Day*, besides paying his full salary, made frequent inquiries about him. The fever, moreover, was not of a bad type. For all that, it was an anxious time, and Alfred had no

sooner been pronounced out of danger than Vera became the mother of a little boy. She got well over her trouble, but her gladness was turned into sorrow when she learnt that her baby was so weak—owing, as the doctor thought, to her anxieties and exertions during Alfred's illness—that it was hardly possible for him to live more than a few days or weeks. Nor did he. After a brief struggle the flickering lamp went out, and Vera, with bitter tears and an aching heart, saw her first-born taken away to be laid in the cold ground.

But her grief was lightened by her husband's loving sympathy; his rapid recovery removed a great weight from her mind, and she found further solace in the resumption of her artistic work. And she resumed it none too soon, for their savings were quite exhausted, and they were now entirely dependent on the weekly remittance from the office of the *Day*.

CHAPTER LXX.—AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

WHEN Balmaine reported himself at the office as fit for duty the Franco-German war had been going on several months, the siege of Paris was drawing to a close, and Mr. Nonpareil, after congratulating him on his recovery, warned him to be in readiness to proceed to the French capital the moment it should be open.

The *Day's* correspondents had stuck to their posts during the siege and sent many communications by the pigeon express; but one had fallen seriously ill, and the other was so weakened by privation that both would have to be relieved, and Alfred, with two other members of the staff, had been appointed to take their places—for how long they had no idea. His two colleagues would look after political matters, while to him was assigned the special duty of going about the city, describing its appearance after the bombardment, and the condition and temper of the populace. It was the duty he would himself have chosen, and he rightly took the appointment as a decided compliment and an acknowledgment that his previous services had given satisfaction to the proprietors of the paper. His salary was also raised, but as he had to defray out of it his personal expenses in Paris, the increase did not add materially to his means. But it was a step in the right direction, and he felt that his prospects were again improving. The only drawback was the necessity of leaving Vera in London, for as the new appointment might not be permanent it would have been

imprudent for him to take her with him, even had peace been definitively concluded.

Vera, however, though greatly pleased with her husband's promotion, did not much like the idea of his going to Paris so soon after the siege. She feared that he was running into danger; but Alfred reassured her by pointing out that, as the city had capitulated and the Germans held it at their mercy, there was no chance of a renewal of hostilities, and that a stay there involved little if any more risk than a stay in London. It was arranged that Cora should be her guest during his absence; so Vera would not be alone, and he left home with a comparatively easy mind.

"Where are you going to put up, Balmaine?" asked one of his *Day* friends, as he was on the point of starting.

"I have no idea. Can you recommend me a place?"

"I can, if you want to get really into the heart of Paris. There is a little hotel in the Quartier Latin—if it has not been smashed by a Prussian shell—that I think would be just the thing. I once stayed there a few weeks and found it very comfortable. But it is a Bohemian sort of place, I must tell you, and you are not likely to meet any English there."

"So much the better. What is it called?"

"Hôtel des Miracles, Rue des Apôtres, kept by Madame Veuve Merveille."

"Thanks, I will go there," answered Balmaine, making a mem. in his note-book.

"Make my *amitiés* to Madame Merveille—if the Prussians have left her alive," said the other, who had a mortal hatred of everything German. "Tell her I sent you, and she will treat you well."

Balmaine arrived at Paris with the first train of provisions for the famished inhabitants, and witnessed and described their distribution and some other scenes; and he had good reason to believe that his letters and despatches gave satisfaction to the conductors of the *Day*, and were read with interest by its readers. But he had soon still more stirring incidents to describe—the Communist rising and the second siege of Paris. At first he rather sympathised with the movement. Among the leaders were men whose sole aim was the good of their kind, and who would gladly have sacrificed their lives if thereby they might establish that ideal justice for which the noblest spirits of all ages have yearned and striven. Their principles may be summed up in the memorable words uttered nearly nineteen centuries ago, "Peace

on earth and good will to men." Nor were their demands unreasonable; and if the Versailles government had shown more forbearance and discretion at the outset the horrors that afterwards came to pass might have been avoided. But when the scum of Paris rose to the surface, and the Communist Council began to vote decrees for closing churches, proscribing priests, and forcing capitalists to "disgorge," all chance of success or a peaceful termination of the strife vanished. The Commune had signed its death-warrant, and its overthrow only became a question of time.

Whoever, like Balmaine, saw Paris under the Red Flag must have afterwards found any stage burlesque tame in comparison. Louise Michel took possession of the pulpit of St. Eustache and shrieked lectures on the rights of women, and showered denunciations on the wretches of the bourgeoisie. Another creature set up as a priestess in the cathedral of Notre-Dame. Citoyen Eudes and a gang of loose women, decked with red ribbons and adorned with crosses, held high revelry in the Palace of the Legion of Honour, while the Tuileries, the Elysée, and other Government buildings were filled from night to morning and from morning to night with drunken ruffians in much braided tunics and broad sashes, who smoked, played cards, and sent out squads of privates to requisition wine from the cellars of private houses, whose owners had fled in affright from the doomed city.

All this Balmaine described in letters that, despite the prevailing disorder, he found no difficulty in dispatching. But in order to obtain materials for his correspondence he had to move continually about, and was several times in great danger. Once he was impressed, forced to shoulder a musket, and take part in a skirmish. He might, of course, have refused, but only at the price of his liberty or his life, while by pretending compliance he contrived to get away without much trouble. On another occasion he had the alternative offered him of working all night at a barricade or being marched off to prison. He wisely preferred the former, and at daybreak the commander gave him a breakfast and let him go. When he related this adventure to Madame Merveille, who, since she knew he had left a young wife in London, had taken a warm interest in his welfare, she besought him to stay at home.

"You never go out," she said, "that I do not fear you will never return. One of these days that *canaille* will kill you, as they killed

the poor Archbishop. If only for the sake of Madame your wife, the beautiful lady so *gentille*, whose portrait you have shown me, you should be prudent."

Alfred explained that if he were to remain all day in the Rue des Apôtres he would be unable to find matter for his correspondence.

"Yes, the Rue des Apôtres is very tranquil, fortunately; but I fear we shall have bad work even here before this is over. I hope Monsieur will never have to put the street in one of his dispatches," observed the landlady with uneasy foreboding.

And then she asked Balmaine whether he had any friends among the Communards.

"Not one. Why do you ask?"

"They might be useful; they could give you protection. If you only knew Monsieur Corfe now!"

"Corfe, Corfe! what Corfe?" said Balmaine, unpleasantly surprised by the mention of his enemy's name.

"An English gentleman who once lodged here, and, I'm sorry to say, has joined the Commune. He is an officer, and has great power, and they say—though that is quite *entre nous*—that he has made a nice little harvest. Now if Monsieur only knew Monsieur Corfe——"

"Know him? Perhaps I do. What is he like, Madame Merveille?"

"Tall, brown hair, hard grey eyes, thin lips, haughty in manner and hasty in temper, carries himself like *un ancien militaire*."

"The same," said Balmaine thoughtfully. He was asking himself what would happen if Corfe and he should meet, for just then the leaders of the Commune could do pretty much as they liked. "Yes, I think I know this Monsieur Corfe, or, rather, I did know him."

"Monsieur and he are not friends then?"

"Not precisely."

"Then I should still more advise Monsieur to stay altogether in the house and keep as quiet as he can. It is not well to have a chief of the Commune for one's enemy."

But Balmaine could not have reconciled the acceptance of Madame Merveille's counsel with the faithful discharge of his duty, even if he had been disposed to take the course she suggested. On the other hand, he could not hide from himself that the danger was a very real one, and he had a strong feeling that sooner or later he and Corfe would cross each other's path. It was a danger, moreover, against which he had no means of guarding. All he could do was to trust in God and keep his powder dry. He

had got the better of this man hitherto, and he hoped to be equally fortunate if they should meet again.

The event which Balmaine foresaw and, to tell the truth, rather feared, was not long in coming to pass.

Going one evening from the Hôtel des Miracles to the office of the *Day*, on the opposite side of the Seine, he had to pass by, or rather through, a company of Communard soldiers, *en bivouac* near the Tuileries.

"*Ma foi*," exclaimed one of them, "that *gaillard* cannot be French; he has not the air."

"Perhaps he is a Prussian," suggested a second.

"Yes, a Prussian spy," hissed a third; "he looks like one."

"*Sac-r-ré nom de dieu*, let us arrest him," shouted a fourth.

The next moment Balmaine was the centre of a ring of bayonets, and it is no imputation on his courage to say that he broke into a cold sweat and wished he was well out of the difficulty. The proximity of lethal weapons to your person can hardly, in any circumstances, be productive of pleasurable sensations. Alfred suspected, moreover, that the Communard muskets were loaded, and the unkempt *sans-culottes* around him looked as if they would no more hesitate to draw a trigger than to drain a wine-cup. But the very extremity of his peril restored his courage, and the moment he realised his position he recovered his presence of mind.

"What does all this mean?" he asked quietly. "You are mistaken; I am no Prussian."

"Who are you then?" asked one who appeared to be in authority.

Balmaine told them his name and calling, and in proof of his statements showed papers and letters, but as his captors knew no language but their own these were of no avail. Then he produced his address card, whereupon the man in authority observed that a card was no proof of identity or good faith, and it would be quite like a Prussian spy to provide himself with a false name and a forged card.

"What shall we do with him then?" asked a fellow with a red beard and a ferocious face, glancing significantly at his chassepot and approaching his bayonet to the small of Alfred's back.

"*Tais-toi, Jules*, I reflect," said the officer. "Yes," after a pause, "that will do. Where is the *Diable-boiteux*? I saw him about just now."

"Behold him, Citizen Captain," pointing to a group close by.

"Good. Make *le Diable-boiteux* advance. He knows the English, he shall interrogate the prisoner."

Why the Communard in question should bear such a name as this was not very apparent, for he was a stalwart, clean-limbed fellow, with a strong squint and as much hair on his head and face as would have stocked a wig-maker's shop.

"Here's a suspected spy, Boiteux, who protests he is English," said the officer, "interrogate the *drôle* in his own tongue, and tell us what you think."

"Perfectly, Citizen Captain," answered the Devil-on-two-sticks, and leaning his hands on his piece his fiendship asked Balmaine a question in a language the like of which the latter had never heard before. It was no more English than Choctaw. Alfred could not understand a word of it. All the same, he listened attentively, and assuming that the fellow meant to ask who and what he was, answered accordingly, speaking slowly and clearly, so that if his questioner knew any English at all he might have no excuse for not understanding him.

But Boiteux evidently understood not a word, for turning to the officer he roundly declared that the prisoner was no more English than himself; and though ignorant of German he had heard it spoken in Alsace and would take his oath that the prisoner was both a Prussian and a spy.

This declaration elicited a chorus of fierce execrations; the bayonets were thrust closer, and Alfred perceived that he was in a very awkward predicament. But whatever he may have felt he showed no sign of fear, and surprised his captors by the coolness of his bearing.

"*Monsieur le Diable* is quite mistaken," he began.

"No *monsieurs* here, if you please," growled one of the Communards.

"Not even when speaking of his satanic majesty?" rejoined Alfred with a jocularly he was far from feeling.

"*Mille tonnerres*, that is worse; we will have no majesties even in hell."

"Well, you look as if you ought to know," said Alfred, smiling.

This time the joke told, all burst into a laugh and the situation became less strained.

"I was going to say," he went on, "that the Citizen Devil is quite mistaken. I have no doubt he knows English quite well, and can read it with ease, though his pronun-

ciation leaves something to be desired, is in fact utterly incomprehensible. His accent has probably become rusty from disuse. Have you no officer who knows English? I would answer his questions with pleasure, and he could see at once that I am a true Englishman and no spy."

"*Ma foi, oui*," said the man in authority, "we have such an officer, and the prisoner's proposal is reasonable. Take him to the Commandant in the Place Vendôme. He has travelled and knows all the languages."

So Balmaine was marched off by his six captors—two before, two behind, and one on either side of him. Two would have been quite enough, but as they could not agree which two it should be, and all were curious as to the issue, perhaps anxious to be in at the death, all went, and Alfred had the honour of being escorted by half-a-dozen Communards armed to the teeth, who, in the event of his failing to clear himself of the suspicion of being a Prussian spy, would, he felt assured, have the greatest possible pleasure in making a target of him.

When they reached the Place Vendôme he was taken to a house at the door whereof two sentinels stood on guard, and on their errand being explained the party were ushered into a large room where several men sat writing.

"Citizen Commandant, behold a prisoner," said one of the six; "he has been denounced as a Prussian spy, but he professes to be an English journalist, and we have brought him here that you may interrogate him in his own tongue and ascertain the truth."

"What brings you here, Balmaine? You are not in luck this time anyhow."

At the same moment the speaker faced towards him and Alfred, who had not previously caught sight of the man's face, saw that the Communard chief before whom he stood was Vernon Corfe.

CHAPTER LXXI.—BEFORE THE ENEMY.

ALFRED made no answer; he was praying Heaven to steel his heart and sharpen his wits, for he foresaw that the struggle before him would be one of life and death. He was in the power of a man from whom he could expect neither justice nor mercy.

"What the mischief brought you here, I say?" repeated Corfe angrily.

"Those men. You may be sure I did not come voluntarily."

"And what do you expect me to do with you?"

"Let me go. I have done no wrong, and as you well know, I am no spy."

"I know nothing of the sort. A sneak like you is capable of anything. As for wrong, you have wronged me in several ways, and it is with me you have to count, my fine Mr. Balmaine."

"Wronged you! How?"

"How? You know right well. You intrigued me out of my place on the *Helvetic News* and robbed me of the girl I was going to marry. What could you have done more?"

As Alfred's reply, if he had replied, would have been either scornful or indignant, he thought it better to hold his tongue.

"You don't answer. You acknowledge that you treated me ill. And you gained nothing by your treachery after all—nor she either. What a terrible sell it must have been for you, Balmaine, when you lost that lawsuit! But if Vera had married me she would have kept her fortune. I could put her in the way of getting it even now. What do you say to that, my fine fellow?"

Alfred, who naturally did not believe a word of this, still kept silence.

"How are you getting your living, Balmaine—still scribbling?"

"I am a journalist, and at present special correspondent of the *Day*."

"Well, I fear that by this time to-morrow the *Day* will have a correspondent the less. I wonder whether they would take me on in your place? I expect it is very nearly U P with this precious Commune. Do you know, I have only to say the word and those fellows will just take you outside and riddle you with bullets, or run you through with their bayonets."

"I know."

"Pon my word, you are very cool about it. If you think I am not in earnest you are deucedly mistaken. However, I will give you one more chance for your life. Write down on this sheet of paper that you pretended to be my friend in order to deceive me, and persuaded Miss Hardy to marry you by telling her a pack of lies—and I will let you go."

"I prefer to die," said Alfred with assumed coolness, for his thoughts were of Vera, and his heart was well-nigh bursting with suppressed emotion. But even to save his life and see her again he would not put his name to a lie. He could see, too, that whatever he might say or do, however he might abase himself, his doom, so far as it depended on Corfe, was sealed.

"Die and be d—d, then," exclaimed Corfe in a rage. "Look here, citizen sol-

diers!" addressing the escort. "I know something about this fellow. His capture does credit to your discrimination, for beyond all doubt he is a Prussian."

"*Mille tonnerres!* Shall we?—"

"Wait a minute. You cannot kill a man for being a Prussian—that is a mere accident of birth; the proceeding would be highly undemocratic. But I have not the least doubt that the prisoner is a spy. His answers are unsatisfactory, the papers found in his possession compromising. I know his antecedents, too, and they are bad. He was a spy of the Prussian police in Geneva."

"You lie!" exclaimed Balmaine, unable any longer to restrain his indignation. "It is you who were a spy in the service of the French Government. I am a British subject, as I can at once prove, if you will conduct me either to the office of the *Day* in the Rue Scribe, or to the Hôtel des Miracles, Rue des Apôtres; and I warn you, Corfe, and all here present, that if you harm me it will be at your peril."

"You are a fool, Balmaine," hissed Corfe savagely. "What use is it to talk of peril to men compromised and desperate as these are? Do you think they stand in awe of your Government, or care a button-top whose subject you are? Take the *mouchard* away, my braves, shoot him on the Trocadéro, and throw his carcase into the river."

"*Allons,*" said the chief man of the six, who seemed to be a corporal, taking Balmaine by the arm; "we will soon dispose of this *gaillard*."

"No, don't do that," exclaimed Corfe with a sardonic glance at his victim. "Better take him to the police station in the Rue de Rivoli while I make some further inquiries. But be sure of this; if you do not hear from me to the contrary before eight o'clock in the morning give him the *coup de grâce*."

"As you will, Citizen Commandant," began the corporal; "but I should think——"

"Let him have some supper and supply him with writing materials. He may want to write to his wife. Give her my kind regards, Balmaine. I hope you will remember me in your will, and that you are properly grateful for the respite I have granted you."

"I might be if I did not guess your motive—murderer, coward, and thief as you are! And I am not your first victim. You killed Esther Brandon on the Mer de Glace, and sooner or later retribution will overtake you."

At the mention of this name Corfe turned

perfectly livid with fear and rage, and fell back in his chair as if he had received a blow.

"Take him away," he shouted hoarsely; "take the *mouchard* away and shoot him to-morrow morning like a dog."

A few minutes later Balmaine was thrust into a small room at the *post* in the Rue de Rivoli and left to his thoughts. The room contained a chair, a table, and a truckle-bed; the windows were strongly barred, a sentinel stood on guard at the door, and at least a score of armed Communards were loitering about the building. Escape seemed to be out of the question. Nevertheless Alfred did not despair; life is sweet, and both for his own sake and for Vera's he had resolved to spare no effort to get out of Corfe's clutches. To this end it was imperative to keep up both his spirits and his strength; so after demanding writing materials, he asked for supper and a bottle of wine. These latter being dispatched, he wrote a letter to his principal colleague at the office of the *Day*, telling him what had happened, and that unless prompt measures were taken he would certainly be shot the next morning at eight o'clock. If he could get this letter into the hands of his friend Laurence, he knew that every possible effort would be made to save him. Then he wrote to Cora, telling her also what had come to pass, and asking her to break the news of his death to Vera with all gentleness.

This letter he enclosed in the one to Laurence with strict injunctions to forward it only in the event of his murder being accomplished.

But how should he get Laurence's letter to its destination? There was only one way—by stratagem and bribery. The sentinel who had obtained him his supper and his writing materials had a good-natured face, and might possibly be persuaded to act as his messenger.

"How soon will you be relieved?" asked Alfred through the keyhole.

"In an hour."

"That is to say at ten o'clock."

"Precisely."

"Good. Would you like to earn two hundred francs, and do an act of kindness at the same time?"

"If Monsieur—I mean if the Citizen Prisoner will tell me how, I shall be delighted to oblige him."

"You have only to take this letter, which I am pushing under the door, to the Rue Scribe, and the *destinataire*, M. Laurence, will

give you the money. As you will see, I have written outside, 'Two hundred francs to be given to the messenger who shall deliver this letter as addressed, before midnight.' I have said before midnight, but the sooner the better."

"*Parfaitement, Monsieur le Prisonnier*—I have not the advantage of knowing your name—your commission shall be executed and the letter delivered before eleven."

This done, Alfred lay down on his truckle-bed, so utterly worn out with the fatigues of the day and the emotions of the last few hours, that, despite the perils that threatened him, he slept well and did not awake until the clocks were striking five. For a minute or two he neither remembered where he was nor what had happened, and only when he saw the first light of dawn struggling feebly through the grated window, and heard the measured tread of the sentry in the street, did he realise his position.

"Five o'clock! In three hours—unless by that time the soldier had delivered his letter and Laurence succeeded in obtaining an order for his release—he would be lying stark and stiff on the Trocadéro. And it seemed to him now that the chances in his favour were much less than he had thought them the night before. The man might not have delivered the letter, after all. Laurence might have failed to convince the Communard leaders of his innocence, and procure a respite, for just then, while the enemy's shells were hurtling through the air and death and destruction stared them in the face, the rebels could be in no merciful mood. But in any case Laurence would surely come to see him, if only to say that he had failed, and to bid him a final farewell—supposing he had got the letter! Only if he had got the letter he would have been there already, or, at least, have sent some message. No friend in such circumstances could do less.

No, the letter had not been delivered; and as the clocks went six Alfred threw himself on his bed with a shudder. He was beginning to lose courage. It is hard for a man in the prime of life and the fulness of his strength to walk through the dark valley and die in cold blood an ignominious death at the hands of men he never harmed, away from those he loves, sustained neither by a hope of posthumous fame nor the consciousness that he is sacrificing his life at the call of honour, or for the good of his kind. How little, how utterly insignificant appeared the trials he had lately undergone as compared with this crowning calamity! Poor Vera! what would

become of her? And then he bowed his head, and prayed both for her and himself, that God, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, would comfort his desolate wife and give him courage to die as a Christian gentleman should.

Seven o'clock! Balmaine was already up and dressed; but he now threw off his clothes and lying down made as if he were asleep. There was still a chance that Laurence might come, and he resolved to delay his departure from the *post* to the latest possible moment.

At half-past seven the door opened and the Communard corporal entered the cell, and placing his heavy hand on Alfred's shoulder shook him roughly.

"Waken up! It is time. *Mille tonnerres!* for one who is going to be shot in half an hour you sleep soundly, young man. It is time, I say."

"Time for what?" said Alfred drowsily, and putting on a surprised look.

"*Ma foi*, time to die. You know what the Citizen Commandant said: eight o'clock at the Trocadéro."

"No, he did not. He said you had to keep me at the *post* until eight o'clock. Besides, I must have time to dress and take my breakfast."

"Dress then, and quickly. But as for breakfast—well, yes, I will order you some. It might be bad for your digestion to die on an empty stomach. Ah! ah!"

And the fellow laughed consumedly.

"Have you money?"

Balmaine gave him a five-franc piece.

"Here, Victor, fetch the prisoner some breakfast and a bottle of wine at twenty sous."

"Two; one for yourself."

"Thank you much. Bring two bottles, Victor."

It was half-past eight before Balmaine had finished his breakfast, and the corporal, besides emptying his own bottle, drank the greater part of Alfred's. But by this time the man's comrades were getting angrily impatient, and the under-officer declared that he could allow no further delay. They must march at once.

Alfred walked slowly, almost automatically, feeling like a man in a dream, yet continually on the alert, for Laurence might come to the *post* at the last moment and reach the Trocadéro in time to save him.

As the escort neared their destination, they met two well-dressed men proceeding in the opposite direction. The strangers

looked at Balmaine pityingly, and he at them with languid curiosity; but the next moment his face brightened with new-born hope, and springing forward with an eager gesture, he shouted:—

“Senarclens, Senarclens, Monsieur Senarclens, dear friend, save me! These men are going to shoot me on suspicion of being a Prussian spy. You can tell them who I am, that I am neither a Prussian nor a spy.”

“But it is not possible,” exclaimed the startled historian, with a look of horrified surprise. “These are honest citizens, they would not put to death an innocent man. This gentleman is Alfred Balmaine, my particular friend; he is the husband of a lady who is as dear to me as my own daughter, and no more a Prussian spy than I am. You must let him go, my friends.”

This the corporal refused to do, albeit he was evidently very much impressed by what he had heard.

Commandant Corfe, he said, had pronounced the prisoner to be a spy and ordered him to be shot on the Trocadéro at eight o’clock.

“Yes,” put in Alfred, “it is Corfe’s doing.”

And then he told M. Senarclens how it had all come about.

“You must not shoot this man,” said Senarclens sternly. “It would be a most shameful murder. Do you know who I am? My name is Senarclens.”

The corporal doffed his hat.

All the world, he said, knew the name of Citizen Senarclens. Was it not one of the glories of France? He should be only too happy to comply with his request, only Citizen Corfe—

“Never mind Citizen Corfe. I will take the responsibility. Be good enough to let my friend go.”

The corporal still refused; but after a little hesitation he agreed to reconduct Balmaine to the police station in the Rue de Rivoli and keep him there while Senarclens procured an official order for his release. The historian took Alfred’s arm, the six soldiers marching respectfully behind. As they came within sight of the post a fiacre was driven in hot haste to the door, and out of it stepped a man pale with excitement who, when he perceived Balmaine, ran towards him with outstretched hands.

“Thank God, I am in time!” he exclaimed fervently; “I was beginning to fear the worst.”

“And the worst would have happened if it had not been for M. Senarclens. It is to him I owe my life,” said Alfred rather bitterly.

“I could not have done more if my own life had been at stake, Balmaine. I only got your letter at four o’clock, and ever since I have been running about from pillar to post. I have not lost a moment. It is not ten minutes since I got the order for your release. Here it is!”

“You will let my friend go now?” said Senarclens, turning to the corporal.

“Certainly; the citizen, who is not a Prussian spy, is no longer my prisoner. He may go. *Au revoir, citizen.*”

“You are very kind,” replied Alfred grimly; “but everything considered, I think I would rather not see you again. *Adieu pour toujours, Citizen Corporal.*”

CHAP. LXXII. M. SENARCLENS IS DISCOURAGED.

THE historian invited Balmaine to walk with him towards his lodgings in the Hausmann boulevard. He seemed much depressed. When he heard of the Commune rising he had hurried to Paris, full of enthusiasm, and firmly believing that a new era had begun, that a socialist republic was being organized which would regenerate France and confer on humanity at large untold blessings. Only a few years, and wars, inequalities, and poverty would cease, Europe become a happy family, and perfect justice be everywhere established. And what did he see? Violent dissensions among the reformers themselves, the usurpation of power by unscrupulous factions, spoliation and oppression, Paris begirt by a circle of fire, and his beloved France, still in possession of the foe, torn by intestine strife and bleeding at every pore.

“But it is not the fault of the socialists,” said Senarclens. “Had they been more united among themselves, and Thiers were not such a wretched little despot, and the Versailles Government had been less cruel and intolerant, and the Empire had not so completely brutalized the population of Paris, all might have gone well.”

“If, if, if,” repeated Alfred rather bitterly. “Why not say at once that if everybody was virtuous all would be happy? Do you not see, my dear M. Senarclens, that while brutality and ignorance, crime and intolerance prevail, they must be taken into account, and that so long as dissensions exist among Communists themselves, you cannot expect brotherly love to reign in the world at

large? Before they try to convince others, let them know their own minds. And I have the most profound distrust in these heroic remedies. I have lately seen a good deal of the poor of three countries—England, Italy, and France—and I am convinced that, though wise laws and efficient administration may effect some improvement in their lot, it is really nothing compared with what they could do for themselves. In other words, you cannot make people happy by Act of Parliament. Suppose, for instance, that the people of this country and of England could be persuaded to reduce their consumption of drink and tobacco by one half, and Christian countries were to disband their armies and refer the settlement of their disputes to a supreme international court, composed, let us say, of the wisest men and best jurists of Europe and America! What a difference it would make! The world would hardly know itself, so great would be the change! And I believe all this will come to pass, but only in one way—by the moral improvement of the masses.”

“You do the masses injustice, M. Balmaine; it is not they alone who are deficient; the upper classes are quite as ignorant, and still more selfish.”

“As selfish, perhaps, yet hardly as ignorant. But never mind that. I was about to say that real progress can be achieved only by improving the *morale* and raising the ideals of all—gentle and simple, rich and poor—by evolution, in fact, not by revolution. And the process is going on, has been going on for ages. I have no objection to socialism. I dare say it will come in its own time; but it must come gradually, and be adopted spontaneously, and, as nearly as possible, unanimously. A majority could no more force socialism on a minority than it could force on them moderation in eating or personal cleanliness. At least that is my opinion.”

“You are for a policy of *laissez faire, laissez passer*, then? It is a policy that has failed, M. Balmaine.”

“It will be time to say so when the experiment has been fairly tried, M. Senarcens. Anyhow, the opposite system does not seem to answer here in France. The most complete *laissez faire* could not well produce much worse results than those we are now witnessing.”

“Perhaps you are right,” returned the historian mournfully. “I sometimes think we should be better without government of any sort. Yes, all this is sad and disheartening,

and I begin to despair of the future of humanity.”

“I do not think there is any reason to despair, M. Senarcens; failures always precede success, and enthusiasts are apt to forget that, so long as men are fallible and mortality and toil are conditions of existence, sorrow and suffering cannot be banished from this world of ours, which for many must always be a vale of tears. We may prolong life but we cannot conquer death.”

“You mean,” said the historian, smiling, “that though we may mend we shall never become perfect.”

“Exactly.”

“In that I quite agree with you. But at any rate let us try to mend, and each in his own sphere do something to make the world a little better than he found it. We shall then prepare the way for the reign of that ideal justice which men have so long desired, and which still seems so far off.”

And then, after a few more words, they separated, not to meet again until both had undergone some further strange experiences.

As Alfred, after calling at the office of the paper, was making for his lodgings he encountered a detachment of weary and depressed-looking Communards, part of a force which had just been defeated close to one of the barriers.

The siege was growing hotter and hotter; an assault might be delivered at any moment, yet there was no sign of yielding, and the besieged were making preparations for a desperate resistance in the very heart of Paris. Barricades were being erected and buildings fortified in every direction, and when Balmaine reached the Rue des Apôtres he found it swarming with insurgents and blocked at both extremities. But on showing a passport with which he had provided himself at the office he was allowed to pass. Poor Madame Merveille was in a state of great agitation and distress. Nearly all her lodgers had fled, she had feared that Balmaine was killed, and was in mortal terror lest her house should be crushed by shells or set on fire by the rebels. For all that, she was determined to stand by her property to the last. If the worst came to the worst she would shut herself up in the cellar, where she had placed a store of provisions sufficient for several days. When she knew that Alfred did not mean to run away like the rest, she fairly hugged him; put her arms on his shoulders, and kissing him on both cheeks declared that she should not charge him another centime. So long as he remained

in Paris he might live at free quarters in the *Hôtel des Miracles*.

A few days later the Versailles troops were inside and the street fighting began. The events that followed are amongst the most terrible that ever happened, even in the bloodstained history of Paris. Balmaine witnessed scenes that burnt themselves ineffaceably into his soul, and made him, like M. Senarclens, almost despair of mankind.

In some of the streets dead bodies were as numerous as autumnal leaves in a country lane; pools of blood as frequent as pools of water after a storm. From La Roquette to Père la Chaise human carcasses lay as thick as the bodies of slaughtered pheasants after a great battue. Horrible as were the excesses perpetrated by the Communards, the atrocities committed by the troops were still more ruthless. To insurgents captured in fight no quarter was given. Prisoners were sorted; those with blackened hands, or shoulders which appeared to have been bruised with the recoil of muskets were shot without mercy. The others were reserved for execution later on, or transportation to Cayenne. No consideration was shown either for age or sex. The mere suspicion of being a Communard, above all a *petroleuse*, was equivalent to a sentence of death without inquiry or trial.

One day, while Alfred was watching from the Place de la Concorde the fires in which the doomed city was wrapped, he saw coming towards him a crowd of howling demoniacs, half-carrying, half-pushing along what at first sight looked like a bundle of rags. The bundle of rags was a woman, limp, helpless, and nearly unconscious; her dress in tatters, her hair dishevelled, and her white, blood-stained face agonised with fear.

"*La petroleuse ! la petroleuse !*" yelled the crowd, and as they reached the point where Balmaine stood an officer stepped forward and, drawing his revolver, blew out the wretched creature's brains.

Balmaine took the trouble to inquire, but cautiously, lest he should draw on himself suspicion of being a Communard, how it was known that the woman was a *petroleuse*—on whose evidence she was accused. But nobody could tell him. *On le dit*, was the only answer he received.

One of the last fights that took place was in the neighbourhood of the *Hôtel des Miracles*. As the other lodgers had fled, and Madame Merveille was hidden in the cellar, the correspondent of the *Day* had the house all to himself, and he watched the operations

partly from an upper window, partly from the *porte cochère* between the tobacco-shop and the hotel. He saw the first attack on the nearest barricade, led by a plucky little officer with a walking-stick, who at the first volley bounded into the air with a scream and then fell flat on his face, stone dead. The insurgents contested the ground inch by inch, and repulsed the troops in the street over and over again. In the meantime, however, another detachment had entered the buildings on either side, and, breaking with pickaxes and crowbars from house to house, they fired on the Communards from the windows, and finally took the barricade in reverse.

Alfred, always on the outlook for incidents wherewith to enrich his correspondence, obtained permission to accompany one of these housebreaking parties; and exciting and perilous work it proved, though he took care to expose himself to no more danger than he could help. To make a hole in a wall big enough to admit a man was generally an affair of a few minutes, whereupon the soldiers would rush through and begin shooting from the windows or, as happened more than once, descend into the street, and engage in a hand-to-hand struggle with the rebels, who, taken between two fires, and knowing that no mercy would be shown them, fought with the ferocity of despair. At length, as night was closing on the murderous scene, they were driven—the few who remained alive—into the very centre of the Rue des Apôtres, and close to the *Hôtel des Miracles*.

And now the end of the struggle is at hand. The soldiers (whose movements Balmaine is following) have reached the house contiguous to the wine-shop, next door to the hotel. They are in a large room in the third story, and while one party is firing from the windows a second is breaking through the next wall. The air is thick with lime-dust and powder-smoke. Two or three wounded men are lying on the floor; every now and again a lump of ceiling, dislodged by a bullet, falls with a crash, and all in the room are as white as millers. A large building on the opposite side of the street is on fire, and the flames throw a lurid light on the fierce, ghastly faces of the fighters, all of them damped with sweat, and some of them streaming with blood.

"*En avant, mes enfants !*" shouts the captain, who stands, sword in hand, near Balmaine, as a big stone is knocked out of the breach in the wall, now wide enough to

admit two men abreast. "Six of you to the windows; the rest follow me into the street, and at them with the bayonet." As the captain speaks, he makes for the hole, his men, among whom is Balmaine, crowding after him. "Ah! who is that? After him, men! after him!"

A man, who seems to have sprung out of the adjoining room, is rushing madly up-stairs, three steps at a stride. The next moment a soldier has him by the heels; he is dragged down in a trice, the captain seizes him by the coat-collar and, shortening his sword, prepares to plunge it into his throat. At the same instant a great sheet of flame from the burning house flares into the sky, and in the writhing and terror-stricken prisoner before him, disguised though he is, Balmaine recognises his erstwhile friend and would-be murderer, Vernon Corfe.

"You are mistaken, you are mistaken!" he screams, putting up his hands to ward off the impending stroke. "I am not a Communist; I was escaping from them; I am an Englishman; and that gentleman there—that gentleman knows me and can tell you that I speak the truth. For heaven's sake save me, Balmaine! It will be worth your while."

Alfred, it need hardly be said, bore Corfe no good-will, nor was he a sufficiently advanced Christian to return good for evil. A few days previously he would probably not have raised a finger to save the murderer from the doom he so richly merited. But he had lately supped full of horrors, he was sickened with slaughter, and could not bear to see this man, murderer and traitor though he was, slain in cold blood before his eyes, if by a word he might obtain him a reprieve.

"Is this so?" asks the officer.

"It is. I know him, and, as he says, he is an Englishman."

"Has he been fighting at the barricades?"

"That I cannot tell you." Balmaine did not feel that he was called upon to save Corfe's life by telling a lie.

"His hands are clean," said the captain; "and that is a good sign; but the circumstances are suspicious. I cannot let him go. He must be sent to the Bicêtre, and justice will decide his fate."

CHAPTER LXXIII.—A MESSAGE FROM CORFE.

A MONTH later Paris had almost resumed its ordinary aspect. True, the blackened ruins of the Hôtel de Ville, the Tuileries, the Conseil d'Etat, and other buildings were there in grim evidence of the havoc so recently wrought by social hatred and civil

strife; but the streets were thronged with passengers, most of the shops were reopened, and people went about their business as if nothing particular had happened. Now that matters were taking their regular course Balmaine had much less to do, and he was in daily expectation of being either recalled to London or sent farther afield. In the meantime he found the comparative calm a great boon, for the fatigues and excitement of the siege had told on his health. He felt and looked far from well, and was just about to apply for leave of absence to run over to London and spend a few days with Vera, when he received a letter from Corfe, of whom, since his arrest in the Rue des Apôtres, he had heard nothing. It was to this effect:

"I am condemned to death. I have done you all the harm I could, but for all that I entreat you to come and see me. I have an important communication to make."

"VERNON CORFE."

Balmaine did not much believe in the important communication, yet he resolved to visit his quondam rival, partly to see how this man, whose character interested him, met his doom—he had not shown much courage in the Rue des Apôtres; partly with a view to obtaining matter for a letter—for your true journalist is always on the quest after effective "copy."

On presenting his card as correspondent of the *Day* he was courteously received by the director of the prison, who made no difficulty about granting his request for an interview with Corfe.

If Alfred had expected his ancient enemy to show any signs of embarrassment he was mistaken. He found him in a small yet airy and comfortable cell, well supplied with books and writing materials. As his visitor, accompanied by a turnkey, entered, Corfe rose from his chair, bade Balmaine good day, and offered him a seat, quite in the old nonchalant style.

"Won't you sit down, Balmaine?" he said. "It is awfully good of you to come and see me, after all that has happened. Let me offer you a cigar. You will find them better than the Vevays and Grandsons we used to smoke at Geneva. They let me smoke now that I am condemned; they would not before, and 'pon my word, to be deprived of tobacco is almost as bad as being under sentence of death."

But there was a nervous tremor about his lips and a hunted look in his eyes which

showed that he was far from being at ease, and that his words were braver than his heart. He was playing a part, and his insatiable vanity went far to supply the place of courage.

"You would be rather surprised to get my letter. You had not heard, I suppose?"

"No; I had not heard."

"Well, I want you to do something for me; but in return I will do a good deal more for you."

"Yes," said Alfred quietly; "what is it?"

"Restore your wife's fortune."

"How?" exclaimed Balmaine, startled but incredulous, and expecting some trick.

"By giving you properly legalised copies of Philip Hardy and Vera Leonino's marriage certificates—a copy of those, I mean, that Hardy had in his possession before he died, and which he gave to Gabrielle Courbet to take to his father in England."

"How do you know he did this, and how came these documents into your possession?" asked Alfred, almost confounded by this revelation, which nevertheless seemed to bear the versimilitude of truth.

"I will tell you." And with a self-satisfied air, as if he were telling something that redounded to his credit, Corfe explained how he had come by the papers, and how he had sold them to Saintly Sam and Ferret. "They are shrewd fellows, both of them," he went on to say, "and there are not many, I expect, who ever got the better of the lawyer in a deal, though he does drop his h's and talks with a Lancashire twang. But I did. After going to Balafria to make cock-sure that the place had been burnt down and all the records destroyed, we went to Milan to make sure that the duplicate certificates in my possession were sufficient to establish the validity of the marriage according to Italian law. There was then nothing to be done but exchange the papers for a five hundred pound draft, as per agreement. About this we had some little difficulty, for I wanted the money before I parted with the security, and they wanted the security before they parted with the money. We got over it by meeting each other half way. I surrendered the documents with my right hand and received the draft with my left. But a good deal of this was rather make-believe on my part. I had taken my precautions in advance. The certificates I gave them were worthless—at any rate, for their purpose."

"You are trifling with me," said Balmaine sternly. "Did you not say just now that these documents were certified copies of the

original entries in the parish register of Balafria?"

"And so they were," answered Corfe coolly, as he knocked the ashes from his cigar; "but, as I said just now, I took my precautions. While Ferret and his client were looking at the cathedral on the day of our arrival—I had seen it so often that I did not care to see it again—I went to a notary and got sworn copies of both certificates, properly legalised, and such as would be received as proofs of the marriage by any court in Italy and, as I take it, in England. I have them now, or, what comes to the same thing, I can tell you where they are and how to get them."

"Well," exclaimed Balmaine warmly, "I think I never heard of such a rascally business in all my life! I knew that Saintly Sam had not much principle nor Ferret many scruples, but I never supposed they were capable of taking part in such a cruel and shameful fraud."

"Yes; they are a bad lot. But I was too many for them, sharp as they thought themselves," observed Corfe complacently. The imputation of being a rascal did not appear to disturb him in the least.

"You are going to tell me where these papers are, I suppose? You are anxious to make such reparation as lies in your power."

"Reparation! Ah, I understand. Call it what you like; only if I put you in the way of getting these papers, you must do something for me."

"What?"

"I have a mother, Mr. Balmaine," said Corfe, dropping for the first time during the interview his cynical manner; "I have a mother, the only relative for whom I ever cared, and who has never treated me badly. My father is a hard, severe man, who used to punish me unmercifully, and, I believe, begrudged me the very bread I ate. But my mother was always good to me, she shielded me from his anger, and got me out of many a scrape. A few years ago, unknown to him, she gave me a large sum of money to save me from a great danger—never mind what. I promised to give it her back, and I have not been able to keep my word. My father has found it all out, and he is awfully savage, reproaching her always, and making life a burden to her. Now I should like her to have that money, and if I let you have these papers you must send it to her; that is my condition."

"You are not absolutely destitute of conscience after all, Corfe!"

"Of course I am not; what made you think so?" returned Corfe, with a look of injured innocence. "Well, how is it to be?"

"What is the amount?"

"A mere trifle; eight hundred pounds."

"It shall be done," said Alfred, after a moment's thought; "always provided, of course, that my wife recovers her fortune by means of these papers."

"Of course. That goes without saying. And now I must tell you where they are. I made some money during the Commune, but lost it all in the crash, except two or three thousand francs, which, together with some private papers—those relating to the Hardy marriage among them—I hid in the house where I was taken, and where I had gone for the purpose of getting them. They are in an oaken cupboard in a room on the fourth story, which I once occupied. You will easily find it; and I shall give you a letter to the proprietor, authorising you to take possession of my effects, though there is naught worth taking but the money and the papers, which, as I said, are hidden. The back of the cupboard is panelled, and all the panels are fastened with four nails, save one, which is fastened with five. Remove it, and behind you will find a recess in which is a little iron box. That box contains the papers and the bank notes. Destroy all the papers but those you want; they concern nobody but myself."

"And the bank notes?"

"Send them with the eight hundred pounds to my mother; say they were my last gift. And now I have a last request to make of you."

"And that is——"

"To come and see the last of me. I want you to be able to say that I died game. I am aware I did not appear to advantage in the Rue des Apôtres; but I was taken by surprise, and, I admit it, got into a mortal funk—only for a minute, though, as you no doubt noticed. You will come, of course?"

"It is a strange request, but I will do as you wish. When——"

"Have I to be shot? I have no idea; they do not let us know beforehand; in two or three days probably. The director will tell you. Must you go?"

"Yes," said Alfred, who had risen from his chair; "I cannot stay any longer. I have work to do."

Corfe tendered his hand. Balmaine drew back.

"What! you won't shake hands?" asked the prisoner.

"With you? Certainly not."

"You have got all you require, and now you want to insult me, I suppose. But you need not get on your high horse; my family is quite as good as yours, let me tell you."

"So much the worse for your family. I won't touch your hand, Corfe, because it is stained with blood. By a shameful fraud you deprived my wife of her fortune, you did your best to murder me; I firmly believe that you killed poor Esther Brandon, and you richly deserve the punishment you are about to receive."

With that Balmaine turned on his heel and left the cell. He never saw Corfe again. The director, of whom he inquired as to the time of execution, thought it would not take place until the following week, and promised to let him know betimes. But peremptory orders came early next morning, and within an hour of their receipt the culprit was shot in the prison yard.

Corfe failed to make good his boast of "dying game," for though he struggled hard to keep up an appearance of composure, he completely broke down at the last moment, had to be dosed with brandy, supported to the place of execution between two warders, and propped in a fainting condition against the prison wall.

CHAP. LXXIV.—DISPOSAL OF THE FORTUNE.

"WHAT would you say, Vera," asked her husband, on the day after his return from Paris, "if I were to tell you that you are going to get your Two Millions after all?"

"I should say you were joking; would not you, Cora?"

"I am not sure. If Alfred says so I should think he is very likely to be right."

"Are you serious, *cher ami*?"

"Quite. I did not like to say anything until I had seen Mr. Artful. Well, I saw him this morning, and after hearing my statement, he said there was no doubt the fortune could be recovered; and I took the liberty of telling him to begin proceedings for its recovery forthwith. Did I do right, Vera *mia*?"

"Whatever you do is right for me, *mon maître*," said the young wife fondly; "but tell us all about it, please; we are both dying of curiosity."

Alfred told them all about it. The two women were so deeply interested in the story and so much excited by the perils their hus-

band and cousin had undergone, that the fortune question fell for a moment into the background.

"What an awful villain that man was!" said Cora, meaning Corfe; "it makes one's blood run cold to think of him."

"And he tried to have you shot!" said Vera, turning pale.

"That he might marry you," said Balmaine.

"How do you account for the existence of such a monster of iniquity?"

"You might as well ask me how I account for the existence of evil. Yet I have no doubt there are many more like him—as vain, as devoid of moral principle, and as hard and cruel—as potentially bad though not actually so wicked. But there are, fortunately, few equally unscrupulous who have Corfe's gifts and education, and opportunities for evil. Those who have, become, like him, great criminals."

"And always come to a bad end, it is some satisfaction to know," put in Cora.

"Not always, I fear. If Corfe had not got mixed up with the Commune I do not see how he could have been brought to book for the crimes we know he committed. It is well he did, for a man of his capacity and moral callousness is more dangerous than a homicidal lunatic. But enough about Corfe. Do you think" (smiling) "the fortune will be too great a responsibility for you, Vera?"

"Not when you share it with me. But we must turn it to good account."

"How?" asked Cora, rather sarcastically. "I cannot conceive of anything more difficult than to dispense a large fortune judiciously—that is if you mean to give it away."

"But we don't. Vera and I have discussed the subject often, and imagined what we should have done had the fortune come to her; and I think we are agreed that there are better ways of helping people than bestowing indiscriminate alms, subscribing to churches and the rest. We should give something for charitable purposes, of course—probably a good deal—but nothing is easier than to give money when you have plenty of it, and as often as most charity pauperises. I would rather try to prevent pauperism and help the poor without impairing their self-respect by making them recipients of relief."

"That is easier said than done."

"True. But few things worth doing are done easily. You will perhaps say that what one man can do is hardly worth mentioning—that it is only as a drop of water to the ocean. Well, the ocean is made up of

drops after all; and if a sufficient number could be taken from it, even the volume of an ocean might be perceptibly diminished. From what I have lately seen, both in this country and others, I feel convinced that more good may be effected by raising people's ideals, improving their morals—using the word in its widest application—and combating erroneous views than by mere doles, however proper and carefully bestowed. For instance, if anybody could persuade the people of this country to lessen their expenditure on drink by five or ten millions a year, and eat—I exclude of course the indigent—a little more moderately, he would do more good than would be done if every millionaire in the land were to sell all he had and give it to the poor. Adam Smith, who was the first to show the errors of the protective system, and the men who brought about the repeal of the Corn Laws, probably did more to diminish the sum of human misery than all the philanthropists of the century."

"Very likely," put in Cora, "but what is the practical application? Adam Smiths are not to be bought to order, and there are no more Corn Laws to repeal."

"There are other bad laws to repeal though, and I only mentioned Adam Smith as an illustration of the idea I wanted to convey—that the greatest and noblest of all functions is that of the teacher; second to it is the work of those who devote themselves to the repetition and enforcement of the teacher's lessons; for of all evils ignorance is the greatest—if men were wiser they would be both better and better off."

"You must have a newspaper, Alfred."

"I mean to have one if Vera will let me?"

"Allow you! Of course I will; but why do you ask?"

"Because my newspaper will not be a money-making concern. I shall not conduct it on commercial principles. It must be sold at a low price or it will not reach the people whom I want most to influence; it must be well and brightly written, or it will not please my readers, and fearlessly written, without respect to persons and parties, or it will not please me. The columns of this paper will be open to all who have anything really good to say, and I shall pay my contributors handsomely, always on condition, however, that they sign their articles, for I will neither take the responsibility of other men's articles, nor ask them to suit their views to mine. And it is only right that the public

should know who their self-appointed Mentors are. What should we think of a divine or a statesman who delivered his discourses with his features hidden under a mask? Anonymity is the journalist's mask, worn, moreover, not in his own interest but in that of his employer. A paper conducted on these principles would not be likely to pay pecuniarily, the more especially as I should neither humiliate myself by asking for advertisements nor stoop to obtain subscribers by pandering to the classes or flattering the masses. But other results would come in turn; sooner or later the public would appreciate honesty of purpose and plainness of speaking. And if the enterprise should cost us a few thousands a year what then? The money would be better spent than in keeping up a big establishment, and Vera and I can live on far less than the interest of our income. And there are other ways in which we could dispose of money usefully, such as educating highly and providing for poor children of exceptional ability, organizing free lectures on practical subjects, and making an essay now and then towards the problem of housing the poor."

"I approve of all you propose, *mon ami*," said Vera thoughtfully; "but could we not do something more immediate? It will be a long time before the paper begins to tell, and making experiments about housing the poor will be a rather slow process, will it not? Could we not hit upon some idea that would be all our own?"

"An apt suggestion. Yes; I think I have an idea. It occurred to me a little while ago. When I was among the London poor, I noticed that they are very badly served by retail traders. Why should we not establish stores in some of the poorest districts of London, where the very poor could buy all they want at a moderate advance on first cost? I would not give anything—for giving, like borrowing, dulls the edge of husbandry; so the scheme would have to be self-supporting, but by doing the business on an extensive scale, we could afford to supply genuine articles at much lower prices than are paid at present, and so place within the reach of the poor the advantages of co-operative trading—perhaps, in the end, by advancing the necessary capital, of course without interest, enable some of them to become their own providers. For of all helps, self-help is the best. Oh, there are many ways by which those who regard

wealth as a trust, and not a right, may promote the common good. And it seems to me that it is simply a matter of duty on the part of the rich to spend the greater portion of their incomes in bettering the condition of the community which protects them in its enjoyment."

"And yet you say you are not a socialist," said Cora.

"Nor am I, for I would constrain no man. The only force I desire to use is the force of public opinion, and it is public opinion which, Vera being willing, we will try to do our part in educating."

"With all my heart, *mon ami*. It is a noble aim and practical, not like some of those splendid yet impossible schemes M. Senarcens used to talk about."

"All very fine and Quixotic," observed Cora, smiling. "But you have not got your fortune yet. What are you going to do in the meantime?"

"Cannot we go to Switzerland for a while?" said Vera; "the London air seems to suffocate me. I must see once more the mountain and the lake, and bask again in the sunshine of Canton Vaud *si beau*. The change would do us both good, Alfred. And we need not be idle. You could write articles for the *Day* and your new paper, and I would go on with my picture."

"Yes; let us go. Artful says it may be some little time before the proceedings for the recovery of the estate can be completed. We will sell this furniture, and give up the house—I think we are both pretty well tired of Park Village East—and betake ourselves to Switzerland until the business is arranged. We shall come back stronger for work. And I should like to see Milnthorpe and Delane. Perhaps we might find Delane a better place, or do something to enable him to marry Ida von Schmidt. If Cora will go with us as our guest and at our expense, it will add greatly to our pleasure. Won't it, Vera?"

"It will, indeed. Do come, Cora dear."

"With all my heart. Alfred's proposal is a piece of practical communism of which I heartily approve. I wish more rich folks would do likewise, and treat their less fortunate friends to continental excursions rather oftener than they do at present. Educate public opinion on that point, cousin, and you will do a good thing. It is a capital beginning, and you may do the same thing next year if you are so disposed."

CLOSING HOURS.

SHORT SUNDAY READINGS FOR DECEMBER.

By NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.

FIRST SUNDAY.

Read Psalm lxxi.

FROM DAWN TO SUNSET.

GOD the home and refuge of the heart in youth, manhood, and old age, such is the delightful picture presented in this Psalm. The writer, now "old and grey-headed," recalls the story of past years. He cannot remember a time when he did not trust God, and pray to Him. "O God," he exclaims with evident emotion, "Thou hast taught me from my youth." If we may suppose David to have been the author, we can fancy that as he wrote these words there rose up before him "through the moonlight of the autumnal years," the dear image of that handmaid of the Lord of whom he speaks in more than one of his Psalms, "O Lord, truly I am thy servant and the son of thine handmaid;" "Give thy strength unto thy servant and save the son of thine handmaid." Who can doubt that with the recollections of his youth there must have been interwoven many a blessed memory of her who bore him, one assuredly not the least honoured in that band of sainted mothers who, in their several generations, have been among the greatest benefactors of the world. But whoever wrote the Psalm, it is at all events the precious and imperishable record of a life hallowed from "dawn to sunset," by sweet trustfulness and piety.

In the religious history of this man of God there was no violent break or interruption. The whole intervening period between youth and age is spanned by the word "hitherto" which occurs in the 17th verse. "Hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works." Again, by the recurring expression, "all the day," "Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day;" "My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day;" "My tongue shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long." He had his sorrows like other men. Troubles "great and sore" had come upon him. Yet through "all the day" of joy and sorrow, of sunshine and storm, God had been with him, guiding him with strong, but gentle hand, into green pastures and by still waters. And now as he stands on the "low verge of life," anticipating the hour of his departure, he can find no language too strong to utter

forth his boundless gratitude for all the goodness and mercy which had followed him "all his day" from lisping childhood to tottering age.

It is a beautiful picture, which has many lessons suitable both for the beginning and the close of life.

It teaches the young that there need not be any violent break or interruption in their religious history. Many no doubt are brought back by the way of repentance and conversion to the feet of God after long wanderings in the ways of sin. But equally true is it that the highest types of Christian character have been found among those who could say, "O Lord, thou hast been my guide from my youth." In lives thus begun, continued, and ended, there is a "continuity of godliness" which is peculiarly attractive.

Behold the Psalmist, we would say to every young person who may chance to read this page. See him bowed under the weight of years. Listen to the story of his mingled experiences of joy and sorrow. Is he now ashamed of his youthful piety? Does he regret that his heart was so early given to his God and Saviour? No! a thousand times No! is the answer that is furnished by every line of this Psalm. From beginning to end it witnesses to the blessedness of a life early dedicated to God and wholly spent in that service, which is perfect freedom and perfect joy. Happy indeed are they whose lives correspond in any measure to that experience of a lifelong piety which is here set before us.

Again, there is a very blessed message for those whose strength is failing.

The Psalmist was now approaching the latest stage of the journey of life. At last the truth had dawned upon him that he was an old man. In what spirit does he recognise this fact? With what feelings does he anticipate the inevitable close? As we read this hymn of old age—for such it is—one thing cannot fail to strike us. Throughout it is pervaded by a cheerful, courageous, happy spirit. It is not a dirge, but a chant of praise. The future, no less than the past, is illumined by God's tender love and mercy. We have the thought, if not the language, of the Apostle when he asked triumphantly, "Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall things present, or things to come, or life or death?"

In particular three great thoughts would appear to have sustained this aged saint.

First, the remembrance of all God's unspeakable goodness from childhood till that hour. Because he could say, "O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth," he could add, with a holy confidence which rested on a life-long experience of the Divine mercy, "Cast me not off in the time of old age, forsake me not when my strength faileth." What a reserved fund, so to speak, of trust and hope in regard to the future is theirs who can thus look back on a long life of humble Christian service! Therein lies the soothing power and beauty of such a Psalm, for instance, as the twenty-third. "Thou hast made me to lie down in green pastures. Thou hast anointed my head with oil. Thou hast restored my soul." This it was which enabled David to say with a thankful and happy mind, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." And as there so here also, the Psalmist's anticipation is founded on a retrospect. The God of his youth was with him still. And would be with him always. "This God is our God for ever and ever."

Further, he was sustained by the fact that, though old and feeble, his opportunities of usefulness were not yet ended. "O God, forsake me not until I have showed thy strength to this generation, and thy power to every one that is come." He wished to be helpful and serviceable to the last. He felt that he could teach lessons of reverence, patience, humbleness, and piety to the generation following, lessons that would be all the weightier because enforced by the experience of years of dutiful obedience and labour. Very sad and unlovely is old age when it is disfigured by peevishness, nigardliness, or vice, but most beautiful and attractive when it teaches such lessons as it alone can teach effectually to a younger generation. Let no one say, "My day is over. I cannot any more be of use to others." Every season of life has its own opportunities of usefulness; and while we are here we can serve God.

Lastly, he was sustained by the hope of final deliverance from all the sorrows and troubles of his pilgrimage. "Thou shalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the depth of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side." Is it fanciful to read the hope of immortality into this language? Certainly it appears to point to something better than mere temporal deliverance.

At all events, we can now read it in the brighter light which shines upon our own path. How unbearable would be the sense of ever-accumulating infirmities, how dismal beyond all expression the approach of old age without the Christian hope to illumine the great darkness! But the faith of Christ crucified and risen again, "The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," can make the old age as it can make the youth of every believer serene and happy, and when the end comes it can irradiate even the closing scene with the brightness of a dawning glory. Let us not then look too sadly on the passing years. "The autumn has its beauty as well as the spring; there is a joy of him that reapeth as well as of him that soweth; and while the blade and the ear are for the present world, the ripe corn is for the garner of God in heaven."

SECOND SUNDAY.

Read Isaiah xl. 27—31, and 2 Cor. iv. 16.

LIGHT AT EVENING TIME.

In our last reading we considered the possibility, through Divine grace, of a life-long piety. It may not be inappropriate now to turn our attention to the secret of that undecaying power by which the true Christian is enabled to go on, often from early childhood to old age, from strength even unto strength. Such is the power that is inherent in the spiritual life. Sooner or later every other form of life must languish and die. This alone has in it, by reason of the ever-renewed strength which accompanies it, the "promise and potency" of endurance. He that hath this life shall have it more abundantly. When all else, youth itself, shall have passed away it abides in joyous fulness.

In those wonderful verses which occur at the end of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah two pictures are presented, by a few master-strokes, to the mind's eye. One is manhood's prime, youth clothed in its fairest and most charming colours, when all the powers of the body and all the faculties of the mind have reached their maturity, when joy is poured into the heart by every avenue of sense, and reason and affection, emotion and imagination,—

"That time when meadow, grove, and stream,
To us did seem
Appareled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream."

The other is the picture of nature's decay. Now the glory of the day is fading. The evening shadows have begun to fall. The radiance of youth has fled. The decrepitude of age is creeping on apace.

"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." How sad it is to observe in those nearest and dearest to us on earth the fast-accumulating tokens of failing energy and enfeebled

and middle-aged sympathise with the labour and sorrow which are the frequent, though not perhaps invariable accompaniments of declining years. True, none but He who is the "Ancient of days" can fully enter into

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(Beginning with the January Part.)

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"Ring out the False."

A New Serial Story.

By MARY B. WHITING, Author of "That Living of Langley's," &c.

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In particular three great thoughts would appear to have sustained this aged saint.

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At all events, we can now read it in the brighter light which shines upon our own path. How unbearable would be the sense of ever-accumulating infirmities, how dismal



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"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." How sad it is to observe in those nearest and dearest to us on earth the fast-accumulating tokens of failing energy and enfeebled powers! The step, once nimble as the roe, becoming shorter and more uncertain year by year. The intellect, once so clear and vigorous, on all whose judgments we could implicitly rely, becoming dim and clouded, and the strong man is bowed and the inevitable hour all too plainly hastening on, when the "silver cord must be loosed and the golden bowl be broken at the fountain." This, if it is one of the commonest, is assuredly one of the most painful of our experiences.

"Whither is it gone? the visionary gleam.
Where is it now? the glory and the dream."

But for us who believe in Christ, life is more than vigour of limb or health of body. It is more than the enjoyment, however keen, of the things of time and sense—more, even, than immortality. Life is character. It is the growth of the soul in goodness and truth, in wisdom, holiness, and love. In short it is the possession of God, and of all things present or to come, in God through Christ. Where there is life in that sense, *there* have we the sure pledge and earnest of a youth which can never pass away. Sickness may come, and the glow of health fade from the withered cheek. Disease may draw its rough lines o'er the fairest form. Suddenly or by slow degrees the frail tent which is the home of the deathless spirit may be taken down. But what of that? Have we never seen that as the "outward man" perished the "inward man" was renewed day by day? We have seen it again and again. We have seen the aged believer, in the hour of his departure, upheld by an invisible power, which made him more than a conqueror over physical weakness. We have seen young sufferers manifesting on the bed of languishing a heroism of faith which shone forth all the brighter, and diffused a fragrance all the sweeter, because it was accompanied by the evident tokens of decay. And seeing these things, witnessing this triumph of the spirit over the flesh, have we not thanked God in our hearts that there is a life over which neither time nor change, nor death itself, has any power, a life which is eternal, as the life of Him who is without beginning of years or end of days?

This is a thought that should be especially consolatory to those who are far advanced in the journey of life. Too little do the young

and middle-aged sympathise with the labour and sorrow which are the frequent, though not perhaps invariable accompaniments of declining years. True, none but He who is the "Ancient of days" can fully enter into their feelings or fulfil to them His own promise, "And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you." But a younger generation can bear patiently with their infirmities, and soothe them by gentle ministries of helpfulness and affection. Above all they can point them forward and upward unto Him in whose life our life abideth, ever new and ever strong. For what dearer solace can be imparted to the Christian old and travel-worn than is found in the conviction that, his life being hid with Christ in God, there has been set upon his brow the seal of an everlasting youth, so that, albeit he is tottering to the grave's brink he can say, "Though my heart and my flesh fail, God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. The 'outward man' perisheth. It must perish. But what of that? The 'inward man,' my very self, is renewed day by day. Though the gladsome joys of my youth have passed away, the future I know has better things in store for me than any of which time and change have robbed me." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is now thy victory?"

But why is spiritual life thus undecaying? What is the secret of its permanence? It is found in the living communion of the soul with its Father in heaven. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

In particular there are two hindrances which beset spiritual life, from both of which we are delivered by simply waiting upon the Lord in the exercise of a living faith and the humble and diligent use of all the means of grace. One is despondency. Another is presumption. No doubt there is much which if viewed alone has a tendency to cloud and depress the mind. The passing away of youth with all its joys; the flight of time, brought home to us in these weeks when the sands of the dying year are running low; the sense of failure which cleaves to us; our broken vows and resolutions—these and a thousand other things may occasion this feeling. But whatever causes of disquietude may overshadow us there is no way of escape, no possibility of strength ever renewed, and with strength renewed of fresh courage and hope, save in waiting upon the Lord from whom cometh our help, our life, our all.

And as from despondency, so too from presumption, there is opened up to us a path of escape as we thus wait upon God. "When I am weak," cries the Apostle "then am I strong." It was not until God had emptied him of the spirit of presumption that he felt himself uplifted above the weakness of mental and physical suffering, by a new power—Christ's power resting upon him. And we too must learn the meaning of these words, "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord," would we be filled with the joyous sense of an ever-abiding and happy youth. We too must be taught that when we are weak then are we strong, not in self but in God, who giveth power to the faint, and to them who have no might who increaseth strength. Then and then only shall we be able to appreciate at its true worth the indescribable charm of such a passage as the one on which we have been meditating, so tender in its recognition of our utter helplessness and at the same time so hopeful in its tone, lifting us far above all discouragement, weakness, and decay, into that clear and sunlit atmosphere in which our merciful Father in heaven would have His own children always to dwell. We shall then "run and not be weary, we shall walk and not faint." At evening time it *shall* be light.

THIRD SUNDAY.

Read Job xxxv. 10, Luke ii. 8—15, and Acts xvi. 25.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

How often in the long history of His Church on earth has God given songs in the night! Best and sweetest of all is that song which comes to us at this blessed Christmas time. Borne through the night of ages it falls once more on the listening ear of faith, softened and hallowed by distance, but unchanged in its divine and matchless melody. By night, as they kept watch over their flocks, the shepherds first heard it; and now again, in this night-time of the year, when all nature lies dead, and wintry winds sigh and shriek around our dwellings, we hear it as of old, now blending with that triumphant song of salvation which waxes louder and louder as it ever ascends unto God "out of every nation and kindred and people and tongue." Sometimes as we look abroad over the face of this sinful and sorrowful world, we feel appalled by the darkness and mystery of the night through which we are passing. But as we listen to the angels' song, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will to men," we are reassured. In the Babe wrapped in

swaddling clothes and laid in a manger we behold "God manifest in the flesh." The story of the Holy Nativity, bound about our hearts by a thousand gracious memories and associations, gives us such a sure pledge of the love of God, "Who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all," that we are enabled in perfect calmness and in perfect peace to await the issue of events, being well assured that "though weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning," and "if God be for us, who can be against us?"

It has been said that mankind may be divided into two classes, those who look on the bright side, and those who look on the dark side of things. Now whatever may be said of our attitude in relation to the common incidents and concerns of life, it is to be feared that there is a very general disposition, even among Christian people, to look too exclusively on the darker side of things. We see pain, suffering, and misery on every side, and half incredulously we ask, Is there indeed an all-wise and loving ruler of God upon this earth? Is God our Father? Does He care for us, His poor helpless children struggling through the night? These questions might prove too strong for faith, unless we were upheld by the songs which come to us from Bethlehem's plains—ay, and from the experience of many "a night of the Lord to be had in remembrance." Be the darkness which enshrouds us ever so great, are there no songs in the night? What is the word of prophecy, that light which shineth in a dark place until the day dawn? What is the Gospel of pardon and salvation? What are God's promises? Was there ever a night so dark that His faithful servants could hear no songs? As it is night which reveals the glory of the starry heavens, so too does it often happen that in the night of weeping mysteries of divine consolation and love are disclosed, which otherwise had been unknown. "Never," it has been said, "does the harp of the human spirit yield such music as when its framework is most shattered and its strings most torn. There is a hand which can then sweep the heart-strings and wake their highest notes of praise."

Most of us have known how much more formidable our troubles appear when we think of them in the night watches. Cares which fly before the rising sun seem almost unbearable when the darkness is about us. Many too have found that there is no way of escape from the distressing thoughts

which haunt us in our sleepless hours like steadily fixing the mind on God as our merciful and reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. At no time does the expression "Looking unto Jesus," convey to us a more blessed meaning. And what is this but a picture in miniature of the experience of God's servants in every dark night of trial or anxiety which comes to them? When does God give songs in the night? Is it not when we are able with some degree of vividness to realise that He is with us and His Fatherhood becomes to us a great and glorious reality? Is it not when the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord is manifested in all its infinite fulness? The cloud then turns to us its silver lining. We find rest unto our souls in the certainty of God's Fatherly love, and in the firm persuasion that all things, being ordered in perfect wisdom, are working together for our present and eternal good. Is it the loss of friends which causes us to dwell in darkness? Are there no songs in the night if we hear that voice which is still crying as of old: "I am the Resurrection and the Life;" "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;" "As Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him"? Is it the loss of property, or the straitened circumstances which are so common in these days which make us sad? Are there no songs in the night if we are taught that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth; if human sympathy is called forth and brotherly love deepened; if the tone of society is purified and elevated, and our thoughts are lifted above the sordid cares of this life and fixed on the better and enduring substance?

Once more then, let us draw near to the manger-cradle of our Redeemer, that adorning the mystery of the "Word made flesh," we may be strengthened and comforted, and that these poor hearts of ours, oft saddened by the jarring discords of earth, may be soothed by the strange sweet melody of the angels' song. Let us open our hearts anew to the message of peace, "Unto you is born this day a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." Like the shepherds, "let us now go even unto Bethlehem," and our faith like theirs will be confirmed by the experience of what Christ is, to all who truly know and truly love Him. We shall find that in the gospel, embraced not merely as a creed but realised and felt as a living power in the life, there is a balm for every sorrow, and a light to guide us—

"Till the night is gone,
And with the morn those angel-faces smile,
Which we have loved long since and lost awhile."

Nor should we forget, least of all at this season, that if God giveth songs in the night, we should seek in this respect as in every other to be imitators of Him. By the exercise of a practical Christian sympathy, by the ready help we extend to all who are in need, by our brotherly kindness and charity, we too can give songs in the night. We can deliver the poor, the fatherless, and him that hath no helper, and so the blessing of him that is ready to perish shall come upon us, and many who now dwell in darkness shall awake and sing.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Read Rom. xiii. 11—14, and John ix. 4.

THE MORNING COMETH.

Most of us have felt that on the last Sunday of the year the mind is peculiarly susceptible of good impressions. A week hence we shall be accustomed to the change. Our thoughts, like our pen, will have become familiar with the new date. But to-day there is in every heart which indifference has not chilled into utter insensibility a certain tenderness of feeling which predisposes to serious reflection. Even the trifler is solemnised, if only for a moment, as he crosses that hidden boundary which separates the old year from the new. To the Christian it is one of those moments in life which are rich with possibilities of fresh achievement and resolve. It seems appropriate at such a time to review the past with blended gratitude and penitence. The eye then turns wistfully to the future, anxious to discover the secrets which lie hidden in its bosom. The question, What am I, and whither tending? forces itself on our attention with more than common solemnity.

Now when St. Paul uttered this great advent call, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," he stated a fact which, if duly considered, should go far to scatter those gloomy thoughts which in certain moods we are apt to associate with the dying year. Our feelings at this season will be truly peaceful and happy in the same degree as we realise that the swiftly passing years are bearing us, not into darkness, but into light. The joy with which we greet the opening year must be shallow and unreal unless it has its roots deep struck in the soil of a holy Christian hope. It is positively unnatural to rejoice when one year ends and another begins if our rejoicing has in it no element of religious faith. Not indeed that there

is aught unseemly in festive gladness, expressing itself in kindly greetings and happy, social gatherings at this time. On the contrary, there is every reason why such innocent practices as have commended themselves in all ages to the best and healthiest instincts of our nature should be encouraged. Austerity is always unlovely. We err only when we substitute the mirth of mere thoughtlessness for that deeper and holier joy which springs from the consciousness of being encircled in everlasting arms which are bearing us forward towards a brighter day, and to the possession of better things than any which the changeful years have taken from us. No thoughtful person can recall even one brief year without there being an undertone of sadness in his gaiety. Let him, however, grasp this fact, that the advance is not from light to darkness, as we are prone to think, looking at the matter from a human stand-point, but from darkness to light, if so be the life of God is in us—and then how much brighter and happier will be the transition from the old year to the new! The sense of loss which might otherwise overwhelm the mind is swallowed up in the blessed consciousness of having an enduring substance over which time and change have no power. We may mourn for beloved comrades taken from our side; but even that sorrow is turned into joy if we remember that as our circle of friends grows smaller on earth it is becoming wider in heaven! Human joys may pass away. The fountain of earth's pleasures may dry up. But "in God's presence there is fulness of joy, and at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Believing this firmly and vividly we can say "good-bye" to the year that is going, and hold out a hand of ready welcome to that which is coming, because we know that each year as it passes brings us nearer to the sunrise and the dawn—nearer to that day of days when the promise of bliss shall be fulfilled—"Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." How differently do the "men of this world" regard the flight of time! Great indeed is the change which faith makes in our estimate of the transitory and the abiding.

It will be noticed that St. Paul uses the terms "night" and "day" in a sense directly opposite to our Lord, when He said, "I must work the work of Him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh in which no man can work." Jesus calls the present life

"day," in contrast to the stillness and inactivity of the grave. St. Paul, on the other hand, contrasts the present life with that brighter state which lies beyond, where "they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light." And "there is no night there."

Both aspects of the subject are suitable to this season. The morning cometh, also the night. The sands of another year are running low. With it how many opportunities of receiving and doing good have passed away! We must not suffer it to fall into its grave without earnestly beseeching God for Christ's sake to forgive its wasted hours, its neglected privileges, its misused advantages. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

Nor are the practical lessons which underlie the apostle's imagery less solemn or constraining. The Day is at hand! No doubt the reference is primarily to the Second Advent. It formed no part of the commission of Christ's apostles to declare when He will come again. They only knew as we do that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief, and accordingly they ever recommended a spirit of watchful and sober-minded expectancy with regard to it. It is but a shallow criticism that would dismiss these words as meaningless, because they are as yet unfulfilled in the literal sense. We need not, however, trouble ourselves, meanwhile, with difficult questions of interpretation. Times without number, as notably in the case of St. Augustine, these words—"The night is far spent, the day is at hand," have been as a voice from God, trumpeted, awakening the soul from the slumber of carnal indifference, and constraining it to stronger effort and to a nobler life.

Thus may we now hear it amid the shadows of the closing year. "There is a time to build up and a time to pull down." The present is such a time as that. Now are we summoned with a special urgency to "cast off the works of darkness," all that shuns the light, all that cannot bear to be looked upon in the Presence of Him "who is light, and with Whom there is no darkness at all," and to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ," that being clothed in the pure vesture of His saints, we may serve God and wait for His Son from heaven. In this spirit let us meet the future, hopefully and courageously believing that for all God's true children, it is radiant with the promise of the eternal morn. "Though it tarry, wait for it. It will surely come. It will not tarry."

